

Most Holy Trinity Church
524 Mifflin Street
Huntingdon, PA 16652
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GUIDELINES FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

1. The following guidelines are intended to assist the members of our community in properly preparing for the baptism of their **infant** children. These guidelines are a combination and summary of church (Canon) law, diocesan regulations, and parish policies and must be followed unless properly dispensed by the bishop or priest.

2. The law of the church states that the priest may not baptize a child unless there is solid assurance that the child will receive a proper Christian formation. Therefore, the parents of children brought to the church for baptism must be active and practicing members of our Christian community. Likewise, their sponsors (godparents), who are representatives of the faith community, must also be active, participating members of the Catholic Community. In the case of **parents** who are **not registered in our parish**, a letter is required from their pastor stating the following:

- A. that they are active and practicing members of their parish community.
- B. that the pastor delegates authority for the baptism to take place at Holy Trinity.

In the case of **sponsors** (godparents) who are **not registered with us**, a letter is required from their pastor stating that they are active and practicing members of their parish community. (A sample Sponsor Certificate is available from the parish office.)

3. It is the responsibility of the pastor to help parents understand and appreciate the responsibilities that they assume in bringing their child to the church to be baptized. Therefore, a period of preparation is essential and the length of this period may vary. For this reason, parents should contact the pastor at least one month prior to the birth of their child in order to begin this preparation period. The preparation period includes attendance at a Baptism Preparation Program scheduled quarterly.

4. A parish Baptismal Preparation Team, part of the faith formation program, assists the pastor in preparing parents for the baptism of their infant children. A member of the team will contact you to coordinate your preparation.

5. The baptism stipend for the church is due on the date of the baptism.
The standard charge is:

\$50.00 for registered and contributing members of the parish;

\$100.00 for non-registered and non-contributing members.

This check should be payable to Most Holy Trinity Church.

A stipend for the priest is voluntary and made at the discretion of the family.

6. Baptism is a community sacrament, the sign by which an individual enters and becomes a member of the Christian Community. Baptism cannot be a closed, private affair. Therefore, the ordinary time and place for the celebration of baptism is on Sunday during the celebration of the Eucharist, when the Christian community is gathered for prayer. However, baptisms should not take place too frequently and there may be a valid reason for celebrating this sacrament other than at Eucharist. The final decision, as to when the baptism should take

place must be mutually made by the pastor and parents.

July 29, 2005

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