



Baptism Preparation Guide
Church of the Redeemer
Sarasota, Florida

Preparing for Holy Baptism

In this document you will find important information about the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, how and when it is administered at Church of the Redeemer, and some useful information to prepare for your big day. Please read it carefully, and please reach out to any member of the clergy, or staff, if you have any questions.

A Welcome from the Rector

You are making the best decision you will ever make!

To follow Jesus as Lord and to put your whole trust in His grace and love is the foundation of life well-lived, both now on earth and eternally in heaven. We often speak of grace in many settings – sometimes as a cliché or catch-all word for things like “nice” or “good.” But, when we talk about the life of grace in Christ begun at baptism, we mean something very specific. For Christians grace is the unearned, unmerited – yet constant – given freely to unworthy sinners for life and salvation. In Holy Baptism you and I die to the old life of sin, shame, and guilt, and we are raised to the life of grace (yeah, holy water is powerful stuff). Baptism, therefore, is the Sacrament of New Birth.

At Redeemer we have a bold – even daring – confidence and trust in God’s grace. Remember, baptism is the beginning of the life of faith, not the end. It is expected that each baptized person takes on an active role in the life of the parish. Redeemer is an active, growing family with literally dozens of opportunities for ministry, growth, and service.

I am personally looking forward to growing in grace with you.

Your servant,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CDW', with a small plus sign (+) to the right of the final stroke.

The Reverend Charleston D. Wilson, Rector

The Sacrament of Holy Baptism

The following questions and answers are from the *Book of Common Prayer*.

What are the Sacraments?

A. The sacraments are outward and visible signs of inward and spiritual grace, given by Christ as sure and certain means by which we receive that grace.

Q. What is Holy Baptism?

A. Holy Baptism is the sacrament by which God adopts us as his children and makes us members of Christ's Body, the Church, and inheritors of the kingdom of God.

Q. What is the outward and visible sign in Baptism?

A. The outward and visible sign in Baptism is water, in which the person is baptized in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Q. What is the inward and spiritual grace in Baptism?

A. The inward and spiritual grace in Baptism is union with Christ in his death and resurrection, birth into God's family the Church, forgiveness of sins, and new life in the Holy Spirit.

Q. What is required of us at Baptism?

A. It is required that we renounce Satan, repent of our sins, and accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior.

Q. Why then are infants baptized?

A. Infants are baptized so that they can share citizenship in the Covenant, membership in Christ, and redemption by God.

Q. How are the promises for infants made and carried out?

A. Promises are made for them by their parents and sponsors, who guarantee that the infants will be brought up within the Church, to know Christ and be able to follow him.

Public, Private, Conditional, and Emergency Baptisms

At Church of the Redeemer baptisms may take place at any time. To be baptized, please contact any member of the clergy or the parish office.

Public Baptism

Public baptisms are traditionally offered in the context of mass on the following feast days: Easter Vigil, the Day of Pentecost, All Saints' Day or the Sunday after All Saints' Day, and the Feast of the Baptism of our Lord (the First Sunday after the Epiphany). Public baptisms may also be offered on other Sundays throughout the year, as needed or requested.

Private Baptism

Private baptisms are baptisms at a prearranged time with invited family and friends. Please contact a member of the clergy to schedule your preferred time. Traditionally, private baptisms are offered in the church on Saturday mornings, usually at 10:00 or 11:30 AM, or on weekday evenings after 5:00 PM. Although it is preferred that each private baptism be accompanied by a celebration of the Holy Eucharist, it is not required. Private baptisms may take place off-site at a suitable location with the permission of the officiating priest.

Conditional Baptism

Conditional baptisms are for persons who have reason to believe they were not previously baptized. Conditional baptism is only administered when it is impossible to verify whether or not an individual has been baptized, or when there is a serious reason for doubting the validity of a previous attempt to confer baptism. Contact a member of the clergy to discuss conditional baptism.

Emergency Baptism

Emergency baptisms are baptisms that are desired when a person is near death and has not been previously baptized. Please call 941-955-4263 to reach the priest on call for an emergency baptism.

Baptism Preparation Classes

We offer Baptism Preparation Classes at least twice a year (and sometimes at other times). Please check the announcements and website calendar to see when classes are offered. Parents and godparents should attend. Adult candidates for baptism should schedule a time to prepare individually with a member of the clergy.

What About Godparents & Sponsors?

For every child to be baptized there should be no fewer than two godparents, of whom at least one should be of the same sex as the child. There are occasions, however, when there may be only one godparent. The godparents shall be persons who have been baptized and will faithfully fulfill their responsibilities both by their care for the child committed to their charge and by the example of their own godly living.

For adults being baptized, godparents are not necessary. However, it is appropriate for adult candidates for baptism to choose a sponsor, who must be a baptized person.

General Guidelines

Private Baptisms

- If you would like your baptism live-streamed, please contact the parish office. A fee is required.
- There is no cost to be baptized, although some choose to provide an honorarium to the priest officiating in thanksgiving for the baptism (the honorarium should be paid directly to the priest, not the parish).
- Depending on set up requirements, flowers, sextons, catering, etc., additional fees may be required.

It is customary, although not required, to make a gift to the parish in honor of the newly baptized.

- If you choose to have music at your baptism, please speak with the Organist/Choirmaster. Certain fees apply.
- Please arrive and be seated at least fifteen minutes prior to the scheduled baptism.
- You may take photographs after the baptism; please refrain from photography during the liturgy.

Public Baptisms

- Please arrive at least twenty minutes prior to mass.
 - Parents and godparents are to be seated in the reserved pews. Other friends and family are asked to sit elsewhere in the nave (the baptistry is a popular choice).
 - If you have a child being baptized, don't worry about the wiggles and squirms. God put the wiggle in babies! If, however, you want to step outside to comfort your child, feel free to do so. The closest exit is to your right, through the baptistry doors.
 - A parish representative will escort you to the baptistry at the correct time.
 - You may take photographs after the baptism; please refrain from photography during the liturgy.
- It is customary, although not required, to make a gift to the parish in honor of the newly baptized.

Pre-Baptism Checklist

Make sure your baptism forms are turned in and completed (forms are available at redeemersarasota.org—search for Baptism Information Form, or by calling Angela Ward at (941) 955-4263.

Office Use Only

_____ Altar guild contacted

_____ Sexton contacted

_____ Organist contacted (if needed)

_____ Flower Committee contacted (if needed)

_____ Registrar contacted

_____ Entered on Priest Rota/Parish Calendar

_____ Cards completed and mailed to the newly baptized with letter from the Rector