

Commitment of the parents:

During the baptismal rite, parents ask the Church to baptize their child. The priest or deacon then claims the child for Christ by making the sign of the Cross on the child's forehead. This is an act of entrusting the child to God. Next, the parents publicly acknowledge their understanding that, in asking for their child to be baptized, they are accepting the responsibility of training the child in the practice of the faith. In this act, they publicly promise before God and His believing community that they will raise the child to keep God's commandments as Christ taught us.

These actions before God and the community of believers are immense, and must be made in earnest by participating in worship with the people of God on a regular basis. If the parents are unable to make these promises, or if their actions give evidence that they do not intend to keep these promises, *under church law the priest or deacon must delay the baptism.*

If baptism is delayed, it is only until such time that the parents are ready to raise the child in the practice of the faith. The normal procedure, then, is to ask the family to delay the baptism for *three months*, so as to allow them an opportunity to attend Mass and participate in the life of the community so they can make a true decision for their child.

Godparents:

The mission of a godparent or sponsor is to present the child for baptism and help the baptized to lead a Christian life by fulfilling the obligations of baptism. A child must have at least one godparent, and may have one godfather and one godmother. To be admitted to the role of a godparent, according to the universal law of the Church, a person must be Catholic, at least 16 years of age, have received the Sacrament of Confirmation, not be the father or the mother of the one to be baptized, and lead a moral life in harmony with the faith and the role of a godparent.

A person who does not practice the faith and keep the commandments (for example, someone who does not attend Mass each Sunday) is not capable of being a sponsor, because that person is not practicing the faith. One of the godparents must receive from his or her Catholic pastor a certificate of eligibility, which certifies that the proposed godparent is a Confirmed, practicing Catholic and qualified to be a godparent. The godparent should talk to his or her pastor concerning this certificate as soon as you ask him or her to be a godparent. If parents are unable to find a qualified godparent from among their family and friends, Holy Cross Parish will be happy to provide one.

Requirements:

Those who are baptizing for the first time at Holy Cross are required to attend a pre-baptismal class. If you are not a registered member of the parish, you are required in advance of the baptism to meet with a priest or deacon in order to join the parish.

A non-Catholic parent:

A non-Catholic parent does not need to make the profession of faith during the baptism if he or she does not share the Catholic faith. However, this parent, in requesting baptism for the child, must give permission for the child to be instructed and raised in the faith of the Church in which the child is baptized.

Emergency Baptism:

If your child experiences a life-threatening medical emergency before the scheduled time of baptism, you should call one of the Catholic chaplains at the hospital where the child has been admitted, or call a priest or deacon here at Holy Cross to do an emergency baptism.

Photos and videos:

Photos and videos of the baptismal ceremony are permitted, but please remember that the Church is not a studio, and the primary purpose of being present at the baptism is to pray. For this reason, you are asked to be discreet in taking these important remembrances. You are asked not to block others from observing the ceremony and to not go beyond the first step of the sanctuary.

Donation:

It is customary for the family to present a financial gift to the Church according to their means, in order to foster the continued growth and work of the Church. Those who are financially able are asked to write a check for \$50 to Holy Cross Church. These contributions go entirely to the Church. If the family would like to give a special gift to the priest or deacon, they may, but it is not expected that they do so.

For more information:

To talk with a member of the parish pastoral team about a future baptism, please feel free to contact Father Jim, Father Larry, or Deacon George at 508-238-2235.

**HOLY CROSS PARISH
MISSION STATEMENT**

Out of our commitment in faith and love to Jesus Christ, Holy Cross Parish Community strives to fulfill the profoundly human and spiritual needs of its parishioners and the larger community it serves. We seek to inspire all, through deeds and by example, to do the work of Christ.

www.holycrosseaston.org

**CELEBRATING THE
SACRAMENT OF
BAPTISM AT
HOLY CROSS PARISH**



Scheduling a baptism:

Baptisms are typically celebrated during Sunday Mass, as well as on the first Sunday of the month after the 10:00 a.m. Mass.

Non-parishioners can request a baptism at Holy Cross Parish, in which case the family will need to obtain a letter of delegation from their home parish. One of the parish priests or the deacon needs to approve the request before it can be scheduled. The Church, due to the importance of baptism, suggests that the baptism take place as soon as possible after birth, certainly within the first year of the child's life.