

**BAPTISM OF YOUNG CHILDREN
ST. ALOYSIUS PARISH
SPOKANE, WASHINGTON**

Dear Parents,

St. Aloysius Parish Community joyfully welcomes new members through the Sacrament of Baptism. With the support of the Christian community represented by the godparents, parents publicly present their child to God, pledging to provide the example and nurturing that will allow him/her to grow to full stature in Christ. Diocesan norms direct each parish to provide parents and godparents with an opportunity to renew their own understanding of Christian initiation and to renew their own faith commitment. A full copy of diocesan norms governing Baptism is available on request.

Because the whole Christian community celebrates new life in Baptism, the parish ideally celebrates Baptism in the context of Sunday Mass. This enables the entire assembly to renew its own commitment, to accept responsibility for nurturing the faith of this child and all children, and to give witness to new birth into eternal life. In this same spirit of community, preparation for Baptism is scheduled for groups of parents several times during the year. Families meet and interact with one another, develop friendships and a supportive network within the parish community for the important first years of their children's lives.

In addition to the preparation before the Baptism of your child, the parish offers help to parents as they strive to pass on the faith in their child's earliest years: religious formation activities for toddlers and preschoolers, special materials to help facilitate child and family faith development at home, information and referral to marriage and family resources. We value your suggestions for ways the parish can encourage your family's full human development.

We welcome your inquiry about preparing for your child's Christian initiation and look forward to working with you. Please review the following guidelines and schedule. Call or e-mail if you have questions or need additional information.

Yours in Christ,

Michele Lassiter
Director of Faith Formation
509-313-7009
mlassiter@dioceseofspokane.org

GUIDELINES FOR BAPTISM OF YOUNG CHILDREN ST. ALOYSIUS PARISH, SPOKANE, WASHINGTON

1. Parents who wish to present their child (up to age 7) for Baptism participate in preparation sessions with other parents to renew their understanding of Christian initiation and to deepen their appreciation of their own gift of new life through Baptism.
2. Diocesan and parish norms require that parents receive instruction on Christian initiation and help to nurture faith in the child's earliest years. If desired, parents may choose to participate in the preparation session before the birth of the child.
3. Information on the selection of godparents is included separately within this packet.
4. Because Christian initiation is the work of the whole assembly, Baptisms are ordinarily celebrated in connection with regular parish weekend liturgies. The entire assembly participates in welcoming the new members and witnessing the sacrament.
5. The ordinary celebrant for Baptism at St. Aloysius will be the priest assigned to the weekend liturgy.
6. Parents who are not St. Aloysius parishioners are always encouraged to present their child for Baptism at the local parish in which they are current members. If parents still wish to present their child for Baptism in this parish, they may do so after presenting authorization from their own parish. This recognizes the importance of active membership in the faith community in which the parents will raise their child and assures that they have been prepared in their home parish according to its diocesan and local norms.
7. Baptisms are permanently recorded in the parish in which the sacrament is celebrated. A baptismal certificate for family personal records is issued by the recording parish after the Baptism has been recorded.
8. A donation to the parish on the part of the parents for a pre-scheduled parish baptism celebration is optional—but greatly appreciated!
9. In ideal circumstances, baptism will be celebrated within the context of the liturgy or publically to invite the community of faith to witness and worship.
In situations where deployment, illness, or other extreme circumstances prevent the participation in our parish Baptisms, a private Baptism that is separate from the scheduled baptism liturgy may be scheduled. We do ask that the family works with the Baptism Coordinator to contact a priest or deacon with whom they have a relationship and coordinate several date and time options. Baptism registration and preparation class will still be required. Please note that a \$25 fee is required to cover the services of a lay sacristan. Stipends to priests or deacons you arrange to celebrate with you apart from the scheduled parish services are at your own discretion.
10. Because of the busyness of the Church calendar, clergy, and staff, we are unable to accommodate requests for private Baptisms during the Holiday seasons of Thanksgiving, Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter.

GODPARENTS FOR YOUR CHILD

Because of the important relationship that exists between child and godparent, the Church requires that parents exercise care and discernment in selecting persons to fill this role, one of support and nurturing and modeling faith.

In view of these responsibilities, Canon Law sets these ordinary qualifications for serving as a godparent:

- **age 16 or over**
- **fully-initiated Catholic Christian (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist)**
- **practicing Catholic whose life demonstrates the ability to undertake the responsibility of modeling faith for this child.**

Only one godparent is required, who must be Catholic, although two may be chosen. A non-Catholic, baptized Christian living a Christian life and holding a special place in a family's heart may participate in the baptism ceremony and be noted in the baptism register as a godparent. Parents are not able to serve as godparents for their own child.

A proxy may stand in for the godparent during the ceremony if the chosen godparent is unable to be present.

Godparents are encouraged to participate, if at all possible, in the parents' preparation program as well as in the Baptism rite in order for them to be actively involved with the child's spiritual development from the beginning. If godparents live at a distance, we encourage them to participate in Baptism preparation offered in their own parish.

If you have questions or need assistance in selection of godparents, please call Michele Lassiter at 313-7009, or e-mail mlassiter@dioceseofspokane.org.

2018-2019 PREPARATION SESSIONS AND BAPTISM LITURGIES

Celebration of the Sacrament of Baptism is preceded by a preparation session for parents, designed to prepare them for the celebration and for the challenge of helping their child grow in faith. Godparents and extended family members are welcome to participate.

Parent Session: Held in St. Aloysius Church, 7:00 – 8:00 PM

The Sacrament of Baptism: What Are We Doing and Why?

During this session, parents reflect on their own commitment and their intention to lead their child to God by praying together and experiencing the symbols and reality of the Baptismal Rite, as we “walk through” the Baptism liturgy together.

Please enter the Church through the West door (the one with the ramp, nearest the parking lot).

Baptism Liturgies

Baptisms will be scheduled to take place during a regular weekend Mass, OR if this is not feasible, at a weekend time outside of Mass. Please confirm the date and time of the baptism with the coordinator at the time of class registration. *Please arrive no later than 15 minutes before the Liturgy.*

2018-19 Baptism Preparation Sessions and Liturgy Dates

**Please see notes 6, 9 & 10 in the guidelines regarding Baptisms outside of your current parish and/or the scheduled Baptism Liturgies at St. Aloysius*

Parent Session – 7pm in the church

Baptism Liturgy – exact date & time TBD

***There will be no private baptisms scheduled during the weekend after Thanksgiving*

Tuesday, December 11, 2018

Weekend of December 15-16, 2018

***There will be no private baptisms scheduled during Advent or the week following Christmas*

Tuesday, January 15, 2019

Weekend of January 19-20, 2019

Tuesday, February 26, 2019

Weekend of March 2-3, 2019

***There will be no private baptisms scheduled during Lent or Easter Weekend*

Tuesday, April 30, 2019

Weekend of May 4-5, 2019

Tuesday, June 18, 2019

Weekend of June 22-23, 2019