

HOLY BAPTISM INFORMATION

PLEASE TAKE THE TIME TO READ OVER THE INFORMATION LISTED BELOW. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE SPEAK WITH FR. THEODOROS DIRECTLY.

WHAT IS BAPTISM?

The Sacrament of Baptism incorporates us into the Church, the Body of Christ, and is our introduction to the life of the Holy Trinity. Water is a natural symbol of cleansing and newness of life. Through the three-fold immersion in the waters of Baptism in the Name of the Holy Trinity, one dies to the old ways of sin and is born to a new life in Christ. Baptism is one's public identification with Christ Death and victorious Resurrection. Following the custom of the early Church, Orthodoxy encourages the baptism of infants. The Church believes that the Sacrament is bearing witness to the action of God who chooses a child to be an important member of His people. From the day of their baptism, children are expected to mature in the life of the Spirit, through their family and the Church. The Baptism of adults is practiced when there was no previous baptism in the name of the Holy Trinity.

COORDINATING YOUR BAPTISM

Please contact Fr. Theodoros to arrange for a meeting pertaining to the needs and requirements of your baptism. He will prepare all necessary Church documents, along with directing you to our Community Council Treasure for the collection of any Church fees. Please feel free to ask him any questions you may have concerning your baptismal service here at Holy Cross - St Nektarios Greek Orthodox Church in Barrie.

SETTING THE DATE

An individual or a family desiring to baptize their child should first contact Fr. Theodoros for an appointment. It is preferable to schedule your baptismal date with the parish priest at least two months prior to the desired date so that scheduling conflicts can be avoided. According to the official policies of our Metropolis, baptisms should not be celebrated during Great Lent along with several large feast days of the Church. However, please speak with Fr. Theodoros if you are choosing such a date.

BAPTISM: SPIRITUAL PRESUPPOSITIONS

Due to the fact that Baptism is a sacrament, it cannot be celebrated in a spiritual vacuum. This, therefore, presupposes that: The person to be baptized has never been baptized before in the Orthodox Church.

If someone has been baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, in another Church - and wish to join the Orthodox Church, they need to be baptized again. However, for Roman Catholics and Oriental Orthodox Christians, re-baptism is not required, only Holy Chrismation is sufficient to 'make whole anything that is lacking', and to join the individual to the Orthodox Church.

GODPARENTS

The "koumbaro" or "koumbara" - the sponsor who will participate sacramentally in the service by speaking on behalf of the child, or standing with the adult, as they accept Christ and renounce the devil, along with placing oil on the individual and receiving them as they come out of the Baptismal font, must be an **Orthodox Christian In Good Standing** and a steward/member of their parish.

Please note that there are **no exceptions** to this rule. To be Orthodox Christian In Good Standing, the Godparent(s):

1. Must be Orthodox Christian.
2. Actively attending the divine services on Sundays.
3. A current registered Steward/Member of a **canonical** Eastern Orthodox Parish.
4. If married, the wedding **MUST** have taken place in the Orthodox Church
5. If married in the Orthodox Church and are now divorced, they need to obtain an Ecclesiastical Divorce Decree.
6. If not married, may not be cohabitating with someone outside of Marriage.

VISITING CLERGY

Guest clergy, in Communion with the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Canada, may participate in a baptism at Holy Cross - St Nektarios Greek Orthodox Church. Canonically, it is the responsibility of the priest where the baptism is taking place to extend an invitation to any and all visiting clergy. Orthodox Christian clergymen in communion with the Archdiocese are welcome to participate in the celebration of sacraments at Holy Cross - St Nektarios with the blessings of our priest.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOTAPING

Photographs of your baptism are permitted but should not in any way impede or distract from the celebration of the sacrament. Photographers should be quiet and respectful; the use of a flash is allowed. If you are planning on professional photography and videography, please ask that your photographer arrive early at the Church so that guidelines can be laid out. Also, please ask guests to be respectful of the professional's space, for your benefit.

ITEMS NEEDED

Among the items necessary to celebrate one's baptism in the Church are the following:

- Small bottle of Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- A Cross
- A large white Candle (Lambada)
- Bar of Ivory Soap
- Large White Sheet
- Large Towel
- 2 Hand Towels
- New white clothing/Onesie