



# ST. MARGARET, QUEEN OF SCOTLAND

ST. THOMAS CHAPEL • SPRINGFIELD

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Post Office Box 100 • Albany, Louisiana 70711-0100 • 225.567.3573

01 October 2017

*The Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time*

Dearest Parishioners and Friends:

Baptism, the preeminent Sacrament of Initiation, incorporates us into Christ and forms us into God's people. This Sacrament is crucial as it pardons our sins, rescues us from the power of darkness, and brings us into the dignity of God's chosen ones; we become a new creation through water and the Holy Spirit and are indeed called to be the children of God.

From the earliest of times, the Church has understood that children should never be deprived of baptism because they are baptized in the faith of the Church – a faith proclaimed for them by their parents and godparents who represent both the local Church and the communion of believers. To fulfill the true meaning of the sacrament, children must be later formed in the faith in which they have been baptized. Christian formation seeks to lead them gradually to learn God's plan in Christ so that they may ultimately accept for themselves the faith in which they have been baptized.

Parents especially have a ministry and a responsibility in the baptism of their children. They are moved by their own faith and should prepare to take part in the rite with understanding. To accomplish this and to help parents prepare to become the "first teachers" of their children in the ways of the faith, St. Margaret presents to you these baptism policies for the preparation and celebration of this important event in the life of your child and the life of the local Church. These policies outline some essentials necessary for the celebration; they describe the role of the sponsor; they also present the creation of the new Baptism Preparation Ministry team which will visit families at their home to welcome and prepare them for this communal celebration.

I know that I speak for our entire congregation when I tell you how much we look forward to the celebration of baptisms in our Church! Your witness and reminds us that Christ is alive in these children reborn in baptism. This celebration too is an indication that there is much hope for the Gospel of Christ to spread until it reaches every corner of the world! We look forward to the Christian community welcoming your child with great joy!

Yours in the Lord,

Rev. Jamin Scott David, JCL  
Pastor



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## BAPTISM POLICIES

*“In the sacraments of Christian initiation we are freed from the power of darkness and joined to Christ’s death, burial and resurrection. We receive the spirit of filial adoption and are part of the entire people of God in the celebration of the memorial of the Lord’s death and resurrection.”* -Rite of Baptism for Children, Paragraph 1

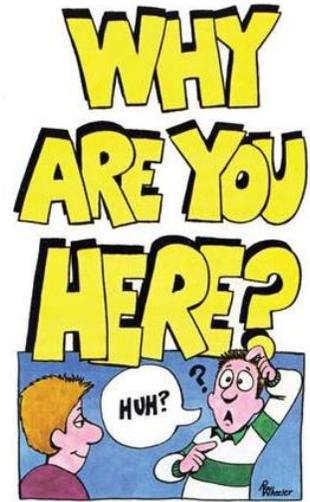
### WHY ARE YOU HERE?

You may be awaiting the birth of your child; you might be nursing a newborn; you might have a child who is several months old. No matter your stage of parenting, YOU have been entrusted with a great gift from God. As a parent, you will serve in many roles. Perhaps the greatest and most influential role you possess is being the teacher of your child in the ways of the faith.

St. Margaret is here to help you in this role. We expect you to participate (with your child!) in the celebration of Sunday Mass every weekend, and we are happy to offer you the Sacrament of Baptism. As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* notes, Baptism is “the basis of the whole Christian Life, the gateway to life in the Spirit, and the door which gives access to the other sacraments” (1213).

The Baptism liturgy invites you to think about the hopes and dreams that you have for your child and the values you want to communicate to him or her in everyday life. These hopes, dreams and values are expressed in the many choices you make as a parent, the traditions you foster in your families, and the habits and interests you cultivate in your child. These ritual actions celebrate the beginning of your child’s life as a child of God and a member of the Church. **It affirms your commitment to the**

**faith and your promise to be your child’s first catechist, being the first to hand on the faith to him or her by your Christian example. It also affirms the Church’s commitment to offer you and your child support in your role.**



### REQUIREMENTS FOR BAPTISM

Parents who desire to have their children baptized at St. Margaret need to be aware of the following requirements:

- A. Parents of the child to be baptized must be registered parishioners of St. Margaret, or they should have the permission of their pastor to have the child baptized at our parish church.
- B. Baptisms are communal celebrations and as such are held in the context of the Eucharistic liturgy. Exception to this norm is made only in extreme circumstances with the permission of the pastor.

C. No Baptisms are performed during the Lenten season.

D. Parents with children between the ages of seven (7) and seventeen (17) who are not baptized are encouraged to learn more about the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults, adapted for children (RCIC). Adults interested in baptism should also inquire about RCIA.

## THE CEREMONY

During the liturgy, expect for you, your sponsor(s), and your child to be brought up before the assembly almost immediately after the Introductory Rites begin so that you might formally present the child to the Church for baptism. After the Scripture Readings and subsequent Homily, you will return to that same place before the assembly for the celebration of the sacrament, including the Renunciation of Sin and Profession of Faith, baptism, and explanatory rites. After the General Intercessions, you will be invited to return to your seat for the remainder of Mass.



At St. Margaret, children are baptized by “infusion,” which involves the pouring of water three times over an infant’s forehead as the priest or deacon recites the baptismal formula.

## SPONSORS (GODPARENTS)

A sponsor(s) plays a vital role in the faith of the child being baptized. In order to be a sponsor (godparent), one must be a fully initiated Catholic who is in good standing with the Catholic Church and who is over the age of sixteen (16). These requirements are important since the sponsor represents the Catholic Church at Baptism and serves as a role model throughout the child’s life by living an exemplary Christian life.

Practically, this means that sponsors must be confirmed and have already received the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist; they should lead a life of faith in keeping with the function to be taken. They should also not be bound by any canonical penalty, legitimately imposed or declared, and must be in a valid marriage, if married. The mother or father of the child cannot be a sponsor. If there are two sponsors, they must be of the opposite sex.



Only one sponsor (godparent) is required in Church law. If there is a second sponsor, he/she must fulfill the same requirements as the other sponsor. If there is a Catholic sponsor, another person who is non-Catholic, but baptized none-the-less, can serve as a Christian witness. *A Catholic cannot serve as a witness. If you were baptized Catholic, but no longer consider yourself to be a Catholic, you cannot serve either as a sponsor or as a witness.* The sponsor(s) and witness must return the Sponsor Eligibility Form(s) before the home visit. Without this form, the person(s) designated will not be allowed to serve in either role.

## THE HOME VISIT

Once the Baptism Preparation Forms are completed, a member of the Baptism Preparation Ministry Team will contact you to schedule a visit to your home. These visits are important since they give the Church an opportunity to meet with you,



your family, and your sponsor(s) to discuss the important role of this sacrament but also to celebrate the upcoming baptism. These representatives will accompany you through your child's baptism; they are also available to address any concerns that you might have.



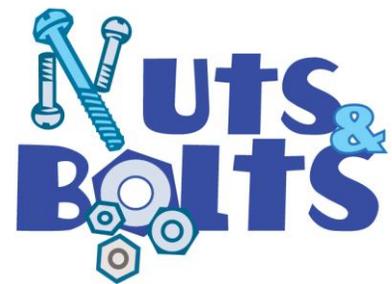
## BAPTISM SEMINARS

St. Margaret offers a preparation process for those individuals serving in some baptismal role outside of the parish. These seminars are crucial to help you understand the sacrament and Rite of Baptism. Seminars *are not* required of those who participate in the home visits by members of the Preparation Team.

Attendance at a baptism seminar *is* required for those sponsors/witnesses who cannot be part of the home visit. Sponsors who have attended a baptism seminar either at St. Margaret or at another Catholic Church within the past three years are exempt from attending. These seminars are held once monthly in the Hall of Saints.

## THE “NUTS AND BOLTS” OF IT ALL

Now that you are here, it is time for you and for the people of St. Margaret to prepare for your child's baptism. This step-by-step guide will help you to prepare for this special day in the life of your child:



1. Complete the Baptism Preparation Form and return this to the Parish Office. Be sure to include your requested date of baptism on the form! Baptisms are normatively held at any of St. Margaret's parochial Masses (Saturday 4:00PM; Sunday 8:00AM, 10:00AM, and 5:30PM) except during the Lenten season. Sponsor forms should also be returned at this time.
2. Once the packet arrives at the Parish Office and a staff member assures that everything is complete, a member of the Baptism Preparation Ministry Team will contact you to arrange a home visit at your home. Parents and Sponsors should all be present for the visit. If a Sponsor is unable to attend the home visit, he/she must attend a Baptismal Seminar either at St. Margaret or at his/her home parish.
3. A member of the Parish Staff will call you after the visit from the Baptism Preparation Ministry Team to confirm the date of your child's Baptism.
4. When the special day arrives, a pew will be reserved for your family at St. Margaret Church or St. Thomas Chapel, and your son/daughter will be welcomed into our community of faith through the saving waters of grace!

Done on the Seventh of August 2017, the Feast of St. Dominic Guzman.

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Rev. Jamin Scott David, JCL  
Pastor