

HOLY TRINITY PARISH

*incorporating the Mass centres and communities of Barwon Heads, Ocean Grove, Point Lonsdale,
and Queenscliff*

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The Sacrament of Baptism in Holy Trinity Parish

The birth of a child is cause for celebration not only within the individual families, but also within the family of the Catholic Church. When children receive the sacrament of Baptism they are welcomed into this family and reborn as children of God.

There are several key symbols in the baptismal rite that tie this first sacrament to Jesus' sacrifice and resurrection. Prior to Baptism, the priest uses special oil – Oil of Catechumens – to anoint the baby and protect them from evil. During the Rite, consecrated water is poured upon the baby's head as a symbol of purification and rebirth through Christ.

Following the baptism, the priest anoints the baby with Oil of Chrism, which symbolises the gift of the Holy Spirit. By performing the Rite, a priest liberates the child from sin, brings them into the light of God's love and prepares them for eternal salvation in heaven.

During the ceremony, the catholic parent/s make a commitment to raise their child according to the principles of the Church. They are also required to select Godparents to guide their child in life's journey. Godparents act as role models and mentors and, consequently, parents should choose Godparents who have a firm belief in God and a commitment to the teachings of the Church. When choosing a godparent at least one of them must be a fully initiated Catholic (Baptised, Confirmed and have received the Eucharist), over the age of 16 and not one of the parents. Together, parents, Godparents and the Catholic community as a whole provide an example for the baptised as they prepare for their full commitment to the Church through the sacraments of First Holy Communion and Confirmation.

Baptism usually occurs during or after the Sunday Mass, however this may vary from one parish to the next. This first sacrament is a community event for your local parish; therefore, several families may have their child baptised at the same ceremony. Prior to the Baptism, most parishes require parents to attend a preparation session/s. It is normal practice for a donation (or gift of thanks) to be given by the parents to the parish. Some parishes will give a suggested amount for this donation. The gift of thanks goes towards ongoing support of the Baptism Program (administration &

resources, cleaning & disinfecting, priest's stipend, baptism stole and baptism candle) and the general upkeep of the parish. Note: this fee is subject to change.

Where neither parent is a Catholic and they desire for their child to be baptised Catholic, the parish priest will ask to meet both parents to discuss this request. The priest will explain that for the grace of Baptism to unfold, the parents' help is important. The priest will need to ascertain that there is a 'founded hope that the child will be raised Catholic'.

If the permanent residential address of the parents is outside the parish the parents must obtain a letter of permission from that parish priest before the baptism can go ahead in our parish.

If seeking baptism for a child who is in primary school, the parish may require that you and your child attend a preparation program. These programs are very useful as they help the child to understand what will take place in the ceremony.

Baptisms take place on the third Sunday of the month, unless another Sacramental Celebration is to take place on that Sunday, e.g. The Sacrament of Confirmation. All baptisms are celebrated at Our Lady Star of the Sea Church (Ocean Grove) at 12:30pm.

For an appointment and enquiries, please contact the Parish Office.

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