



St. Benilde Catholic Church

1901 Division Street · Metairie, Louisiana 70001
Phone (504) 834-4980 · Fax (504) 831-5810
Email: stbenildechurch@cox.net · Website: www.stbenilde.org

Dear Parents

On behalf of the entire St. Benilde parish family, I would like to express our great joy to be able to join with you and your extended family in welcoming your new baby. We are happy to participate in the celebration and wonder of new life with you in the sacrament of Baptism. Our desire is to make this time very special for you, to accommodate you in every way possible, and not to place any undue burden on you.

This sacrament entails a serious obligation for parents. Because these children are too young to speak for themselves, parents must make a personal commitment to instruct their children about the Catholic faith. Even though it may be years away, it is not too early to think about what form this instruction will take, whether it be formal education in a Catholic school or through parish programs like CCD. The pledge made by those chosen as godparents to help and support the parents in this endeavor is also essential.

THE PROCESS AND THE BAPTISMAL SEMINAR

In preparation for the celebration of a child's baptism, parents are required to attend a baptismal seminar. The purpose of the baptismal seminar is to help you understand your responsibility as Christian parents, and to encourage you to honor that responsibility with a generous spirit. To you, more than to anyone else, God is entrusting the rearing of your child in the faith. He has that much confidence in you! You are required to attend one session at St. Benilde Church and that meets the requirement for your life here at St. Benilde Parish. The baptismal seminar is held on the last Monday of the month in the Parish Office and begins promptly at 7:00 p.m. For everyone's convenience it is important that the session begins on time.

Couples are generally encouraged to complete this preparation before their child is born. ***In order to be eligible to attend a seminar, the completed "Baptismal Registration Form" (which is attached to this letter) must be on file at the Parish office.*** The couple must register for a seminar by calling the parish office at (504) 834-4980.

At the baptismal seminar, data required for church records will be collected, questions will be answered, and certain issues will be addressed. The majority of the seminar will be devoted to a teaching on the nature of baptism, on the responsibility accepted by parents and godparents, and on the baptismal ceremony itself.

WHAT IF YOU HAVE ALREADY ATTENDED A BAPTISMAL SEMINAR AT ST. BENILDE?

If you have already attended a baptismal seminar at St. Benilde Church, then you are only required to ensure all the necessary paperwork is on file with the Parish Office before scheduling your child's Baptism. That paperwork includes:

- Baptismal Registration Form
- Parental Testimonial for the Sacrament of Baptism (*Must be signed in the presence of a priest or deacon*)
- Godparent Registration Form (One per Godparent)
- Godparent Testimonial for the Sacrament of Baptism (One per Godparent -*Must be signed in the presence of a priest or deacon*)
- Certificate of Birth/ Paternity Affidavit (if applicable)

GODPARENTS

The baptismal seminar is also required for first-time godparents. If the godparents live elsewhere, they may attend a session at their parish. The “*Godparent Registration Form*” along with the “*Godparent Testimonial for the Sacrament of Baptism*” must be returned to St. Benilde Parish. Please be mindful that your choice of godparents will have many implications for the religious formation of your child, not just in the immediate future, but also down through the years. To help you in making that decision, attached is a “*Guideline for Choosing a Godparent.*”

THE SACRAMENT

Baptisms are celebrated on the first and third Sunday of every month at 12:00 Noon.

Parent’s seeking a private baptism must make individual arrangements with a priest/deacon.

The date and time of a child’s baptism can only be set once all the required paperwork has been submitted to the parish office. After the date and time is set, we ask that you please call the office one week before the scheduled baptism to confirm that you and your child will be present.

OTHER INFORMATION

Single parents or unmarried couples are required to submit a Certificate of Birth from the State that declares paternity on the part of the mother and father in order for the name of both parents to be recorded in the baptismal record. If the certificate of birth from the State does not declare paternity then a signed and notarized copy of the Paternity Affidavit must be completed and mailed to the Office of Vital Records for the State of Louisiana requesting a change to the Certificate of Birth. Both parents must be listed on the Certificate of Birth in order for both names to be recorded in the baptismal record.

You may make a donation to the Church if you are able to do so, but your ability to offer a stipend or gift will not prevent your child from being baptized. The usual stipend amount ranges from \$25.00 - \$50.00. A second stipend to the officiating priest or deacon is also customary. Stipends may be given to the priest/deacon on the day of baptism.

I want to take this opportunity to congratulate you on the occasion of your baby’s birth. Remember that the parish staff and I are always here to help you to grow in our Catholic faith and pass that faith on to your children. May God continue to bless you and your family!

Commending you to the tender heart of *Our Lady of Prompt Succor* and to *Saint Louis IX, King of France*, patrons of our archdiocese, I remain

Sincerely in the Lord

Fr. Cooper

Reverend Father Robert T. Cooper
Pastor

RTC/nl

Revised 8-2013



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Guidelines for Choosing a Godparent

When a parent chooses a godparent, that person should be a committed Catholic. Being called to be a godparent is not merely a choice because of family ties or friendship rewards.

The call to be a godparent bears the responsibility of giving a spiritual witness to your child of how to live out the Catholic faith in everyday life.

As a confirmed adult Catholic, the godparent is a guide and model of how a mature Catholic ought to live. By being faithful to God's law, being active in the life of the parish, participating in Mass weekly, and living the Gospel values, the godparent can render tremendous personal support for you in faithfully passing on the Catholic faith to your child.

Requirements:

The law of the church lists these requirements for a person to be a valid and lawful godparent in Baptism:

The godparent's role is, together with the parents, to present the child for the sacrament and help him/her to live a life befitting a baptized Catholic Christian.

There may be only one male godparent or one female godparent or one of each.

To be permitted to take on the function of godparent a person must:

1. Be a Catholic in good standing with the Church who has received the three sacraments of initiation namely Baptism, Eucharist and **Confirmation** and regularly practices his/her Catholic faith;
2. Be at least 16 years of age;
3. Not be bound by any canonical penalty legitimately imposed or declared by the Church. If married, the Godparent must be in a marriage recognized as valid by the Catholic Church. *As a reminder, a Catholic must be married by a priest or deacon. A Catholic not married by a priest or deacon (i.e. civil ceremony) cannot serve as a godparent unless his/her marriage has been Convalidated. Person may not be cohabitation, or living together without sacramental marriage.*
4. Must not be the father or mother of the one to be baptized.

A Christian Witness:

A non-Catholic may act as a Christian witness alongside a Catholic godparent. This non-Catholic must be at least 16 years of age and baptized in a Christian tradition. Catholics who are non-practicing, not Confirmed, or otherwise do not qualify to serve as godparents may not serve as a Christian Witness.

Questions concerning who may or may not serve as godparents and/or Christian witnesses should be discussed with the priest or deacon at the baptismal seminar.

Revised 11-2014



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Baptismal Registration Form

Today's date _____

CHILD'S NAME _____
(First) (Middle) (Last Name)

Sex: _____ DATE OF BIRTH: Expected _____ or Actual _____ City & State of birth: _____

FATHER'S NAME _____
(First) (Middle) (Last Name)

Biological father _____ Adopted father _____ (affidavit required) Foster father _____

Religion: _____ FATHER ATTENDS MASS: Weekly _____ Monthly _____ Seldom _____ Never _____

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: Elementary school: _____ yrs. High School: _____ yrs. CCD _____ yrs CONFIRMED: yes _____ no _____

MOTHER'S NAME _____
(First) (Middle) (Maiden Name)

Biological mother _____ Adopted mother _____ (affidavit required) Foster mother _____

Religion _____ MOTHER ATTENDS MASS: Weekly _____ Monthly _____ Seldom _____ Never _____

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: Elementary school: _____ yrs. High School: _____ yrs. CCD _____ yrs CONFIRMED: yes _____ no _____

MARRIAGE: Are you married? yes ___ no ___

Please note that single parents or unmarried couples are required to submit a **Certificate of Birth** from the State that declares paternity on the part of the mother and father in order for the name of both parents to be recorded in the baptismal record.

Date _____ Church _____ Catholic: yes ___ no ___ City _____ State _____

Has either parent has been married before _____ Who _____

Provide the current status of that marriage: _____ spouse deceased _____ divorced _____ annulled

NUMBER OF OTHER CHILDREN _____ Ages: _____ SOURCE OF THEIR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: Catholic school _____ CCD _____ Other _____

CURRENT HOME ADDRESS _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

TELEPHONE: Home _____ Mother's cell phone _____ Father's cell phone _____

Mother's Email _____

Father's Email _____

Are you registered parishioners of St. Benilde Catholic Church? yes ___ no ___ If not, at which parish are you registered? _____

Has the child ever been baptized privately due to illness, danger of death, or any other reason? yes ___ no ___

Please answer yes or no to the following:

| | FATHER | MOTHER |
|--|--------------|--------------|
| Have you received the following sacraments? | | |
| Baptism | yes___ no___ | yes___ no___ |
| Holy Eucharist | yes___ no___ | yes___ no___ |
| Confirmation | yes___ no___ | yes___ no___ |
| Do you frequent the sacrament of Reconciliation? | yes___ no___ | yes___ no___ |

| | FATHER | MOTHER |
|---|--------------|--------------|
| Have you previously attended a baptismal seminar at St. Benilde Church? | yes___ no___ | yes___ no___ |

PLEASE READ THE GUIDELINES FOR CHOOSING A GODPARENT BEFORE COMPLETEING THIS SECTION.

GODFATHER NAME: _____ **TELEPHONE:** _____

Has the Godfather previously attended a baptismal seminar? yes___ no___

GODMOTHER NAME: _____ **TELEPHONE:** _____

Has the Godmother previously attended a baptismal seminar? yes___ no___

CHRISTIAN WITNESS: _____ **TELEPHONE:** _____

CHRISTIAN WITNESS DENOMINATION: _____

THE ABOVE INFORMATION IS CORRECT: _____

SIGNATURE OF PARENT

Please remember that the PARENT TESTIMONIAL FORM must be completed and signed in the presence of a priest or deacon and returned with this form.

PLEASE DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE. FOR OFFICE USE ONLY.

Baptismal Seminar: Date _____ Facilitator: _____

Attended: Father _____ Mother _____ Godfather _____ Godmother _____

Scheduled Baptism Date and Time: _____

Officiating Priest or Deacon: _____

Book No. _____ Page No. _____



ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW ORLEANS

Parental Testimonial for the Sacrament of Baptism

Date: _____

Name of Child to be Baptized: _____

Proposed Date of Baptism _____

Statement of Parent(s)

“It is my sincere hope and intention to raise my child in the Catholic faith and to do all in my power to assure through my own efforts that my child practices and grows in the Catholic faith.”

By signing below, the Catholic parent(s) solemnly swear that the statement above is a true and correct indication of their intentions.

Father’s Signature: _____

Father’s Name Printed: _____

Mother’s Signature: _____

Mother’s Name Printed: _____

Signature of Priest/Deacon Receiving Testimony