

## **Guidelines for the Reception of Baptism**

### **Baptism of Infants**

**Canon 867 § 1:** Parents are obliged to see to it that infants are baptized within the first weeks after birth; as soon as possible after the birth, or even before it, parents are to go to the pastor to request the sacrament for their child and to be prepared for it properly.

**§ 2:** An infant in danger of death is to be baptized without any delay.

**Canon 868 § 1:** For the licit baptism of an infant it is necessary that:

- the parents or at least one of them or the person who lawfully takes their place gives consent;
- there be a founded hope that the infant will be brought up in the Catholic religion; if such a hope is altogether lacking, the baptism is to be put off according to the prescriptions of particular law and the parents are to be informed of the reason.

**§2:** The infant of Catholic parents, in fact of non-Catholic parents also, who is in danger of death is licitly baptized even against the will of the parents.

**Canon 872:** Insofar as possible, one to be baptized is to be given a sponsor who is to assist an adult in Christian initiation, or, together with the parents, to present an infant at the baptism, and who will help the baptized to lead a Christian life in harmony with baptism, and to fulfill faithfully the obligations connected with it.

**Canon 873:** Only one male or one female sponsor or one of each sex is to be employed.

**Canon 874 § 1:** To be admitted to the role of sponsor, a person must:

- be designated by the one to be baptized, by the parents or the one who takes their place or, in their absence, by the pastor or minister and is to have the qualifications and intention of performing this role;
- have completed the sixteenth year...
- be a Catholic who has been confirmed and has already received the sacrament of the Most Holy Eucharist and leads a life in harmony with the faith and the role to be undertaken;
- not be bound by any canonical penalty legitimately imposed or declared;
- not be the father or the mother of the one to be baptized.

**§2:** A baptized person who belongs to a non-Catholic ecclesial community may not be admitted except as a witness to baptism and together with a Catholic sponsor.

### **Baptism of Adults and Children of Catechetical Age**

Adults and children of catechetical age seeking baptism participate in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA). This process, which includes liturgical rites, a program of formation and catechetical instruction, should be in place in each parish. Please refer to the Diocesan RCIA Guidelines for additional details.