

2018

Baptism Preparation Dates

Mon., Jan. 22, 2018, 6-8 p.m.

Sun., Mar. 18, 2018, 1-3 p.m.

Mon., May 7, 2018, 6-8 p.m.

Sun., June 10, 2018, 1-3 p.m.

Mon., July 30, 2018, 6-8 p.m.

Sun., Sept. 9, 2018, 1-3 p.m.

Mon., Nov. 5, 2018, 6-8 p.m.

** Unless otherwise notified, all preparation programs will take place in the Gathering Space of St. Mary Church, Mt. Vernon.

** Please do not bring children to the baptism preparation sessions. If you notify the parish office at least one week prior to the session, we will arrange for babysitting during the session.

2018 Baptism Dates

St. Mary the Immaculate Conception

Sun., Jan. 14, 2018, 10:00 a.m. Mass

Sat., Feb. 3, 2018, 5:00 p.m. Mass

Sun., Feb. 11, 2018, 11:30 a.m.

Sat., April 21, 2018, 5:00 p.m. Mass

Sun., May 20, 2018, 11:30 a.m.

Sun., Jun. 24, 2018, 10:00 a.m. Mass

Sat., Jul 14, 2018, 5:00 p.m. Mass

Sun., Aug. 12, 2018, 11:30 a.m.

Sun., Sept. 23, 2018, 10:00 a.m. Mass

Sun., Oct. 14, 2018, 11:30 a.m.

Sat., Nov. 10, 2018, 5:00 p.m. Mass

Sun., Nov. 18, 2018, 10 a.m. Mass

St. Barbara

By Appointment

Infant Baptism 2018

Saint Mary The Immaculate Conception Church

1550 Main Street
Mount Vernon, Illinois 62864
618-244-1559

Saint Barbara Church

4281 N Scheller Ln
Scheller, Illinois 62883



Welcome

The partnered parishes of St. Mary the Immaculate Conception and St. Barbara are very glad to welcome you as you prepare for the Baptism of your child. We are here to help you in this important event because we believe that your child's Baptism is a time for celebration and joy.

Fr. John Iffert, the parish staff, and the baptism team will guide you through the entire process of your child's baptism. We pray that this occasion will be an opportunity to renew your faith in God and to commit yourself to God and to His Church.

Understanding the Sacrament of Baptism

Christ commands us, "Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples: baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Mt 28: 19-20). Holy 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. Through Baptism we are freed from sin and reborn as children of God; we become members of Christ, are incorporated into the Church and made sharers in her mission (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #1213).

Of course, baptism is not magic. This seed of faith given as free gift from God to children, will need parents' love and care if it is to flourish. The way you live your life and faith will contribute to your child's experience of discipleship. "It is therefore, the duty of parents to create a family atmosphere inspired by love and devotion to God and humanity which will promote an integrated personal and social education of their children" (*Declaration on Christian Education*, #3)

A Sacrament of the Christian Community

Baptism is a sacrament of the whole Church. It is never private. We encourage parents to baptize their children during the Sunday or Sunday Vigil (i.e., "Saturday night") Mass. The parish schedule does allow for Baptism outside of Mass on some Sundays.

How to Prepare For Your Child's Baptism

- **Start Early**—At St. Mary's and St. Barbara's *we encourage you to begin preparing for your child's Baptism before your child is born.* As you wait for the miracle of your baby's birth, prepare to be faithful parents by considering your own relationship with Jesus and your faith practice. Commit to prayer and to an active life in the Church. After all, this is the life you are asking to share with your baby. Register for and *attend a Baptism Preparation session even before the birth of your child.* It will make the expectation that much sweeter and more hopeful. And it will allow you to have your child baptized very soon after birth.
- **Contact the Church**—Call St. Mary's (618-244-1559) or email skusmer@stmarymtvernon.org to inquire about baptism. You will receive a packet of information and a registration form that you can return to RSVP for a Baptism Preparation session. If you are not registered in the parish, we will ask you to register at this time.
- **Baptism Preparation**—Parents are required to attend a two-hour preparation session. Both parents must attend. (Exceptions are made for extraordinary circumstances.) God-

parents are also encouraged to attend with the parents. These sessions are offered quarterly. Dates for the coming year are on the back of this brochure. Parents who have already attended this session will be offered other formation opportunities.

- **Set the Date**—After completing this session, parents may schedule the celebration of Baptism.



About Godparents

The godparent (aka, sponsor) role is very important in the life of the Catholic Church. It is more than a way to recognize the affection you feel for a family member or close friend. The sponsor is a person who represents the Catholic community into which your child will be baptized. She also will help your child grow in the Catholic faith. Only a Catholic can do those things.

You may choose one or two persons to be godparents. If two are chosen, one must be male and the other female. They must be:

- at least 16 years of age;
- a fully initiated Catholic (i.e., they have celebrated Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Eucharist);
- actively practicing the Catholic faith; and

- if they are married, validly married according to the marriage laws of the Catholic Church.

A non-Catholic person cannot serve as a godparent. However, a baptized, faithful, non-Catholic Christian can serve as a “Christian witness” to the ceremony, as long as a Catholic godparent is present. The priest or deacon will make no distinction between the Catholic godparent and the Christian witness during the Rite of Baptism.

When you contact the parish we will send you information about selecting godparents, as well as material to help the person you choose to understand the importance of her role.

Immersion

Water is a primary symbol of Baptism. Baptism by immersion, in which the child is lowered into the font until water flows over the head, is the fuller use of this symbol. The Church's Rite of Infant Baptism indicates a clear preference for immersion. We encourage parents to choose Baptism by immersion. We can help answer your questions about immersion at the preparation session.

Cost

Baptism costs nothing and it costs everything. There is no fee for Baptism or Baptism Preparation in our parish. It is a joy to serve your family and to bring a child to Jesus!

On the other hand, we presume that when you ask to have your child baptized you are asking us to help you and your baby to live as disciples of Jesus Christ. Discipleship means living with an awareness that everything is a gift from God, to be returned in service to God and neighbor. To have you join us to worship God, grow in relationship with Jesus and one another, and to serve your neighbor (especially the neediest)—this is the payment we request.

Special Cases

Families who are not members of the parish may attend Baptism Preparation and celebrate Baptism at Saint Mary's if there is a family or historical connection with the parish. All that is required is a letter from your current pastor permitting the Baptism of your child here.

Adults who are not baptized should contact the parish about the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. Adults are baptized at Easter after participating in a much more extensive process of formation.

Children of school age (6 and over) are normally prepared for baptism through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Children. Parents should contact the parish and ask to speak to the Coordinator of Religious Education, Mrs. Teresa Foulks.