

HOLY BAPTISM

The entire Church, triumphant and militant, rejoices when a child is grafted on to Christ through Holy Baptism. Your decision to baptize your child in the Orthodox Church is an indication of your love for the Church and for her sacramental life. Holy Baptism is the cleansing of one's soul from the sin of Adam and Eve. It is also the initiation, if you will, of the child into the Church which has been instituted by Christ Himself, when He was baptized in the Jordan river by John the Baptist. This sacrament actually has within it three sacraments, Holy Baptism, Holy Chrismation, and Holy Communion. Holy Chrismation is the imparting of the gifts of the Holy Spirit to the child, and thus fills the void which is created when we wash away the sins of Adam and Eve and our own individual sins.

COORDINATING YOUR BAPTISM

Please contact the priest or the office administrator in the office to arrange for a meeting pertaining to the needs and requirements of your baptism. They will prepare all necessary Church documents, along with the collection of any Church fees. Please feel free to ask our priest any question you may have concerning your baptismal service here at St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church in Winnipeg.

SETTING THE DATE

An individual or a family desiring to baptize their child should first contact the church office to schedule an appointment with the parish priest. It is preferable to schedule your baptismal date with the parish priest at least three months prior to the desired date so that scheduling conflicts can be avoided.

According to the official policies of our Archdiocese, baptisms should not be celebrated during Great Lent along with several large feast days of the Church. However, please speak with the priest if you are choosing such a date. Please download the fill out the Baptism Preparation Form and bring it with you to your meeting with the priest.

BAPTISM: SPIRITUAL PRESUPPOSITIONS

Due to the fact that Baptism is a sacrament, it cannot be celebrated in a spiritual vacuum. This, therefore, presupposes that:

1. The person to be baptized has never been baptized before in the Orthodox Church.

If someone has been baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, in another Church - and wish to join the Orthodox Church, they need to be

baptized again. However, for Roman Catholics and Oriental Orthodox Christians, re-baptism is not required, only Holy Chrismation is sufficient to 'make whole anything that is lacking', and to join the individual to the Orthodox Church.

GODPARENTS

The “koumbaro” or “koumbara” - the sponsor who will participate sacramentally in the service by speaking on behalf of the child, or standing with the adult, as they accept Christ and renounce the devil, along with placing oil on the individual and receiving them as they come out of the Baptismal font, must be an Orthodox Christian "In Good Standing" and a steward/member of his/her parish. "In Good Standing" means that they may not have gotten married outside the church or participated in any foreign sacraments, as this would excommunicate them from the Orthodox Church. They are charged with being the spiritual parents of those baptized, to raise them in the Orthodox Church. If one is not Orthodox, then this role cannot be fulfilled.

If the “koumbaro” or koumbara”, is from another Orthodox parish, they must provide proof from his/her parish priest certifying his/her active stewardship/membership in the Church.

Requirements to Serve as a Godparent

- Must be an Orthodox Christian
- Must be a registered member of an Orthodox Church.
- If married, must be in an Orthodox Church.
- If married in the Orthodox Church and are now divorced, they need to obtain an Ecclesiastical Divorce Decree.

- A parishioner may serve as a sponsor in another Parish by presenting a letter of good standing from his or her home Parish Priest.

The Godparent anoints the child with blessed oil during the ceremony. By participating in the sacrament in this manner, the Godparent is making a pledge to guide and support their Godchild.

VISITING CLERGY

Guest clergy, in Communion with the Orthodox Church, may participate in a baptism at St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church. Canonically, it is the responsibility of the priest where the baptism is taking place to extend an invitation to any and all visiting clergy. Orthodox Christian clergymen in communion with the Archdiocese are welcome to participate in the celebration of sacraments at St. Demetrios with the blessings of our pastor.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOTAPING

Photographs of your baptism are permitted but should not in any way impede or distract from the celebration of the sacrament. Photographers should be

quiet and respectful; the use of a flash is allowed. If you are planning on professional photography and videography, please ask that your photographer arrive early at the Church so that guidelines can be laid out. Also, please ask guests to be respectful of the professional's space, for your benefit.

ITEMS NEEDED

The following items are either provided by the parents or the Godparents. • Cross & Chain

- White Outfit for after the Service
- A Small Bottle of Olive Oil
- A Bar of Ivory soap • 1 white hand towel
- 1 Large White Bath Towel - (If a double baptism – bring 2)
- 1 Large Candle- (If a double baptism – bring 2)
- Optional additional smaller candles for Children to participate in a procession

DAYS WHEN BAPTISMS ARE NOT PERMITTED

Baptisms may not be performed from Christmas Day through the Feast of Theophany (December 25-January 6), during Holy Week, or on any of the Great Feastdays of the Lord.

WASHING OF THE CLOTHES & BABY/ ADULT AFTER THE SERVICE

Due to the fact that Holy Oil has been spread upon the child/ adult and is seeped into the clothing and towels, care must be taken when washing everything. When bathing yourself, or your child for the first time after the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, please do so in a tub which does not empty into the sewer system. Rather, when you are finished, you can empty

the water, together with the Holy Oil around the foundations of your house, in the flower gardens or any place outside where people do not step. The same holds true for washing the towels and clothing.