

Requirements for Having Infants Baptized in the Cathedral Parish of St. Augustine, Florida

The Cathedral Parish in St. Augustine, Florida has responsibility for the celebration of the Sacrament of Baptism at the following places: (1) the Cathedral Basilica of Saint Augustine, (2) Saint Benedict the Moor Catholic Church, (3) the Mission *Nombre de Dios* and the Shrine of Our Lady of La Leche.

Church law requires that the Sacrament of Baptism be celebrated in the parish at which the family is registered/practicing. Should you request your infant child¹ be baptized in the Cathedral Parish, the following requirements must be completed:

1. If you are members of the Cathedral Parish of St. Augustine, you should be registered and practicing the faith by attendance at Mass and participation in the life of the parish for at least six (6) months prior to the request for Baptism.

If you are coming from another parish other than the Cathedral Parish, you must obtain a letter signed by the pastor (or his delegate) of the parish at which you are registered and practicing giving the Cathedral Parish permission to celebrate the Baptism of your child. This letter must also state that the parent(s) have attended a Baptism Preparation Seminar.

2. Please complete the “Baptismal Preparation Form” – <http://thefirstparish.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Baptism-Preparation.pdf>. Please bring this form with you to the Cathedral Parish’s Baptism Preparation Seminar or send it to Cathedral Rectory by mail, email or FAX.
3. When choosing Godparents, the canonical laws of the Church are specific and must be followed:
 - Each child is to have two Godparents – one male, one female.² Church law prefers that each should be (1) a practicing Catholic. In addition the Godparents are to (2) be at least 16-years-old, and (3) have received the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist. If married, the marriage of each Godparent must be able to be recognized by the Catholic Church.³
[P.N. – One Godparent must meet all the above requirements.]
 - Should only one Catholic Godparent be chosen, then the other Godparent must be a practicing Christian and be at least 16 years old.⁴
 - Each Catholic Godparent who is not a registered member of the Cathedral Parish of St. Augustine must obtain a letter/document from the parish at which he/she is registered and practicing stating that he/she may serve in the role of Godparent.

¹ Children under the age of 7-years-old.

² Some cultures have multiple Godparents/Sponsors. However, only two names may be placed in the parish’s Baptismal Register – one male, one female. These names must meet the requirements as set forth.

³ Catholics must be married according to the laws of the Catholic Church. A Church marriage certificate can be included with the requested paperwork to determine that the Marriage is a sacramental Marriage.

For non-Catholic, Christians, the Godparent either (1) must only be married once, (2) not be in a divorce and re-marriage situation that the Catholic Church cannot recognize or (3) never have been married.

⁴ For non-Catholic, Christians, it helps that a copy of the individual’s baptism information or statement of church membership be provided. [P.N. – By Catholic Church law, a non-Catholic, Christian is listed as a “Christian Witness” in the Baptismal Register.] Non-Christians are never permitted to serve in the capacity of Godparent or Christian Witness.

All of the above documentation must be submitted to the Cathedral Rectory no less than four (4) weeks prior to the requested date for the Baptism.

As a norm, Baptisms are celebrated at the Cathedral Basilica of Saint Augustine on the first Sunday of the month during the 11:00 a.m. Mass and on the 3rd Sunday of the month at 12:15 p.m. Because of the Church's liturgical calendar, these times may have to be adjusted by the Cathedral staff. Other times may be requested but are subject to other events already scheduled in the Cathedral Basilica or at Saint Benedict the Moor Church as well as the availability of clergy to preside at the Baptism.

Requesting a Baptism at the Mission *Nombre de Dios*/Shrine of Our Lady of La Leche

The Mission *Nombre de Dios* and the Shrine of Our Lady of La Leche are not entities of the Cathedral Parish. However, should a family wish to request that a Baptism of their infant child be celebrated at the Mission *Nombre de Dios*/Shrine of Our Lady of La Leche, the Bishop of the Diocese of St. Augustine has delegated the pastor of the Cathedral Parish in St. Augustine to determine whether the request is legitimate and may be granted.

When requesting an infant Baptism be celebrated at the Mission/Shrine, in addition to the above, the following must be submitted:

- A written request from the infant's parents that the Baptism take place at the Mission/Shrine. The request, addressed to the Cathedral's pastor, can be simple and informal, but must indicate the reason for the request and include your email and phone contact information. The request may be submitted:
 - by email (cathparish@gmail.com – please put "Shrine Baptism Request" in the subject line);
 - by FAX (904-824-0761)
 - by Mail –Cathedral Basilica of Saint Augustine, 35 Treasury Street, St. Augustine, FL 32084

Scheduling of the Baptism is done through the Shrine & Mission office (904-824-2809). The Mission/Shrine staff will not schedule any Baptism until notice has been provided from the staff of the Cathedral Parish that all documents have been received. Baptisms in the Historic Chapel take place on Saturdays at 10:00 am, independent of Mass. Baptisms in the Shrine church take place on Saturdays during the 12:00 pm Mass.

The present rector of the Shrine, Rev. Ivan Carillo-Paris, ICC, is willing to officiate at Baptisms celebrated at the Mission/Shrine. However, you must contact him directly to schedule the ceremony. His email address is fathercarrilloparis@missionandshrine.org

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