

Symbols

Water is the central symbol of baptism. Because water is essential to all life, the water of baptism symbolises the life-giving grace that sustains those who have become children of God.

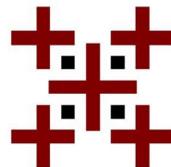
Oil is used twice in the ceremony. Before the baptism, the child's breast is smeared with the oil of catechumens as a sign of healing and strengthening. Afterwards the crown of the head is anointed with perfumed Sacred Chrism as a symbol of joy and thanksgiving.

The **White Garment** with which the newly baptised is then clothed symbolises their new life in Christ and is "the outward sign of Christian dignity".

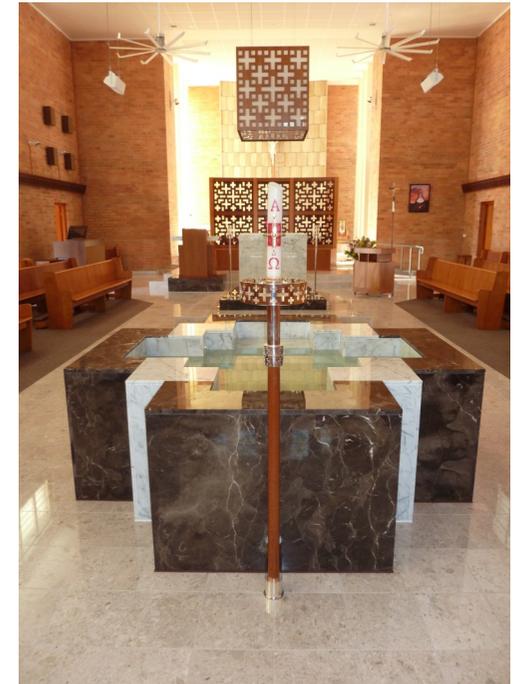
A **Baptismal Candle** is lit from the paschal candle beside the font and presented to the new member as a sign of the light of Christ.

Step by Step

1. Visit or contact the Parish Office: read the brochure provided, choose the date for your child's baptism, the introductory session and the welcoming of your child by the parish Community..
2. Nominate the godparent(s) for your child.
4. Attend the Introductory Session that will be conducted by the Baptism Team. Let the Parish Secretary know if you will require babysitting.
5. Attend the Sunday Mass at which your child is being welcomed . Remember to meet the priest before Mass begins.
6. With your family and friends, come to St Thomas' Church to celebrate the baptism of your child. Remember to bring the Baptism Candle and white garment.



The Sacrament of Baptism for Infants



St Thomas the Apostle Catholic Parish

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Baptism

Baptism is the first sacrament. It begins Christian Initiation, which will later be completed with Confirmation and First Holy Communion.

Baptism incorporates us into the Church and through it we are 'reborn' as daughters and sons of God.

Baptism is celebrated by immersion in or pouring of water and the words 'I baptise you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit'.

Parents who ask to have their children baptised accept the responsibility of training them in the practice of the faith and bringing them up to keep God's commandments. At least one parent must be Catholic.

Baptism is about being made a part of the community of faith; it not a private family occasion. Therefore baptisms are normally celebrated with several other families on the second and fourth Sunday of each month.

Parish Community

The parish community wants to welcome your child and support you in your role as Christian parents. We do this by:

Providing an **Introductory Session** which will prepare you for the celebration of your child's baptism. This session is offered on the third Sunday of each month at 9.30am and lasts about 40 minutes. It is best if both parents attend, so babysitting is available.

Welcoming your child during the 8.30am Mass on either the Sunday prior to or the Sunday of your child's baptism. This is an opportunity to attend Mass with our community.

Celebrating the baptism of your child on the chosen Sunday at 10.00am.

Other Information

Godparents (Sponsors)

A godparent or sponsor has to be Catholic, at least 16 years old, must have received the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist), and needs to live a life of faith which will be an example and support to their godchild. There must always be one godparent. Where there are two godparents one must be the male and the other female.

Costs

The parish recommends a donation of \$50.00 from parents who are presenting a child for baptism in order to provide for preparation materials and parish expenses.

Baptismal Candle and White Garment

Parents are asked to provide a baptism candle and a white garment such as a stole or bib which will be used for Clothing with White Garment during the ceremony. Please contact the Parish Office if you require assistance sourcing these items. Candles can be purchased for \$15 from the Parish Office if required.