

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.

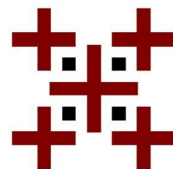
Oil is used twice in the ceremony. Before the baptism, the child's breast is smeared with the oil of catechumens as a sign of healing and strengthening. Afterwards the crown of the head is anointed with perfumed Sacred Chrism as a symbol of joy and thanksgiving.

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".

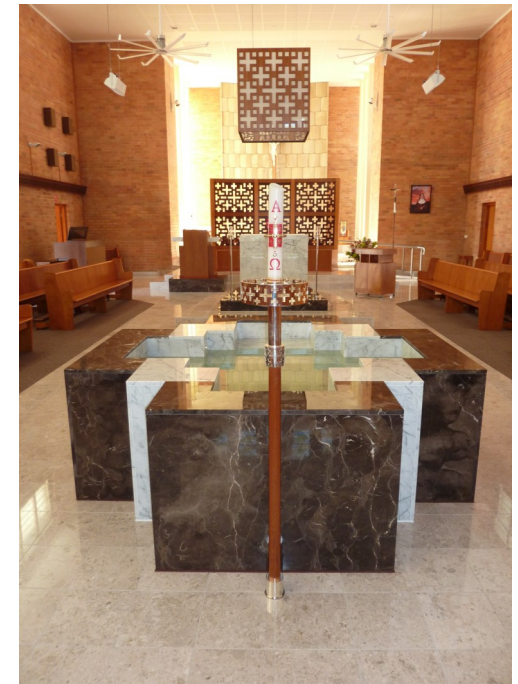
A **Baptismal Candle** is lit from the paschal candle beside the font and presented to the new member as a sign of the light of Christ.

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. Please note, at least one sponsor must be Catholic and over 16 years of age. One Sponsor, male or female is sufficient; but there may be two.
3. Attend the Introductory Session that will be conducted by the Baptism Team. Let the Parish Secretary know if you will require babysitting.
4. Attend the Sunday Mass on the morning of the Baptism where your child will be welcomed. Remember to meet the priest before Mass begins.
5. Enjoy morning tea with parishioners before returning to the 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 45 minutes. It is best if both parents attend, so babysitting is available.

Welcoming your child during the Sunday morning 8.30am Mass. This is done on the same Sunday as your baby's baptism and is an opportunity to attend Mass with our community. Godparents are also asked to attend.

Celebrating the baptism of your child on the 2nd or 4th Sunday of the month at 10.00am, or during 8.30am Mass on the 4th Sunday of each month if you prefer.

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. One Sponsor, male or female is sufficient; but there may be two.)

Costs

A donation is appreciated from parents who are presenting a child for baptism. \$75 is the suggested amount however if two children are being baptised from the same family we suggest \$125. This donation provides for the preparation materials, Baptism Candle, and parish expenses, as well as an offering to the priest who celebrates your child's baptism.

Please speak with the Parish Secretary if you have a concern about costs.

White Garment

Parents are asked to provide a white garment such as a stole or bib which will be used for *Clothing with White Garment* during the ceremony.