**San Marco Baptism Policies**

Baptism marks the beginning of the life of faith and incorporates a person into the Body of Christ.  Parents of a child to be baptized must be registered and active members of San Marco Parish for at least one month prior to requesting baptism for your child.  We recommend that you contact us prior to the birth of your child so that you have time to properly prepare for this very special event.

In presenting a child for baptism the parents accept the responsibility for training the child in the Catholic faith. They make a promise to raise the child Catholic. To help the parents understand this responsibility and what it entails, we require a baptism class of the parents prior to the baptism.

Godparents are required for the Rite of baptism. Godparents are a part of the baptism preparation program at San Marco. These persons help parents in fulfilling their responsibility to raise the child in the Catholic faith. For this reason, godparents must be practicing Catholics, at least 16 years of age, who have received Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist. Prospective godparents should attend Sunday Mass regularly and witness to their faith by receiving Holy Communion. To be a godparent a person cannot be married outside the Catholic Church. Godparents sign a form attesting to their suitability for this role. This form is also signed and sealed by the pastor at their own parish.

To schedule a baptism, we ask that the registration form be turned in and the baptism preparation class is started 4 weeks prior to the baptism date. Godparent forms must be received 2 weeks prior to the baptism date.

For parents who are not active members at San Marco Parish, we welcome you to our parish for this special event. In order to celebrate this sacrament with us, in addition to the baptism registration form and godparent forms, we will need a letter from the priest at your parish stating that you are active parishioners and confirmation that you and your chosen godparents have taken a baptism class in the months prior to the baptism.

Only parents and legal guardians can present a child for baptism and make the baptismal promises on behalf of a child.

Children age 7 and older prepare for baptism through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults adapted for children. This is a separate program with separate policies. It does not adapt well for “destination” baptisms.