

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM FOR CHILDREN UNDER 7 IN THE DIOCESE OF PUEBLO

The following indications are helpful in establishing that there is a “founded hope” that your child will be raised in the Catholic Faith.

1. Valid Birth Certificate
2. Consistent Mass attendance on Sundays & Holy Days
3. Daily Prayer
4. Documentation of godparent(s) sacraments and suitability
5. **Completed Formation for parents and godparents**
Recommended: Reborn (Augustine Institute/Lighthouse Catholic Media/formed.org);
6. Petition in the parent’s own writing or wording*
 - a.) Demonstrating an understanding of the Sacrament (i.e. based on formation content)
 - b.) Expressing desire for their child to receive the Sacrament
 - c.) Committing to continue living the Catholic Faith
 - d.) Committing to raising the child to have a relationship to Jesus
 - e.) Committing to ensuring their child receives the sacraments of Confirmation, First Reconciliation, First Communion and is prepared to discern their vocation
 - f.) Committing to ensuring their child receives proper ongoing catechesis and formation
 - h.) Laying out a Plan of Life (for ongoing Sunday Mass, daily prayer, and regular confession)
7. **Discernment Interview with Pastor or Pastor’s delegate****

*This could well be done as part of a reflection exercise during Baptism Formation or done verbally in the context of the discernment interview

** This discernment interview will focus on establishing that there is a founded hope that the child will be brought up in the Catholic religion. This could be accomplished in part by the parents telling the story of their relationship with Jesus up to this point in their life.

Code of Canon Law and Catechism of the Catholic Church

Parents are obliged to see to it that infants are baptized within the first weeks after birth; as soon as possible after the birth or even before it parents are to go to the pastor to request the sacrament for their child and to be properly prepared for it. An infant in danger of death is to be baptized without any delay. For the licit baptism of an infant it is necessary that: the parents or at least one of them or the person who lawfully takes their place gives consent; there be a founded hope that the infant will be brought up in the Catholic religion; if such a hope is altogether lacking, the baptism is to be put off according to the prescriptions of particular law and the parents are to be informed of the reason. (emphasis added, Canons 867-868; see also 849-878)

Where infant Baptism has become the form in which this sacrament is usually celebrated, it has become a single act encapsulating the preparatory stages of Christian initiation in a very abridged way. By its very nature infant Baptism requires a post-baptismal catechumenate. Not only is there a need for instruction after Baptism, but also for the necessary flowering of baptismal grace in personal growth. The Church and the parents would deny a child the priceless grace of becoming a child of God were they not to confer Baptism shortly after birth. Christian parents will recognize that this practice also accords with their role as nurturers of the life that God has entrusted to them. (Catechism 1231, 1250, 1251; see also 1213-1284) 5 6