The Journey to Baptism
Faith Formation for Parents

CATHOLIC EDUCATION WESTERN AUSTRALIA

The Journey to Baptism

Parents seeking baptism for their children do so for a variety of reasons. Regardless, it is important for them to appreciate the implications of the request. Baptism into the Christian faith carries with it serious responsibilities. It is not a step to be taken lightly, or be rushed into.

Every baptised person is a disciple of Jesus, the one who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. As the first teachers of their children, required to help nurture their children in the beliefs and practices of the faith parents need to consider:

- whose way does my life replicate?
- what are the truth's by which I live?
- how in my daily life is faith expressed and shared?
- how am I being a positive example to my children and to others?

Support their child through the ***Journey to Baptism*** process requires parents to engage in regular conversations about the aspects of faith being explored. These topics cannot be dealt with in isolation, so need to be related to everyday life experiences. It is helpful for parents to reflect individually and engage in conversation with their partners on the areas of focus being explored by the children through the ***Journey to Baptism.*** They will be invited to begin this process during Step one, when parents and children meet together with the catechists and parish priest.

Areas of Focus and related questions for consideration by parents:

Step *One* - **Initial Conversations** About God? Baptism and what difference will it make?

Step *Two* - **The Jesus Story:** Who is Jesus for me, how does the Church calendar help me deepen my understanding of the story and build a relationship with Jesus?

Step *Three* - **Called by God:** how do I relate to God, as the creator of all things? How do I recognise the way God has called me, and others to be witnesses to the Gospel message? Whom have, or will I invite to be Godparents for my child, and why?

Step *Four* - **We Believe:** The Creed expresses the truths of the Church. How well do I know these, how do they impact the way I view the world and live my daily life?

Step *Five* - **The Church Family:** What do I value about the relationships shared in my family? How is, or has the church been a family to me? How are we, as a family connecting with the Church?

Step *Six* – **The Sacrament of Baptism:** How has my understanding of this sacrament grown? How am I nurturing faith in myself and my child, through conversations, prayer and attendance at Mass?

Step Seven – **Celebrating Baptism:** How will I help my child prepare for this celebration? Whom will I invite to join us for this special milestone in our lives? What do I hope for my child beyond Baptism?

Step Eight – **Living the Christian Life:** how has the ***Journey to Baptism*** experience been for our family? Where, or about what has the most learning taken place? How will we as parents continue to nurture faith in both our child's life and our own. What are the next steps for all of us?

Growing in Faith - Opportunities for Parents...

The Journey to Baptism

Introduction for Parents/Carers

CATHOLIC EDUCATION WESTERN AUSTRALIA

The Journey to Baptism

Thank you for contacting the parish to request the Sacrament of Baptism for your child. This is not something you will have done without careful thought. The decision has implications for you as well as your child, not just in the weeks ahead, but for life. As with any important life choice, preparation is necessary to ensure expectations are met and commitment understood.

Baptism provides a formal welcome into the Church founded by Jesus Christ. Preparation for the Sacrament therefore includes exploration of who Jesus is, what his followers believe, and how that belief impacts the way they live, as individuals and members of his Church. Celebrating Baptism is the first stage in becoming a follower of Jesus, one of his disciples in the world today.

In presenting a child for baptism, parents accept the responsibility of supporting them on the journey to baptism, and beyond that the sacrament Reconciliation, then to complete initiation into the Catholic Community, Eucharist and Confirmation.

Parishes respond by inviting families to 'Come and See' what the Christian faith and life within the Catholic community offers. This happens through the Journey to Baptism; a series of steps designed to help children and their families transition into the local Church and its sacramental life.

Ensuring the child attends each of the Journey to Baptism preparation steps is an obvious parental responsibility. Equally as important are the conversations shared while helping children complete the 'take home tasks,' regular attendance at Sunday Mass and guidance in living the faith, as taught by Jesus.

The journey to Baptism is relationship based. The focus is on the heart, more than the head. At Mass each Sunday we gather to hear God's Word, and with the help of the priest, grow in understanding of the scriptures. In doing so we come to know and begin to fall in love with the person of Jesus. Being in the presence of other believers, sharing in their prayer, also enables the people gathered to grow in relationship with one another. The essence of the Christian faith is that we live out the command given by Jesus to his disciples: *'I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.* '[John 13:34] We show this love by the way we speak to and treat every person we meet. Therefore, the journey to baptism preparation happens not merely in the group sessions, but in every aspect of daily life.

Summary of parental consent and responsibility

- ***Attendance*** *at the initial Journey to Baptism Step*
- ***Ensure*** *attendance of the child at each of the Journey to Baptism step*
- ***Assisting*** *with 'take home tasks'*
- ***Conversation and example*** *in the Christian way of life, including*
- ***Sunday Mass*** *attendance, and active engagement*
- ***Meet the priest*** *to affirm readiness and arrange the date for Baptism*
- ***Attendance*** *at the Journey to Baptism Step Eight*

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The Journey to Baptism
Registration and Consent Form

CATHOLIC EDUCATION WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Parish at which the enquiry is being made: _____

Child's Details:

Given name(s)_____ **Family Name:** _____

Date of Birth: _____ **School Year:** _____

School currently attending: _____

Parent/Carer 1 Details:

Given name _____ **Family Name:** _____

Religious affiliation: _____

Celebrations: Baptism Reconciliation Eucharist Confirmation *Circle any that apply*

Mobile: _____ **Email**_____

I give consent for my child to Journey to Baptism and to uphold the responsibilities outlined:

_____ *Date:* _____

Parent/Carer 2 Details:

Given name _____ **Family Name:** _____

Religious affiliation: _____

Celebrations: Baptism Reconciliation Eucharist Confirmation *Circle any that apply*

Mobile: _____ **Email**_____

I give consent for my child to Journey to Baptism and to uphold the responsibilities outlined:

_____ *Date:* _____

Please return this form to the parish office at your earliest convenience.

If you have any queries, or would like some support with your own faith development please contact the parish by phone: *or email:*