

# Baptism Policies for Immaculate Heart of Mary Church

Crowley, LA

## **I. Baptism Preparation**

Parents expecting a child should obtain a Baptism Request Form on the Parish's website (<http://ihmcrowley.org>) or in the Parish Office.

Once the Baptism Request Form is completed, the Parents should contact the Parish office in order to speak with the Pastor of Immaculate Heart of Mary and to schedule the baptism preparation.

Both parents must attend this sacramental preparation.

## **II. Selection of Godparents**

Selecting a godparent for a child is a delicate and serious task. Not every adult who will be important in a child's life, not every family friend, not every aunt or uncle or cousin will be suitable for the role of godparent.

For good and salutary reasons, the Church lays down requirements for being a godparent. To be a godparent, one must be a baptized *and confirmed* Catholic who regularly practices the faith and can receive sacraments of the Church, especially the holy Eucharist. In order to be admitted as a godparent, one must "have the aptitude and intention of fulfilling this function."

The reason for these requirements is that the godparent must be able to give a coherent witness of the Christian life to his godchild. Strengthened by the sacraments of salvation and living the life of grace, the godparent "helps the baptized person to lead a Christian life...and to fulfill faithfully the obligations inherent in it."

From this, certain people are unable to be godparents:

- 1) those who are not baptized *and confirmed*;
- 2) those who are not Catholic;
- 3) those who do not regularly practice their faith by (at a minimum) attending Mass on Sundays and going to confession from time to time;
- 4) those who cannot receive holy Communion because of an irregular marriage situation.

The Church sets the requirements for being a godparent (and a confirmation sponsor) not in order to exclude certain people, but because the role of godparent is uniquely important and carries with it responsibilities that demand an authentic witness of Christian faith.

That said, parents and grandparents must take great care in selecting godparents and must ensure that they meet these requirements. It is always prudent to check with the Pastor of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish *before* asking someone to serve as godparent, so as to avoid any hard feelings or awkward situations.

No one has a right to be a godparent, especially one who does not meet the requirements set forth by the Church. What's more, every child deserves an authentic godparent, one who can be a guide in the ways of faith and who can give genuine and faithful witness to the life of grace.

### **III. Scheduling of Baptisms**

Baptisms are normally scheduled on Sundays following Holy Mass at 10:00 a.m. They may be scheduled on other days/times at the discretion of the Pastor of Immaculate Heart of Mary.

### **IV. Visiting Clergy**

Couples wishing to have a visiting clergy member celebrate the baptism of their child must discuss this with the Pastor prior to inviting and making arrangements with the visiting Priest or Deacon. Couples and visiting clergy will be bound by these policies.

Established: July 2017