



Maronite Baptism & Chrismation Guidelines

Congratulations on the upcoming Baptism of your child! As an aid to your preparation process, we kindly ask you to read through the following guidelines. If you have any questions, please feel free to call our pastor, Abouna Rodrigue, or to ask your questions at your next meeting with him.

Preparation

1. **The Baptism date:** Arrangements for your child's Baptism are to be made no less than 3 months in advance of the suggested Baptism date.
2. **Baptisms are celebrated:**
 - **Saturdays - 10:00am - 12:00pm or after 4:00pm**
 - **Sundays - 1:30 PM (immediately after 11:30 AM Divine Liturgy) or after 5:00 PM**
3. The parents should be registered parishioners of St. Rafka Church who regularly attend Divine Liturgy. Exceptions may be made when necessary.
4. Parents are required to fill out a Baptismal information form online. A link to the form will be emailed to the parents.
5. Parents will meet with the pastor at least once, either over the phone or in-person, prior to the Baptism.
6. Godparents must be responsibly chosen by the parents. The Church teaches that they must "help the Baptized person lead a Christian life in harmony with Baptism and to fulfill faithfully the obligations connected with it." Regarding the choosing of Godparents, the Catholic Church insists that *at least one* Godparent:
 - a. Is a baptized Catholic that has received the Mysteries (Sacraments) of Baptism, Chrism and Holy Communion.
 - b. Is a practicing Catholic, meaning, they are a registered parishioner who regularly attends Divine Liturgy in their own parish.

In addition,

- c. A Godparent cannot be the father or mother of the child.
- d. Both Godparents must be at least 18 years old.

7. In the Maronite Church, the Mystery of Chrism (Sacrament of Confirmation) is administered at the same time as Baptism. Parents should be very careful to be sure that the Sacrament of Confirmation is not received a second time when the child is older.



Instructions for the day of the Baptism

1. Please bring the child dressed in their normal outfit/clothes.
2. After the child is baptized, they will be invited to be clothed in white.
3. Please bring a clean white towel for the baptism which will be used to dry the child's head after the baptism.
4. A baptismal candle will be given to the parents at the baptism.
5. The church will provide candles for the procession at the end of the baptism ritual. Some parents opt to buy candles of their choosing.

Special Considerations

1. Other priests, relatives or friends of the couple, may join our pastor in celebrating your child's Baptism with the pastor's approval.
2. St. Rafka Church is smoke-free. Smoking and/or the consumption of any alcoholic beverages are absolutely prohibited. No beverages, except water, are to be brought into the church.
3. **Suggested offering** - St Rafka sets no fees for religious ceremonies. However, it is customary to make an offering to the parish on the occasion of a Baptism as a token of gratitude for God's blessings and favors upon you. Another offering may be given to the priest(s) performing the Baptism. There is no set amount for these at-will gifts.
4. The Baptism is to **begin on time**.
5. **Photography** in church must not distract from the Baptism. Additional pictures may be taken before or after the Baptism.
6. The use of video equipment is restricted to some designated area in the church. **No video or pictures are to be taken from the Altar area.**
7. Please **reduce unnecessary talk** and commotion in the church before and after the Baptism
8. Use of the parish social hall after the Baptism is not included with the Baptism arrangements and should be set up separately with the church office. Use of the social hall for a reception can be set up based on availability of the space. The fee for the use of the social hall is \$300.



ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I have read through, and agree to the above guidelines, and would like to have my child's Baptism celebrated at St. Rafka Church.

Name of Mother:_____

Signature of Mother:_____

Name of Father:_____

Signature of Father:_____

Name of Child:_____

Suggested Baptism Date & Time:_____