

BAPTISM

Baptism and Chrismation

Baptism and Chrismation (i.e., Confirmation) are the two Sacraments/Holy Mysteries of entry into the Orthodox Church. Through baptism the believer partakes in the Death and Resurrection of Christ and enters into a new relationship with God. Consequently, Baptisms are traditionally performed by a three-fold immersion in a baptismal font, which represents both the tomb of burial, resurrection, and the womb of the second birth into new life in Jesus Christ.

In like manner, Chrismation is considered the believer's personal moment of Pentecost; through an anointing with the Holy Myron, the priest seals the person with the "gift of the Holy Spirit". In accordance with the practice of the Ancient Church, Orthodoxy celebrates the Sacraments of Holy Baptism and Chrismation as a single complete rite.

Arrangements

Parents are encouraged to make arrangements for the baptism of their child through the Parish office. To begin, please go to the attached document (click here for the form), provide the information requested, and print or e-mail it to office@stvolodymyr.ca.

Once the office receives the form, Father Jaroslaw will reach out to provide you with guidance and to schedule a date. Ideally, infants should be baptized between 3 and 9 months of age, but this is not a firm rule. Scheduling in advance is helpful and will be of benefit for your planning.

Parents

Parents are encouraged to be recipients of the sacraments and participants in the mysteries of our liturgies. This is an expression of the life, faith, and love of the Orthodox faith.

Godparents

Godparents are adults who sponsor a child at the time of his/her baptism. They take on the responsibility of helping the child's parents raise him/her in the Orthodox Faith, ensuring that he/she takes part in the Holy Mysteries and other divine services. They know the Creed and the main prayers and hymns of the Orthodox Tradition, and are familiar with the lives and teachings of Christ and His Saints.

Because the role of the godparents is important in raising the child in the Orthodox Faith, godparents (at least one of them) must themselves be practicing members of the Orthodox Church.

Adult Baptisms

Although rare, on occasion, adults who wish to become a member of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church may be baptized. In these cases, a period of adult catechism may be required prior to receipt of the Sacrament. Please consult with our Dean, Father Jaroslaw Buciora for information and arrangements.

Emergency Baptisms

If an unbaptized child or person is in grave danger of dying through illness or injury, our parish priest can perform an emergency baptism in the home or hospital. Please call Father Jaroslaw directly at 905-855-7757.

Baptismal Certificate and Baptismal Register

At the end of the ceremony, you will be given a Baptismal Certificate. Your baby's baptism will be recorded in the Parish Baptismal Register. You will want to keep the Baptismal Certificate in a safe place as it may be needed during your child's school registration, marriage or when they become parents or Godparents.

Clothing and Items for the Service

Christening Dress: infants should be dressed in a white baptismal gown or outfit, which will allow the priest to anoint the baby's eyes, ears, back of the neck, chest, hands and feet. (It should also be easy to remove since in the Orthodox faith the child is partially immersed three times in the Baptismal font). The Baptismal garment is an outward sign of the new life of resurrection and purity of soul.

Kryzhmo: a white linen cloth, towel, or a clean white sheet, large enough to wrap the infant immediately after a three-time immersion in water. In general, according to ecclesiastical tradition, this should be new.

Baptismal Candles: traditionally pure beeswax candles are used and can be purchased from the Cathedral. These are held by the godparents during the Baptism to signify the light of Christ - the Light of the World (Jn 8:12). Jesus is the light that guides every baptized person. It also represents the flame of faith, which is to be kept burning brightly. A flame is another symbol of the Holy Spirit, which came down as tongues as of fire on Pentecost (Acts 2:3).

Cross for the infant: the godparents or parents may wish to gift the child a cross to mark the occasion of the child's Baptism. This cross will be blessed by the priest and will be a constant reminder for the child of their faith and the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

What to expect during a Baptism Ceremony

The priest will meet the child at the back of the Church where the first part of the sacrament will be held, which includes the Godparents repeating the Nicene Creed, the Christian statement of faith.

The Priest then carries the infant to the tetrapod at the front of the church. He partially immerses the baby in the baptismal font of water and says "*The child (name) is baptised the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*" Water is a sign of Divine life, grace, new birth, growth, power, deliverance, cleansing and the covenant. A cross is often displayed on the baptismal font. The cross represents Jesus, in whose name disciples are baptized.

The infant is then anointed with Olive oil rubbed on the chest of the baby and represents salvation as well as the strength and power that come from Christ our Savior. Oil of Chrism/Myron is a mixture of olive oil and sweet-smelling ointments and is rubbed on the crown of the head. It is a sign of sealing with the gifts of the Holy Spirit and represents salvation.

Small pieces of hair are snipped from the child's head and are burned during the ceremony.