

Congratulations!

You may be awaiting the birth of your child, have a newborn, or have a child who is several months or years old. No matter the stage of parenting you are currently in, you have been entrusted with a great gift from God. We are honored to join you as parents as your child begins her/his faith journey through the waters of baptism.

Baptism is an important first step and milestone in your baby's spiritual life. When the planning of your child's baptism begins, there are naturally lots of questions. We hope this brochure helps answer some of your questions. More resources are available on our parish website and feel free to contact the parish office with additional questions.

Steps to Get Your Child Baptized

Step 1

Parents and (if possible) Godparents attend our baptism preparation class. Please register in advance for the Baptism Session. You can register online or through the parish office. Visit the parish website to learn more: www.stfranchisholland.org/infant-baptism. At the session you will fill-out a register card for your child's baptism.

Step 2

Parents and (if possible) Godparents attend our Covenant Retreat (day long, on site retreat). This is a one time retreat, you do not need to participate in this retreat if you have already done so at St. Francis de Sales for marriage preparation or a previous baptism.

Step 3

Once parents have completed step 1 & 2, you may come to the parish office to register your child for baptism.

Baptism Preparation Fee

There is a \$100 baptism preparation fee, which helps cover administrative costs. It can be paid at the baptism preparation class or when scheduling the baptism date. Financial assistance is available upon request.

*Already Baptized a Child at St. Francis de Sales?

If you have baptized a child at St. Francis de Sales within the previous 3 years, you do not need to attend the baptism preparation class. You may come to the parish office to register your child for baptism.



Baptism

*Infants
2018*



*"Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven"
(Matt. 19:14)*

Contact Information

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St. Francis de Sales Parish
Holland, Michigan

Our diversity reflects the richness of our Creator.



About the Sacrament of Baptism

Baptism is “the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit, and the door which gives access to the other sacraments” [Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1213]. The liturgy of Baptism invites you to think about the hopes and dreams you have for your child and the values you want to communicate to him or her in everyday life. These hopes, dreams, and values are expressed in the choices you make as a parent, the traditions you foster in your family, and the habits and interests you cultivate in your child. This rite, or set of ritual actions, celebrates the beginning of your child's life as a child of God and member of the Church. It affirms your own commitment to the faith and your promise to be your child's first catechist, being the first to hand on the faith to him or her by your Christian example. It also affirms the church's commitment to offer you and your child support as together we journey and grow as disciples of the Lord

Jesus' immersion in the water is a sign for all human beings of the need to die to themselves in order to have new life. Jesus did not need to be baptized because he was totally faithful to the will of His Father and free from sin. However, he wanted to show His solidarity with human beings in order to reconcile them to the Father.

By commanding his disciples to baptize all nations, he established the means by which people would die to sin—Original and actual—and begin to live a new life with God.

FAQ's

When should we baptize our child?

Any child at any age is always welcomed for baptism given a commitment to raising the child according to the Catholic faith. The Church recommends that a child be baptized within a few weeks after birth; however, there can be a number of factors that delay baptism.

When is the best time to prepare for my child's Baptism?

The best time to prepare for your baby's Baptism is during the time you are anticipating your baby's birth. This will allow you time to focus on the preparation and then the addition to your family when the time comes.

How do I choose godparents for my child?

Who around you lives most like Christ in word and action? This is an important first question to ask yourself when thinking of who would serve in the important role of a Godparent. A Godparent is not meant to be an honorary title, but a role that serves as a witness of Christ second only to you as parents. They don't need to be perfect, but they should have a good prayer life both personal and within the Church. They should live out a moral life and seeks to serve the poor and lonely.

Who will pray for my child on a regular basis?

Who will help me, help my child know and love Jesus?

Godparent is a subject that is also covered in the baptism class and we have additional resources available on our parish website.

What do we need to bring to the celebration?

Often parents will bring a baptism candle and have the child dressed in a baptismal outfit. Neither needs to be fancy or expensive. The child should wear white and we have extra baptismal candles on hand.

Preparation

Baptism Preparation Session is a **one-evening session** from 5:45 - 8:30 p.m. It includes presentations and discussions of Catholic parenting, the Rite of Baptism, what it means to be a godparent, and reviews St. Francis' celebration of baptism.

Please register in advance for the Baptism Session. You can register online or through the parish office. Visit the parish website to learn more: <https://www.stfrancisholland.org/infant-baptism>

Our sessions dates are below and begin in the Gathering Space of the church. Enter through the main doors on 13th Street.

Upcoming Sessions—5:45 - 8:30 p.m.

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|-----------------|---------------------|
| ⇒ April 3, 2018 | ⇒ July 3, 2018 |
| ⇒ May 1, 2018 | ⇒ August 7, 2018 |
| ⇒ June 5, 2018 | ⇒ September 4, 2018 |
| | ⇒ November 6, 2018 |

The Covenant Program is a day-long retreat focused on the covenantal relationship between us and God. The retreat is required only once. If you have attended already, you do not need to go again. Just let us know.

Upcoming Retreats—Saturdays from 8:45 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

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| ⇒ March 17, 2018 | ⇒ July 21, 2018 |
| ⇒ May 19, 2018 | ⇒ October 20, 2018 |

Please register in advance for the Covenant Program, so that we can make arrangements for food and childcare. You can register online or through the parish office. Visit the parish website to learn more: www.stfrancisholland.org/covenant.