

# The Church of Saint Leo the Great

130 Watford Street, Brooklin, Ontario L1M 1H2  
905-655-3286 ext. 101 Fax 905-655-4519 Email [st.leos@bellnet.ca](mailto:st.leos@bellnet.ca)

## **BAPTISM INFORMATION KIT**

As a Catholic parish community we are happy for you at the birth of your child and your desire to celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism with you, your child, and your family.

### **PROCEDURE**

You are kindly asked to read carefully the information in this package and fill out the *Baptism Registration Form*. Our parish Baptismal Coordinator, Mrs. Brenda Beriault will call you to review the information on your Registration Form, set up a date for the baptism of your child, and give you information about the necessary Baptism Class which is usually held the week prior to the baptism.

### **GODPARENTS**

You are asked to pay particular attention to the attached sheet '*About Godparents*' as the Church is very clear on who can and who cannot stand as a Godparent, that there cannot be two men or two women serving as Godparents, and that the Godparent(s) (a man and a woman) must be a practicing Catholic and ready and willing to profess the Catholic faith at the Baptism.

### **DATE OF BAPTISM AND YOUR SUGGESTED DONATION**

Baptisms are usually held once per month throughout all of the months of the year. The suggested donation for baptism is \$50.00 or more.

### **BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE PARISH – REGISTRATION**

If you are new to St. Leo the Great Parish, live within the parish boundaries, or have come here by choice (but not just for baptism), you are most welcome and we urge you to consider Registering in the parish. Registration is your way of stating your intention to belong to this parish and make it your sacramental home and the place where you worship each Sunday. You are also encouraged to contribute to the considerable financial needs of your parish by taking and using either parish offertory envelopes or through the automatic debiting of your personal bank account which is the way many people pay their bills these days. Information about these may be obtained following Sunday Masses at the Welcome Centre in the church vestibule.

### **FULL PARTICIPATION IN SACRAMENTAL AND PARISH LIFE**

It is so very important in your and your child's relationship with Jesus Christ that you raise the children you have baptized in the lived practice of the Catholic faith, which means not only participation in the sacraments of Baptism, First Reconciliation, First Communion and Confirmation, but also attendance at the Sunday worship of God at the various Masses celebrated here each weekend.

### **THE GOD OF JESUS CHRIST AND YOU**

God is loving, kind, merciful and forgiving. He loves us where we are at and just as we are yet His love will not even think about leaving us there – He desires we live in right relationship with Him; that we worship Him at the celebration of Mass each Sunday and that we grow in our knowledge of Him and His holy Catholic Church. God is love but there are things He demands of us as He calls His people to follow Him in imitation of His life, in following His commandments, His holiness, His teaching and His love for all. We invite you to make this opportunity of the baptism of your child a renewal of your own Catholic faith that will, therefore, be passed on to your children, and your children's children one day.

If you would like to speak to the parish priest, Fr. Charles Forget, about baptism or for any other reason, please call the parish office for an appointment – 905-655-3286 ext. 101.

## **ABOUT GODPARENTS**

The role of the godparent(s) is an often confused and misunderstood one. It has been a belief (though an erroneous one) that the role of the godparent is such that, should the parents of the child die, the godparents assume the custody of the child. This is not only absolutely false but it also has nothing to do with the true role of a godparent. **A Godparent is one who assists the parents in the “spiritual” upbringing of their child.** The godparent should have considerable life-contact with the child to be baptized and to be actively interested in praying for and being a personal spiritual support for the child. Unfortunately, in the choosing of a godparent, sometimes a person is chosen for purely honorary reasons. It is seen as honouring the person who is asked by the parents to serve as a godparent. However, when taken seriously, this role is one that should and must reach the child far beyond the actual day of baptism. It is a role of responsibility before God, the child and the parents themselves.

It is a serious and important task that is placed before you as parents to carefully choose suitable candidates who will take seriously their role as described above. The Church teaches that “godparents are to be present (at baptism) in order to represent both the expanded spiritual family of the one to be baptized and the role of the Church as Mother. As occasion offers, godparents help the parents so that the children will come to profess the faith and live up to it. In the actual celebration of baptism, the part of the godparents is to testify to the faith, and together with the parents, to profess the Church’s faith in which children are to be baptized.”

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In choosing godparents, please consider the following:

1. The godparent you choose must be 16 years of age or older and be a fully initiated member of the Catholic Church (having received the three sacraments of initiation - Baptism, First Communion, Confirmation).
2. The person must be mature enough to carry out the responsibilities and be an active Catholic who embraces in word and deed gospel values.
3. The person must be willing to profess the Catholic Faith with the parents immediately prior to the pouring of water and should have no reservations about doing so.
4. The person must be willing to cooperate with the parents in helping to foster and nurture in the child a Catholic way of life.
5. The Church states that the child must have at least one Catholic godparent **and no more than two.** **If there are two, then one man and one woman are to be chosen.** In keeping with the Church’s teaching on parents being a mother and a father (a man and a woman), two men or two women are not permissible as Godparents even if they are not related to one another.
6. For obvious reasons, **a Christian from another tradition** (United Church, Anglican, Lutheran, Baptist, etc.) **may not be a godparent but may act as a Christian Witness,** provided there is also a Catholic godparent.
7. More than two Godparents are not necessary for any reason and the parish can only allow two Godparents.
8. **Both the Catholic parents and both of the Godparents must have and submit to the parish of St. Leo the Great a copy of their Baptismal Certificate** proving that they are indeed baptized Catholics.