



**THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF NORTH HARBOUR 2019 Program  
Preparation of Young Children (aged 7 – 11 years) for Baptism**



**'My child wants to become a Catholic.  
'I want my child to become a Catholic. What do I do now?'**

We welcome your enquiry and look forward to understanding more about you and your child and the events which have led to this request to become a Catholic.

The Catholic Church is a world-wide family of believers who follow the ways and teachings of Jesus Christ. Catholics share a distinct way of life characterized by certain beliefs, values and patterns of worship. The Catholic Church is not just a 'what' (a religion) but a 'who' (a people, a community).

Becoming a Catholic is a serious commitment and entails certain obligations. It is not simply a 'membership badge', but a commitment to a community and a way of living.

**Step one:** Become acquainted with our parish community (if not already). One of the best ways to do this is to start coming to the Sunday Mass with your child. At the Sunday morning 'Family Mass' (9:00am at St Cecilia's and 9:30am at St Kieran's) Children's Liturgy is celebrated with some special activities for the children to teach them about Jesus and to involve them in the parish community. Encourage your child to join in with the other children as invited by the priest, you can also join them at the Children's Liturgy.

**Step two:** If you have been coming to church for a while and your child is still keen to be baptised you can contact the Family and Sacramental Coordinator and submit a 'Baptism Enrolment' form (available from the parish office, Church foyer or parish website).

**Step three:** After meeting with the priest or talking with the Sacramental Coordinator, if Baptism is considered an appropriate step, we will invite you and your child to attend our Baptism preparation sessions for young children who are preparing to be baptised.

**Step four:** During the preparation sessions we encourage you to continue to bring your child to Mass and to participate in Children's Liturgy. In this way they continue to learn about Jesus and to develop the habit of coming to Church and mixing with their Catholic peers.

**Homework for the Parents**

Before your child comes to the first Baptism session, we ask that you chat with them about their name... how did you choose their name? Is there a story behind it? Are they named after someone? Do you know what their name means?

**Godparent/s**

The child to be baptised must have at least one godparent who is a fully initiated, practising Catholic over the age of 16. The godparent/s stand beside the parents during the ceremony. Their role is to support the parents in raising their child in the Catholic faith. They are called to take a special interest in their godchild's personal and spiritual development.



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*Commencing March and September 2019*

| <b>Date and Time</b>   | <b>Location</b>  | <b>Preparation</b>  | <b>What happens</b>   |
|--|--|---|---|
| <b>17 March 2019 &amp;<br/>15 September</b><br>@ 10.30am     | <b>Parish Centre<br/>@ SK</b>                          | <b>Session 1</b>  | <b>Introduction to Baptism.</b><br>The children learn about what it means to belong to the family of Catholics, and how God calls each of us by name.   |
| <b>24 March 2019 &amp;<br/>22 September</b><br>@ 9.30am Mass | <b>SK Church</b><br><br><b>SK Church @<br/>10.30am</b> | <b>Presentation<br/>and Anointing</b><br><br><b>Session 2</b> | The children who are preparing for baptism are presented to the parish community during Mass and are anointed with sacred oil.<br><br>The children learn about the symbols of Baptism, and practice what will happen at the Baptism ceremony. |
| <b>31 March 2019 &amp;<br/>29 September</b><br>@ 11:30am     | <b>SK Church</b>                                       | <b>Baptism</b>  | The children who have attended the preparation sessions are baptised.   |

**What's happened and what's next**

The children are Catholics now! Like the other Catholic children, they continue to learn about Jesus and pray at Mass, go to Children's Liturgy of the Word and join in Catholic Scripture classes if they attend State Schools.

The children continue in the Children's Sacramental Program and receive the Sacraments of Confirmation, Reconciliation and First Communion. Further information & enrolment details are available on the parish website and in the bulletin during the enrolment period.

**Parents teach and model the Catholic faith**

A child being baptised will need support to grow into this commitment and way of life. Usually this support comes from a child's Catholic parent/s who are raising their child to be Catholic. **In a situation where neither parent is a Catholic, it is important that Fr Dave discuss with you what support is available to your child. You can arrange a meeting with Fr Dave through the parish office on 9949 4455.**

The baptism ceremony is a special family time. It is also special for our parish community, because baptism is the time when the Christian community welcomes a new member into its midst.

Please contact Janette Davidson at [sacraments@northharbourcatholic.org.au](mailto:sacraments@northharbourcatholic.org.au) or on 0408 866 521 if you have any questions/need clarification.