

The Parish of Saint Philip Neri

Diocese of Strewsbury

Baptism
Baptism

In the parish of

Saint Philip Neri



The Parish of Saint Philip Neri

Diocese of Akenbury

Baptisms

We are delighted that you are considering having your child baptised at St. Michael and All Angels or St Joseph's. Fr. Chris, or one of the Deacons conduct the rite of baptism throughout the year on Sunday afternoons. We hold meetings for you on the first Wednesday evening, to get to know you, and talk about baptism, and make sure you are familiar with the rite before your child is to receive the Sacrament of Baptism.



There does seem that there is so much to do.

Planning your baby's baptism

Some people think of baptism simply as something else to 'get done'. They speak of baptism as having the baby 'done' and we find that's very sad. For baptism is a birth into the Christian community and is all about our relationship with God. It is in every way as solemn and important as the birth of your child itself. It's an event that needs to be prepared for.

Your faith is important; the most important preparation you can make is to look at your own faith do you still attend Mass? How often do you practice? Your baby will be born with your features and will pick up your mannerisms. As he or she gets older your child will grow up, too, with your faith. That is why, when you approach the church about having your child baptised you will be encouraged to think through your own faith and the part it plays in your life. The very fact that you have asked to have your baby baptised shows that you recognise the importance of God in your life.

From the earliest day's children too young to answer for themselves have been baptised, usually as they accompanied their parents into the Church. For the church recognises the desire of Christian parents to share the life of Christ with their children. Jesus Christ, like you, wants the best for your child.

An important point to bear in mind is that you will need one Catholic godparent for the baptism of your child and the choice that you make should be very considered. They are there not only to encourage you in your faith but also to ensure that their Godchild is being prepared properly in their faith by yourselves. Your baby's baptism is a time for celebration and joy. And, naturally, you want the best for your baby. We want to help you plan and prepare for the baptism in the best possible way. Please read through the following information.

If as parent within a Catholic relationship you have not been baptised, and are interested in learning more about the Catholic faith, please have a word with whoever of the parish clergy you meet with.

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What is Baptism?

Firstly God frees us from sin and brings us into new life. For adults that is easier to understand but when we are talking about the baptism of a baby a few weeks old, this sounds very negative. "How can a baby sin?" But sin is more than breaking rules. Sin describes all the darkness, selfishness, evil and wickedness in the world. It's easy to point fingers at others, but occasionally we too are responsible. As Christians we believe in a better world without hurt and harm, without selfishness and sin. But being realistic we could never achieve this on our own. So God comes to our aid, walks with us, living our lives with us, helping us to overcome our frailties and find a better way through his gift of grace.

This is the gift we offer children at baptism, God becomes part of the story of their lives, to help them now, and even more so in the future, to be people of light in this dark world.

Signs and symbols of baptism

Welcome of the Child. Your child is welcomed at the beginning of the service on behalf of the family of the church. At this time parents and godparents, promise to fulfil their obligations to bring the child up in the faith.

Sign of the Cross A sign on something shows its origins or ownership. The sign of the cross is the mark of Christians for Jesus Christ died on the cross. Parents and godparents trace it on the child's forehead to show that the baby belongs to Christ, who now offers his help and grace to face and overcome the sufferings of life.



Water This is for cleansing and is a sign that our sins are washed away. Baptism cleanses us of original sin with which we are all born and, in the baptism of adults, of every sin committed prior to baptism. Water is also necessary for life and so is a sign, too, that the life of the risen Christ is ours.

Oils Oil of Baptism is olive oil rubbed on the breast of the baby, just as athletes used to rub themselves with oil to strengthen and prepare for the fight ahead. Oil of Chrism is a mixture of olive oil and balsam (sweet-smelling ointment) and is rubbed on the crown of the head. It is a sign of sealing with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The profession of faith, which you make on behalf of your child at baptism, will later be confirmed personally by your child in the Sacrament of Confirmation when Oil of Chrism will be used again. The oils are blessed by the Bishop around the time of Maundy (or Holy) Thursday.



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White Garment This garment (usually a shawl) reminds us of the swaddling clothes at Christ's birth and the brilliance of his ascension to heaven. It is representative of the new clothes worn by Christians after baptism in the first centuries. It is a sign of innocence and the new life of resurrection.



Candle These symbolise Christ as the Light of the World. The baptismal candle is lit from the paschal candle, which stands near the altar. This is lit at the Easter Vigil bringing the church out of darkness of death as a sign of the risen Christ. The baptismal candle reminds us that the light of Christ has entered the child's life; and its flame symbolises the flame of faith, which will burn through the life of your child. This flame needs to be nurtured and kindle, throughout their life.



Baptismal Register Your baby's baptism will be recorded in the parish Baptismal Register. In the years ahead proof of baptism may be obtained in the form of a certificate issued on the basis of this registration. Your child's confirmation, marriage or ordination will also be noted alongside this entry in the register.

What are the Baptismal Promises?

We baptise children in the faith of the parents and godparents this means that you must be prepared to stand up and publicly declare your faith to reject sin and profess your faith in Jesus Christ.

The Deacon or Priest asks six simple questions.

- Do you reject Satan?
- All his works?
- All his empty promises?

- Do you believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth?

- Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified, died, and was buried, rose from the dead, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father?

- Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sin, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting?

Baptism is a wonderful occasion to celebrate the birth of your child, but is also a time to think about your relationship with God and the Church. Get to know the Parish Priest and Deacons,

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the parish community, and allow them to help you. If you have any questions about baptism or any aspects of church life or worship then please get in touch.

You can contact us here at St. Michael and All Angels by phone, e-mail or calling at the presbytery in person. Fr. Chris, Deacon's Pat and Paul will be more than willing to talk with you over any concerns that you might have.

I wish to have my child baptised, so where do I start?

Obtaining permission from your parish priest

If you live outside the parish you must first obtain permission from your Parish Priest. If there is any problem do not hesitate to contact any of the clergy here at St. Michael and All Angels.

Pre-Baptism Sessions

There is a meeting on the **First Wednesday of every month at 7:00pm for all parents** of children to be baptised in the next 30 days or beyond at which there is an opportunity to meet not only the clergy but other members of the parish in the same position as well as go through what is involved on the day. Please telephone the Presbytery on 0151 652 5767, or you can call into the Presbytery Tuesday to Thursday 10:00am – 3:00pm, or speak to us after mass over the weekend in order to collect an application form and register for one of the monthly meetings.

Choosing a date

Before booking a date for your child's baptism you must attend a meeting the pre-baptismal session, after which you will be able to request a date on which the Baptism is to take place. Baptisms are usually held every Sunday at 11 am, unless a special appointment has been arranged.

Baptism receptions

If you are considering a get together, following the Baptism service, you may wish to consider the St Joseph's Parish Centre. They can be contacted on 0151 652 8587 evenings after 7pm.

Choosing the Godparents

As mentioned earlier the requirement is one Catholic Godparent, a second may be chosen Any other person asked to act as a Godparent should be a believing practising Catholic. During the ceremony godparents promise to help the parents to bring up the child in the Catholic faith. Therefore they should take this responsibility very seriously.

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On the day of the Baptism

Getting to Church

You may wish to provide the following information to your guests, particularly those coming some distance.

St Michael and All Angels, New Hey Road, Woodchurch. CH49 5LE

St Joseph's, Willowbank Road, Birkenhead. CH42 7JY

Car parking

There is a car parking at both the churches.



Timing

The service commences at **11 am**. Parents, godparents and their guests are requested to arrive approximately 10 minutes beforehand. Whilst yours might be the only Baptism that day this cannot be guaranteed. We endeavour to limit the number of Baptisms to a maximum of three, unless the occasion arises when relatives wish to have baptism at the same occasion.

Young Children

There are always young children at Baptism ceremonies. Do encourage them to enjoy the service and to join in when appropriate, a Baptism is a happy time for everyone. Parents and guardians however, are requested not to allow children to enter the Sanctuary, the carpeted area between the altar rails and the altar. Male visitors of all ages are requested not to wear hats or caps.

Charges

The church does not charge for the Sacrament of Baptism however, **it is the custom to make a donation** to the priest or deacon. There is no sum laid down, it's up to you how much you give on this occasion, bearing in mind your own financial situation and the other expenses that you might go to in making this occasion a celebration. A considered donation by yourselves will be accepted.

Baptism Certificate

We do try to have the Certificate of Baptism ready for you on the day but if circumstances arise and this is not possible please ensure that you collect your child's Baptism certificate from the presbytery. It can be collected in the days following the service, by arrangement. **NB.** The certificate must be retained safely as it will be required later, when applying for a place at a Catholic school, hopefully our own parish school, and also before the sacraments of First Holy Communion and Confirmation.

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Ref:

APPLICATION FORM

proposed date

Please complete and return this form. One of the clergy team will make an appointment to meet with you prior to the proposed date of baptism. If you live outside the Parish you must obtain the permission of your local Parish Priest before making the application. If there is any difficulty, do not hesitate one of the clergy here at Saint Philip Neri.

(Please note that the details given below will be used in the Parish Database and in completing the Parish Official Records. Please print clearly.)



Childs Surname:

Childs Forenames:

Childs Date of Birth

Father's Name (in full):

Mothers Name (in full):

Fathers Religion:

Mother's Religion:

Mother's Maiden Name(nee):

Place and town of Marriage:

Your Present Address:

Post code:

Contact Tel. No:

Email:

Full Name(s) of Godparent(s):*

God Father(s):

Godmother(s):

* The minimum requirement is one confirmed Catholic Godparent over the age of 16 years. Any other person asked to act as a Godparent should also be a believing and practising Catholic.

We, as parents, ask of God's Church the gift of Baptism for our child. With God's help we accept the responsibility of bringing up our child in the practice of the Catholic Faith.

Signed: Father: Mother:

Proposed Date of Baptism: Time:

There is no charge made for Baptism by the church but it is the custom to make a donation to the clergy. There is no sum laid down, it's up to you how much you give, bearing in mind your own financial situation. Please make any offering in a sealed envelope marked Baptism.