

St. Clement's Church
Redemptorist Fathers
231 Lake Avenue
Saratoga Springs, New York 12866-2729
www.scpny.org

Office of the Pastor
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Dear Parents:

When the Virgin Mary became the Mother of Jesus she cried out in prayer: *"God who is mighty has done great things for me"* (**Luke 1:49**). The birth of a child is one of God's greatest miracles. As you celebrate the birth of your child may you also take time to echo Mary's prayer and rejoice in the God who has done great things for you. We here at St. Clement's share in your joy and extend our prayers and best wishes to you and your family.

As you prepare to have your child baptized, I invite you to reflect upon your own baptism. If you were baptized, as an infant, you only know about it through pictures, video and your baptismal certificate. Your baptism was a special moment of grace for you that made you a precious child of God, freed you from the power of sin and has made you a member of the Church. As your parents were the first teachers of the faith to you, by asking to have your child baptized you will now be the first teachers of the faith to your child. You are now asking to have your child share in this beautiful gift and to be part of a wonderful Church family. It will be the example of your own faith that will allow the faith of your child to grow. When the priest presents you with the lighted candle during the celebration of baptism, he says to you: "This light is being entrusted to you to be kept burning brightly ..." Living the light of your baptism will teach your child to live in the Light of Christ as well.

Baptism brings your child into the family of the Church. We welcome you and your child to the St. Clement's Community with the peace of Christ. Please know that our entire staff and I are here to help you in any way that we can. Never hesitate to ask for our prayers and assistance. We not only celebrate with you now but we looking forward to walking with you in faith as you child grows. We stand ready to assist you.

May God bless you and may God's Spirit be with you to guide you in your vocation as Christian parents.

Yours in Christ the Redeemer,
Rev. George J. Blasick, C.Ss.R.
Pastor



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**POLICY REGARDING THE CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM
FOR INFANTS AND CHILDREN**

There is an instruction of the Church for the Sacrament of Baptism that tells us:

“Before the celebration of the sacrament, it is of great importance that parents, moved by their own faith or with the help of friends or other members of the community, should prepare to take part in the rite with understanding. They should be provided with suitable means such as booklets, instructions, and catechisms written for families...” **(Paragraph 5.1 of the Rite of Baptism for Children)**

The following policy has been developed here at St. Clement's to meet your needs in preparing for your child's baptism in light of the above Church instruction. It is designed to provide parents with the best preparation and support in meeting the responsibility of this beautiful Sacrament.

MEMBERSHIP IN THE CHURCH

Through the Sacrament of Baptism, we become members of the community of the Church and a specific parish family. If you are not registered with this parish family, we will help you to register. As a member of this parish family, it is expected that both parents attend Sunday Mass each and every weekend, since during the Baptismal Rite you will make a commitment to raise your child in the practice of the Catholic faith. The names of the newly baptized are published on the Sunday bulletin on a monthly basis and the parish family will be welcoming their new members. By nurturing your faith, the faith of your child will be nurtured as well.

THE GODPARENTS

The role of the Godparents is to assist the parents in raising the child as a Catholic. Because they are models of living the Christian faith for your child, each Godparent needs a letter from their Pastor/Home Parish stating that they are a Catholic in good standing. This letter is required for all Godparents. If you need help in choosing the best Godparents for your child, we are available to offer advice in this important decision. The Godparents are required to attend the Faith Formation Session, with the parents, the day before the celebration of the Sacrament.

Some points from Church Law as you prepare to choose the Godparents for your child.

- There is to be only one male sponsor or one female sponsor or one of each;
- have completed the sixteenth year of age or the pastor or minister has granted an exception for a just cause;
- be a Catholic who has been baptized and confirmed, one who leads a chaste life in keeping with the teachings of the Catholic Church;
- A baptized person who is not a member of the Catholic community may serve as a Christian witness provided that the other Godparent is a member of the Catholic community.

THE INTERVIEW

Preparation for the Sacrament of Baptism begins with the interview with the Pastor, one of the parish priests or one of the deacons assigned to work in the parish. The purpose of the interview is to get to know the parents and to determine the level of church support needed to enable the parents to raise the child in the Catholic faith.

BOTH parents are expected to attend the interview. These interviews need to be scheduled in advance by calling the Parish Center at 584-6122 during regular business hours. The interviews are ordinarily held once a month on a Saturday

THE INTERVIEW (continued)

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at 10:15am. (Please check schedule for exact day of Interviews.) We begin with a prayer service in Our Lady's Chapel in the Parish Center. You will meet other parents who are seeking baptism for their children and parents who are currently raising their children in the faith. Please refer to the attached schedule for dates and time of the Interviews, Faith Formation Sessions and Celebration of the Sacrament of Baptism.

We ask that you bring your child's birth certificate to the interview as the documentation on it is used to develop your child's Baptismal Certificate, which is a legal document and needs to be accurate.

FAITH FORMATION (BAPTISMAL INSTRUCTION)

All sacraments are preceded by Faith Formation Sessions. Baptism is celebrated on the Third and Fourth Saturday of each month. Since Godparents are required to attend the Faith Formation Session along with both parents, these sessions are held on Saturday, from 10:15am until 12noon in Our Lady's Chapel in the Parish Center. Ordinarily, the priest or deacon who will be the celebrant of the Sacrament of Baptism will be the instructor of the session. We kindly ask that you arrive on time for these sessions. You are also welcome to bring your child along to the session. The celebration of Baptism will only be held when all members have completed this Faith Formation Session.

CELEBRATION OF BAPTISM

The St. Clement's parish family celebrates Baptisms on the 3rd and 4th Saturday of the month at 11:00am. Ordinarily no more than four infants receive the Sacrament at one time. No baptisms take place during the Church Season of Lent. No baptisms are permitted outside this schedule except for an emergency or with permission from the Pastor.

DONATIONS

We recommend a minimum donation of \$25 to help with the costs of materials and supplies provided for the celebration of this Sacrament. Special envelopes will be provided for your donation at the time of the Interview. Your contribution is greatly appreciated.

CHILDREN OF SCHOOL AGE

Parents of children who are 5 – 7 years of age are asked to contact the Office of Faith Formation at 587-3611 to register your child for weekly classes. When the parents and Coordinator of the Faith Formation Program decide together that the child is ready to be baptized, a preparation session for the child and parents will be scheduled with the Coordinator. The parents will also be expected to complete the requirements for an infant's Baptism as stated above. Children who are older than 7 years of age will enter the RCIA process in preparation for receiving the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist). Please contact the Coordinator of the Faith Formation Program at 587-3611 to schedule an entrance interview.

FINAL NOTE

Thank you for inviting the faith community of St. Clement's to share your responsibility in raising your child as a Catholic Christian. We take this partnership seriously and will be available to support and assist you along the way. While we certainly do not wish to make the Celebration of the Sacrament of Baptism a difficult experience, we do want to make it a meaningful one for each of you. We are always available as your brothers and sisters to help and support you in Christ.

On behalf of the St. Clement's family of faith we thank you in advance for walking with us through this process. *May God bless you and your children with abundant life!*

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INFORMATION FOR BAPTISMAL REGISTER

Name of Child: _____ M () F () _____

Address: _____

City: _____, State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Home Phone: _____ Date of Birth: _____

City where Child was Born: _____

Father's Name: _____ Religion: _____

If Catholic, how often do you attend weekend Mass: Weekly Monthly Sometimes
(Circle one)

Mother's Name: _____ Religion: _____

(Maiden Name): _____

If Catholic, how often do you attend weekend Mass: Weekly Monthly Sometimes
(Circle one)

Are you registered members of St. Clement's Church? Yes No

Does the Church recognize your marriage? Yes No

Was your child already baptized? Yes No

Persons Interviewed: _____

Godfather's Name: _____ Religion: _____

Godmother's Name: _____ Religion: _____

[Section below to be filled out by Priest and/or Deacon]

Date of Faith Formation Session: _____

Priest/Deacon who conducted Instruction: _____

Date of Baptism: _____

Priest/Deacon who celebrated Baptism: _____