

GUIDELINES

Sacrament of Baptism (Infants)

PURPOSE

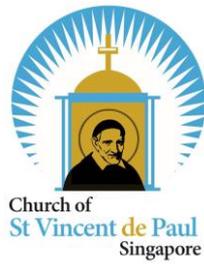
To provide a clear, structured, and consistent framework to guide parish staff, volunteers, and ministry teams in administering the Sacrament of Baptism for infants and young children (typically under the age of 7) in accordance with Catholic Church teachings and practices. This SOP aims to ensure that the process is carried out with reverence, pastoral care, and efficiency.

ELIGIBILITY & REQUIREMENT

1. "The parents of the infant, who is to be baptized are to be instructed in the meaning of this sacrament" *Canon 851.2*
2. "Parents, Godparents and the Priests are to see that a name foreign to a Christian mentality is NOT given," *Canon 855*
3. "Only one male or female Godparent OR one of each sex is to be chosen for the infant," *Canon 873*
4. "A Baptized Christian who belongs to another denomination MAY NOT be admitted as Godparent except as a witness to baptism and together with a Catholic Godparent."
5. "For an infant to be baptized, it is required that there be a well-founded hope that the child will be brought up in the Catholic faith. If such hope is lacking, the baptism is to be deferred, and the parents advised of the reason for this." *Canon 868*
6. Parents and godparents are required to attend a baptism preparatory session prior to the baptism. The candidate's presence is not required for this session.
"To be admitted to the role of Godparent, a person must be:
 - Sixteen years and above.
 - Be a Catholic who has been confirmed and leads a life in harmony with the faith and the role undertaken.
 - Not to be bound by canonical penalty
 - Not to be the father or mother of the one who is to be baptized. Canon 874

SCOPE

This SOP applies to all clergy, parish staff, and volunteers involved in the preparation, coordination, and administration of infant baptisms within the parish. It also provides guidance for parents and guardians seeking baptism for their child.



ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Clergy:

- Conduct the baptism ceremony.
- Ensure adherence to church doctrine.
- Provide spiritual guidance to the family.

Parish Office Staff:

- Schedule baptism dates.
- Provide necessary documentation to the family.
- Record the baptism in the parish registry.

Baptism Preparation Coordinator:

- Organize and lead baptism preparation sessions for parents and godparents.
- Ensure all prerequisites are completed before the baptism.

Parents/Guardians:

- Attend required preparation sessions.
- Submit necessary documents (e.g., child's birth certificate).
- Confirm attendance of godparents.

Godparents:

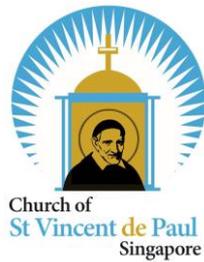
- Participate in preparation sessions.
- Commit to supporting the child's spiritual upbringing.

STEP BY STEP PROCESS

Registration

- The Parish Secretary receives online registration forms from parents. All applications must be submitted 2 weeks prior to the baptism date.
- Ensure that all required documents are uploaded, including:

- 1) Child's birth certificate
- 2) Parents' marriage certificates
- 3) Godparents' confirmation certificates



Eligibility Check

- The Parish Secretary reviews all submitted information to ensure eligibility:
- At least one parent is a practicing Catholic.
- Godparents meet Church requirements (baptized, confirmed, practicing Catholics).

Verification of Missing or Incomplete Information

- If any information or documents are missing, the Parish Secretary contacts the parents to request the missing items.
- Original certificates may need to be sighted at the parish office for verification.
- An in-person consultation with Priests may be required for special cases.

Registration Confirmation

- Once all documents are verified, the Parish Secretary contacts the applicant to confirm the registration and provide the Baptism schedule.

Information Handover to Infant Baptism In-Charge

- The Parish Secretary sends the applicant's information, including:
 - ✚ The child's name
 - ✚ Parents' names and contact information
 - ✚ Date of Baptism
- This information is sent to the Infant Baptism Ministry IC.

Preparatory by Infant Baptism Ministry IC

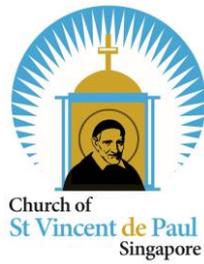
- The Ministry IC:
 1. Contacts the parents to brief them about the preparatory process.
 2. Coordinates Baptism preparation sessions
 3. Arranges a rehearsal session to familiarize the parents and godparents with the ceremony.
 4. In-person preparatory sessions are usually held 1 week before the baptism. Godparents and parents are required to attend.

Final Preparations

- The Ministry IC ensures: the baptismal certificates are ready to be issued on the day of the ceremony.
 - ✚ All liturgical items (e.g., baptismal candle, white garment) are prepared.
 - ✚ The parents and godparents are reminded of their roles and the schedule for the ceremony.

Baptismal Name:

- The baptismal name should ideally be that of a saint or reflect a Christian virtue or mystery. This name is significant for the child's spiritual journey, offering an intercessor and an example to follow



Day of Baptism

- On the day of the Baptism, the Ministry IC and the parish team oversee the smooth running of the ceremony and ensure all families feel welcomed and supported.

REGISTRATION & DOUMENTATION

Parents must submit a completed online application form along with essential documents such as:

1. Child's birth certificate
2. Parents' marriage certificates
3. Godparents' baptism and confirmation certificates

DATA PROTECTION POLICY

1. Purpose of Data Collection:

Personal data is collected solely for the purpose of sacramental administration and record-keeping, as required by canon law and diocesan guidelines.

2. Types of Data Collected:

- Names, addresses, and contact details of parents/guardians
- Date of birth of the child/adult being baptized.
- Names of godparents and officiants

3. Storage and Security:

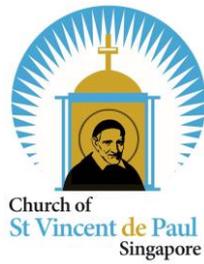
- Baptismal records will be securely stored in the parish office, either in physical registers or an encrypted digital database.
- Access to these records will be restricted to authorized parish personnel.

4. Data Sharing:

- Baptismal records may only be shared with individuals authorized under canon law (e.g., diocesan offices, other Catholic parishes for sacramental purposes) or as required by civil law.
- No personal data will be shared for marketing or non-sacramental purposes.

5. Retention:

- Baptismal records are permanent and will not be deleted.
- Supporting documents (e.g., registration forms) will be retained for a period specified by diocesan policy and securely destroyed thereafter.



6. Responsibilities

- **Clergy:** Ensure the sacrament is administered in accordance with canon law and this policy.
 - **Parish Staff:** Maintain accurate records and uphold data protection standards.
 - **Parents/Guardians:** Provide accurate information and comply with preparation requirements.
7. **Compliance and Review** This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure compliance with canon law, the regulations of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Singapore, and any updates to civil data protection regulations. Non-compliance with this policy may result in disciplinary action as determined by the parish or Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Singapore leadership.
8. **Contact Information** For questions or concerns about this policy or the Sacrament of Baptism, please email to dpo.svdp@catholic.org.sg

Dated: 01 February 2025

Approved By: Rev Fr Paul Lim - Parish Priest