



# HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

Our Mission: "To proclaim and live the Orthodox Christian Faith in its fullness as faithful members of the Body of Christ."

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## IMPORTANT INFORMATION Preparing For Your Child's Baptism

**Please read before completing and returning Baptism Information Form**

Dear Parents:

You have requested a baptism for your child at Holy Trinity Church, an event which will certainly bring great joy to both your family and the Holy Trinity Church community. This letter provides you with important information on preparing for that important event in your child's life as he/she is "born again" into the new life of our Savior Jesus Christ.

**CONFIRMING A DATE:** Prior to the baptism, a date and time must be confirmed by the priest before commitments (such as receptions) are made.

**SELECTING A GODPARENT:** The selection of a Godparent is the next item and must be done with great personal care, respect for the guidelines of the Church and a desire to choose a spiritual guardian who will be able to participate in your child's life and whose life and commitment to Christ will be an inspiration for your child. A Godparent must be an Orthodox Christian in good standing in every way with the Orthodox Church. To assure this and to avoid changing selections in the event of a problem, it is important to consult the priest BEFORE inviting a person to be a Godparent. Keep in mind that only one person will sign the baptismal certificate as the Godparent, so if there is a married couple, be sure to indicate which of the two will sign.

**ARRIVING AT CHURCH:** On the day of the baptism, please be sure that you, the Godparent and the child arrive at the church at least 15 minutes prior to the service. Keep in mind that a spirit of reverence and respect is required at all times in the church.

**WHAT TO BRING:** You will need the following items for the service. These items should all be new. They are traditionally provided by the Godparent, but who provides what is left completely to your discretion.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> A Cross (preferably Orthodox style) and chain.                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> A white undershirt or "onesie." |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A large, white bath towel.   | <input type="checkbox"/> Two white hand towels.          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A white flat sheet (twin will do).   | <input type="checkbox"/> A white baptismal outfit        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A small bottle of olive oil.   | <input type="checkbox"/> A bar of white soap.            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Two or three large white candles decorated with white bows.                    |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A cloth diaper (to line the regular or disposable diaper and absorb Holy Oil). |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> "Martyrika" baptismal remembrances.  |  |

**ABOUT THE SERVICE:** The service to be held will involve three Holy Mysteries (or Sacraments): Baptism, Chrismation and Holy Communion. Each of these has a personal and significant meaning in the life of a Christian:

- ❖ Baptism is our personal Pascha experience. In the Font, we die as the old Adam and are born anew in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, the New Adam, through the descent of the Holy Spirit.

- ❖ Chrismation is our personal Pentecost experience. We receive the “Seal of the Gift of the Holy Spirit” through anointing with Holy Chrism.
- ❖ Holy Communion is received by the child after Baptism and Chrismation. It mystically unites us with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ through the receiving of His Precious Body and Life-giving Blood.

**AFTER THE SERVICE:** Please keep in mind that the towels, the sheet, the diaper and the child's undergarments will have Holy Oil on them, so special care should be taken in cleaning the sacrament from these items after the Baptism. First, place them in a hand tub or a wash basin filled with soapy water. Carefully wring the items to remove all the Holy Oil, then wash them as usual. Pour the contents of the basin into the ground outside where it will not be trampled by people walking (not down the drain, please). This special care is out of respect to the sacrament, which should not be cast into the drain or trash.

**FOLLOWING-UP:** For three consecutive Sundays after the service, the Godparent should accompany you and the child to the Divine Liturgy for Holy Communion with the child dressed in the new baptismal outfit and the Godparent carrying the baptismal candle. If it is not possible for the Godparent to attend, please choose someone else special to stand in or bring the child yourself.

**LIFE IN THE CHURCH:** The on-going commitment to keep the child involved in the life of the Church continues from the day of Baptism forward. The child should be brought for all Sundays and feast days of the Church. He/she should also participate in Church School, youth activities, attendance at worship services and frequent Holy Communion. These things and more will help you and the Godparent fulfill your calling to raise the child in the Holy Orthodox Faith and in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Please complete the Baptism Information Form (found on our web site at [www.HolyTrinityPgh.org/documents](http://www.HolyTrinityPgh.org/documents)) and return it as soon as possible. If you have any questions, please call the church office at 412-321-9282. May the blessings of the Lord will be with you as you prepare for this great event.

In Christ.



Father John Touloumes