

Homework for the Parents!

Before your child comes to the first Kids' 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 somebody? Do you know what their name means?

Our Lady of Dolours Catholic Parish

94 Archer Street
Chatswood NSW 2067
Phone: 9410 9000
Fax: 9412-1282
office@chatswoodparish.org.au
Parish Priest: Janusz Bieniek CSMA

Further enquiries:
Fr George Gorzkowski CSMA,
Phone: 9410 9025 W

A Parent's Blessing for a Child

(pray this at home together)

Father,
Bless our child, (name),
whom you have placed in our care.
May he/she know, truly and deeply,
how precious he/she is,
how much you delight in him/her.

Jesus, be a steady friend
and companion to this child.
Help (name) to grow in truth and wisdom
and may he/she always turn to you for guidance.

Spirit of God, send your love upon our child.
Fill him/her with your peace
and protect him/her from harm.

We ask this in the name of the Father,
the Son and the Holy Spirit, Amen.

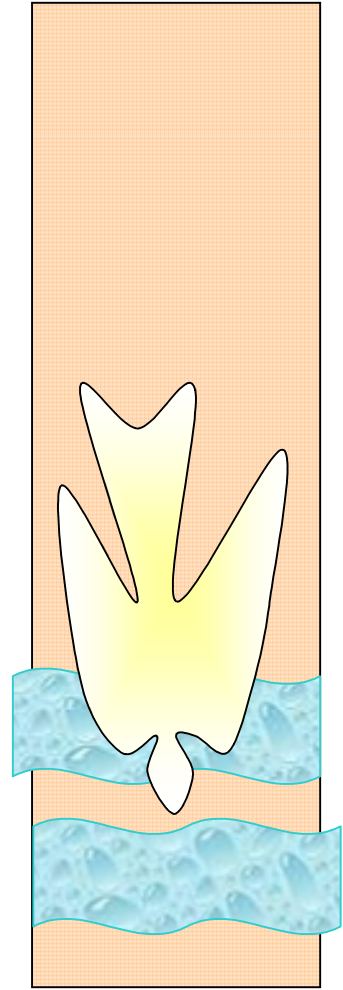
Refer to enclosed timetable for a complete list of dates.

Mark the key dates here:

Starting date:
Presentation:
Baptism:

Kids' Ba

At Our Lady of Dolours,



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Parents teach and model the Catholic faith

Parents are the prime educators of their children. The Catholic Church recognises this and takes their role very seriously. That is why baptising a young child when neither parent is Catholic is not an automatic step, but requires careful thought and discernment by both parties: the family and the parish. Going to a Catholic school is a support, but it does not replace the Catholic upbringing a child receives at home.

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

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 9am Sunday Mass with your child. This is a 'Family Mass' and on some Sundays it includes **Kids' Word** - some special activities for the children to teach them about Jesus and to involve them in the parish community. Just turn up at church at 9am, sit towards the front, and encourage your child to join in with the other children as invited by the priest. Or, you can also just sit in the pews and watch what goes on.

Step two:

If you have been coming to church for a while and your child is still keen to be baptised, approach our Sacraments Minister to arrange a meeting. Alternatively, you can submit a 'Request for Baptism' form (enclosed) and a parish team member will contact you.

Step three:

If, after this meeting, Baptism is considered an appropriate step, we will invite you and your child to **Kids' Baptism** which is held on the first Sunday of the month. This is only for children who are preparing to be baptised and their parents (although siblings and the occasional little friend are welcome too!)

Step four:

On the 2nd, 4th and any 5th Sundays of the month, your child continues to take part in **Kids' Word** which is part of the 9am Family Mass.* In this way they continue to learn about Jesus and to develop the habit of coming to church and mixing with their Catholic peers.

[* Note: **Kids' Word** does not operate during school holidays]

Step five:

On the third Sunday of the month, all the children remain in the church for the Family Mass. Those children preparing for baptism will receive a special **anointing and prayer (we call this step 'the Presentation')**. Those children who are ready to be baptised will be **baptised**. (Note: baptisms can also be arranged at other times – please enquire).

The Baptism itself

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.

There are a number of symbols used in the baptism ceremony: water, oil, candle, a white garment. We will talk more about these symbols at **Kids' Baptism**.

The child to be baptised must have a godparent who is a fully initiated, over the age of 16.

The godparent/s stand beside the ceremony. Their role is to support raising their child in the Catholic faith, called to take a special interest in their personal and spiritual development.

If your child does not already have a name (a saint's name), he/she may like to choose the name for the Baptism.



When does my child receive communion?

Baptism is the first step of initiation in the Church. There are other sacraments which complete your child's initiation: First Communion and also Reconciliation. Your child is eligible to prepare for these sacraments if they have been baptised, and if 7 years of age. The parish has a 12 month process called the **Sacramental Program** by which a child is prepared and receives these sacraments. (See the accompanying brochure.)