

The Parish of Handsworth

The Church of St Mary & The Epiphany

Baptism Information Pack

Thank you for your enquiry about having a Baptism at one of our Churches, St Mary's in Handsworth or The Epiphany in Handsworth Wood. The very fact that you have made the call to explore the possibilities of a Baptism shows that you have thought about the matter – this is something we respect. Baptism is something that we take very seriously in the Parish, as well as regarding it as a privilege to share with you at a very special moment in your family life.

Baptisms take place within the Parish Eucharist at 11.00am on a Sunday morning (the dates for these are fixed for each year to fit in with the Church year). It is important for us to have the Christian community, the worshipping congregation, present to welcome those Baptised into the family of faith.

You will find in this pack:

1. The Baptism Check List. This is to ensure that you know what needs to be done and can relax that everything is in place.
2. The Baptism Application Form. Please do read the notes before you fill it in and then return it to a 10.30am Parish Eucharist at St Catherine's, Burbage, at least two weeks before the Baptism date.

In the years that lie ahead you, as parents, will have the greatest influence upon your son or daughter. Those whom you have invited to share this responsibility with you by conferring the honour of being godparents should also be aware that they have an important role to play. As your children watch and listen, they will learn the things that you think are important. This is true for every aspect of their life, including the spiritual dimension.

The Church as it meets at St Mary's and The Epiphany welcomes children to the regular services. We fully expect that they may make some noise or may be more mobile during the service: relax about this. It is normal and is a sign that they are 'at home'. On the day of the Baptism your child becomes a full member of the Church and is always welcome.

At the Baptism many want to take photographs and there is often an invitation given for photographs to be taken either immediately after the Baptism itself or at the end of the service. We are very happy for people to take photographs but do ask that they are mindful of others and that they do so unobtrusively and without a fuss.


When you come to think of who will stand as godparents (who are the sponsors of the child in Baptism and answer the questions about faith on their behalf) you should think seriously about those who will provide the best spiritual and moral role models. The tradition is that three godparents are appointed (two being the same sex as the baby and one of the opposite sex). You should be aware that, because the Church of England is the Established Church in England and is regulated by the law, it is required by the law that godparents have themselves to have been baptised. If there are any questions about this please do talk to a priest at Church.

Finally, the Church does have a Toddler Group that meets in the Church. Many find that this informal group is a good point of contact and source of support. If you have any questions about this group, please ask, but feel free just to come along.

If you do have any questions at all, please let us know – you will probably have the same concerns that many before you have had. We would rather that you felt informed and at ease about what Baptism means and about what will happen in the service and beyond.

As a Parish Church we count it a privilege and joy to share with you at a significant moment in life. Be assured of our love and our prayers for you as you as a family prepare for this Baptism. There are no fees for a Baptism as it is a celebration of God's love for us – given freely.

With every good wish,
Yours sincerely,



Fr Bob Stephen
Rector

Baptism Check List

<i>Tick</i>	
	<i>Read the Baptism Pack. Please contact me if you have any questions.</i>
	<i>Select your Godparents. Please check that they have been baptised* themselves and ask if they have been confirmed.</i>
	<i>Fill in the Baptism Application Form.</i>
	<i>Return the Application Form to a service at St Mary's at the 11.00am Parish Eucharist on any Sunday Morning. Be sure that we have it at least 2 weeks before the Baptism.</i>
	<i>Contact me in the week before the Baptism (by text, email or telephone) to give some idea of how many will be attending the service.</i>

** If your Godparents have not been Baptised (which is a legal requirement for a Godparent in the Church of England) but they wish to be, that is possible in the same service. They do need to fill in a Baptism Application Form, but there is no need for them to have Godparents. Please talk to me about this if it is required.*

Thank you.

Fr Bob Stephen