



Saint Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church

Ιερός Ναός Αγίου Δημητρίου

ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΟΡΘΟΔΟΞΗ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗ ΚΑΝΑΔΑΣ
GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF CANADA

Rev. Fr. Thomas Sandberg

1 Tamarac Crescent SW, Calgary, AB T3C 3B7 | (403) 246-4553 ext 2 | www.CalgaryHellenic.com

PETITION FOR HOLY BAPTISM

Holy Baptism

Baptism brings about the birth of new life in Christ. The Orthodox Church practices infant baptism because historically it never required "understanding" as a pre-condition. To know God is the fruit of baptism. Baptism makes a person a participant in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and a member of His body the Church. This is the first step in becoming a follower of Jesus Christ. The Church does have a responsibility to administer the sacrament only to those who have shown that this is the primary purpose for the baptism.

A Baptism is a privilege that requires a commitment on behalf of the parents to raise the child in the Orthodox Church. If parents are not active members of the Church, you must demonstrate a desire to become active for the sacrament to be approved. Parents are the primary role models for their children in living a committed life to Christ. Commitment to Christ is expressed in regularly attending Sunday liturgy, participating in the sacramental life of the Church and being a current member of the Church.

The entire Church, triumphant and militant, rejoices when a child is grafted on to Christ through Holy Baptism. Your decision to baptize your child in the Orthodox Church is an indication of your love for the Church and for her sacramental life. Holy Baptism is the cleansing of one's soul from the sin of Adam and Eve. It is also the initiation, if you will, of the child into the Church which has been instituted by Christ Himself, when He was baptized in the Jordan River by John the Baptist. This sacrament actually has within it three sacraments, Holy Baptism, Holy Chrismation, and Holy Communion. Holy Chrismation is the imparting of the gifts of the Holy Spirit to the child, and thus fills the void which is created when we wash away the sins of Adam and Eve and our own individual sins. Holy Communion is offered to the child as a sign that he or she is now a full member of the Orthodox Church. Holy Communion is the ultimate sign that an individual is in communion with the Church, and only those who are Orthodox can receive the Sacred Mysteries, the Body and Blood of Christ. Thus, for the child to receive it on this day is the expression that he or she is part of the Body of Christ.

Those who would like to have a Baptism in our Parish must meet certain financial obligations. These obligations have been set by our Parish Council and are intended to help meet the financial needs of our Church and to encourage regular and consistent membership in our Community from year to year.

Sponsor/Godparent(s)

In the Baptismal service, the Church requires a Sponsor/Godparent. The Godparent is the one who vouches for the child and the family as to the sincerity of the reasons why they are seeking baptism. In addition, the Godparent serves to guide, teach, and counsel their Godchild the Orthodox faith. The Church requires the Godparent to be in full communion and free of any canonical impediment (for example, married outside the Orthodox Church, or common-law status). If you have questions regarding the role of the Sponsor, please speak with Fr. Thomas.

A person who wishes to be a Sponsor for the Baptism must be an Orthodox Christian who is in good ecclesiastical standing (membership for the current year has been paid), and knows the Nicene Creed in English or Greek. The role of the Sponsor is directly related to infant baptism. Since the infant is unable to make the necessary confession of faith, the Sponsor stands and accepts the responsibility.

From the Registry Department of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Canada:

“SPONSORS: The Sponsor/Godparent in a Baptism must be an Orthodox Christian in good standing and a current member of an Orthodox parish. The Sponsor must provide his/her Baptismal Certificate, and if he/she is married, a copy of the Orthodox marriage certificate. A person cannot serve as a Sponsor if any of the following conditions exist: a) his/her marriage has not been blessed by the Church (i.e. Common Law, Civil Union, other religious marriage); b) he/she has a civil divorce but has not been granted an ecclesiastical divorce; c) any other reason he or she is not in communion with the Orthodox Church.”

Parents

In order to baptize your child in a Greek Orthodox Church, at least one of the parents needs to be of the Eastern Orthodox Faith and baptized in an Eastern Orthodox Church.

Booking the Date

The date and time for the Sacrament should be arranged with Fr. Thomas and Penelope as far in advance as possible. The attached form is to be completed and returned promptly to Fr. Thomas so that the Baptismal Certificate can be prepared and to Penelope so that membership obligations are up to date, for both the parents and godparents. Prior to confirming the date, all necessary documents and fees must be paid in full. For booking and payment of financial obligations, please contact: Penelope at admin@calgaryhellenic.com or (403) 246-4555 ext 3. Baptisms may not be performed from Christmas Day through the Feast of Theophany (December 25-January 6), during Holy Week, or on any of the Great Feast days of the Lord. Consult with Fr. Thomas before you confirm your date.

Financial Obligations

Each Orthodox person must be a member in “good standing” at our Parish or at their Eastern Orthodox Parish. Members in “good standing” are those who have paid their membership dues in the current year. Currently, the membership due at St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church is according to the following:

- **Family Membership \$250**
- **Senior Couple Membership \$150**
- **Single Membership (18-64) \$150**
- **Single Senior/Widow(er) Membership \$75**
- **Student Membership (18-25) \$75**

Parents/Godparent(s) that are members at another Eastern Orthodox Church must bring proof of current membership. A letter from the Parish Priest indicating membership in “good standing” with the church is required. If there is more than one Godparent, both must become members in “good standing”. In addition, for every Baptism there is a Sacrament Fee of \$300 for members and \$700 for non-members.

Frequently Asked Questions

How long is the Service?

The Baptismal service is approximately 45 minutes long. Parents and Sponsors should be present 20 minutes before the scheduled time to receive instruction as to the order of service. The service will begin at the scheduled time, as long as the parents, the child, and the godparents are all present.

What items does the Godparent/Sponsor need to bring for the Baptism?

1. Very large white bath towel
2. One white sheet (bedsheet, twin size)
3. One white hand towel
4. One bar of soap
5. One small bottle of pure olive oil
6. One gold cross with chain
7. White underwear (for infants, a “onesie”) to absorb the oil.
8. A complete Baptismal Dress or Suit including underclothes all in white
9. One large white Easter candle – available for purchase from our Church
10. Martyrika (optional: these are small decorative icons/crosses given to guests)

As parents, is there anything else we need to know following the Baptism?

Yes. The parents should not bathe the child for three days from the day of the Baptism, as the newly illuminated has the Holy Chrismation on him/her, which is the “Seal of the Holy Spirit”. If at all possible, the baby must wear the baptismal underwear for the three days. If there is no vigil light burning at the homes’ icon shrine (Iconostasion), it is custom to have a vigil light with oil lit at the house for these three days. After 3 days, give the child his/her bath and wash the baptismal sheet, towel and underwear (everything that touched the oil). Because the wash water (including bath water) will contain holy oil, it should be poured outside in such a manner where it will not be stepped on, such as the foot of a tree or a corner of the house.

When can I print the invitations?

The printing of invitations should not be done until the date, time and Godparent(s) for the baptism have been confirmed with Fr. Thomas and all financial obligations have been paid.

When should the child return for Holy Communion?

It is customary for the Godparent to bring their Godchild to Holy Communion for three consecutive Sundays after the Baptism. This is done in order to form the habit of frequent communion for the child. It is custom to have the Godparent bring the child up to the altar for the child to receive, along with the lit, Baptismal candle.

Can we take pictures?

Photographs of your baptism are permitted but should not in any way impede or distract from the celebration of the sacrament. Photographers should be quiet and respectful; the use of a flash is allowed. If you are planning on professional photography and videography, please ask that your photographer arrive early at the Church so that guidelines can be laid out. Also, please ask guests to be respectful of the professional's space, for your benefit.

My husband and I live in Saskatchewan. I'm Greek Orthodox and in good standing at my Orthodox Church. My spouse is Catholic. The Godparent is also from Saskatchewan and a member in good standing at their Orthodox Church. What fees can we expect to pay in Calgary?

Only the Sacrament fee needs to be paid in full prior to the service by either the Parents or Godparent.

Following the Baptismal Service, we would like have a light snack or meal for guests in the Hellenic Community Hall. Can you accommodate us and are there any fees attached to renting the Hall?

Please contact Hall Manager, Shannon Kelsick at events@calgaryhellenic.com or (403) 246-4553 ext 1.

Can I have two names for my child?

Your child may have as many names as you desire, but will only be Baptized with one. Your child has only one identity. The child's name is part of its identity, even if you Baptize with two, the child will only ever use one name. The other name will be lost. Baptism is also about receiving one's identity in the body of the Church, that is, among the people who make up the Church. Two or more names is a false notion and is not permitted in baptism. On the birth certificate you can put as many names as you like, but nothing will be different. The child will still only have one name. So it is best to be truthful to the child and to everyone else who has expectations in relation to the child's name.



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BAPTISMAL FORM

Sacrament Info

Date & Time: _____

Child's gender: Male Female

- Birthplace: _____ Date of birth: _____
- Given name(s): _____

Father's legal name: _____

- Religion: _____
- Birthplace (city/province/country): _____
- Address (city/province/country): _____
- Email: _____ Phone: _____

Mother's legal name: _____

- Maiden name: _____
- Religion : _____
- Birthplace (city/province/country): _____
- Address (city/province/country): _____
- Email: _____ Phone: _____

Marital status of Parents: Married Not Married Divorced Common-law

- Wedding performed by: Orthodox Priest Minister Officiant
- Date of Wedding: _____
- Place of Wedding: _____

Godparent(s) Baptismal Name(s): _____

- Address (city/province/country): _____
- Email: _____ Phone: _____
- Date of Baptism: _____ (Provide Baptism Certificate or letter of Baptism and Good Standing from your priest, if Baptism did not occur at St. Demetrios)
- Marital status: Married Not Married Divorced
(NOTE: Godparents must be Orthodox Christians who were married in the Orthodox Church and must provide a wedding certificate)
(NOTE: If divorced, an ecclesiastical divorce is needed)

Will you allow your child's baptism to be listed in the newsletter, under the 'Sacraments' section, following the date of the baptism? Yes No