

CREATING THE ATMOSPHERE FOR AN EVANGELIZING BAPTISMAL EXPERIENCE

When a parent/grandparent inquires about baptism, in person, on the phone, through email, what is the first response of the receptionist, secretary, baptism coordinator, etc.? Are first responders given appropriate information about the process to share with inquirers? Are first responders trained to greet with an evangelizing attitude?

How are the guidelines for your parish's baptismal preparation explained to the inquiring family? Are team members aware of the parish/diocesan guidelines? If there are perceived impediments to baptism, how are these handled?

Is there a sponsor/mentor (person, couple or family) that journeys with the family through the baptismal process and beyond?

When families come to a baptismal preparation session, what will help them to locate the room/building in which they are to meet? How is the signage? Is there a campus map and are buildings clearly marked? Are people available to assist those who may be lost?

Are the rooms set appropriately for the session? Are chairs comfortable? Lighting sufficient? Is the room temperature comfortable? Is there access to restrooms? Are refreshments available? Does equipment work?

Are people there to greet attendees? Are name tags supplied and opportunity for introductions provided?

Are godparents encouraged to attend baptismal preparation sessions?

Are family members/children encouraged to attend? Are there appropriate places/items for play for those infants/children that attend?

Is prayer a part of the preparation process? Are attendees taught how to pray?

Are adult learning methods, in addition to lecture, incorporated into the preparation process?

Is there any mention of ministries/opportunities/ongoing faith formation available in the parish beyond baptism preparation?

Are parents and godparents somewhat familiar with the area in which the baptism will occur? Are guidelines given for photography, family/guest seating, dress, etc.? Who will make sure families are made comfortable and greeted for the baptismal ritual?

Who follows-up with families after the actual baptism? How will the parish continue to connect with these families, at their various stages of faith development? How will the parish continue to minister to these families between Baptism and First Reconciliation/First Eucharist/Confirmation? Who will follow up on RCIA/sacramental inquiries of adults?

Does the parish process allow for the family to be welcomed by the community, to gather with other parents and infants and members of the faith community, to celebrate the baptism ritual in the context of community, and to reflect on the celebration in a follow-up session?