

CHRISTIAN BAPTISMS AT ST. NEKTARIOS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH REQUIREMENTS AND GENERAL INFORMATION

5108 Kuykendall Road, Charlotte, NC 28270 – www.stnektarios.org
PHONE: 704-708-4669 FAX: 704-846-6094 EMAIL: office@stnektarios.org

"Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River." (Matthew 3:6)
***"Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved,
but whoever does not believe will be condemned." (Mark 16:16)***
***"For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be
baptized with the Holy Spirit." (Acts 1:5)***

The St. Nektarios community rejoices whenever a person becomes a member of the Body of Christ. As Orthodox Christians our "rebirth" in Christ is through the sacrament of Baptism. In the Gospels, we read that repentance and baptism was being preached by John the Baptist. Jesus validated this practice by being baptized Himself, and baptizing others by the hand of His apostles. This became the original and traditional act of initiation into the Church. For those who believed in Christ, God added to the cleansing baptism of water, the element of the cleansing and dwelling of the Holy Spirit. Christians, by God's will, now are spiritually as well as physically cleansed. In order to remain "members" we must, however, continually maintain our "baptismal garment" with a sincere spirit of repentance (confession) and through the frequent receiving of the Eucharist.

MEMBERSHIP

At least one parent must be a member in good standing with the Greek Orthodox Church. The facilities at St. Nektarios are available for members in good standing and their children and grandchildren. A member in good standing according to the St. Nektarios By-Laws is any "member of this Parish who was baptized and chrismated according to the rites of the Orthodox church who lives according to the faith and doctrines of the Church, who participates regularly in the holy sacraments, who has completed Membership Registration for this Parish and a stewardship pledge card or otherwise communicated an intention to be a steward of the Parish", The priest will have discretion and authority to waive these requirements.

SELECTING A DATE AND TIME

Contact the church office to secure your date. Baptisms may be performed at any time of the year, with the only exception being Holy Week for practical purposes. Baptisms are generally held on:

- Saturday at 11:00 a.m., 2:00 p.m. or 4:00 p.m.
- Sunday at 2:00 p.m. or 4:00 p.m.

SELECTING A GODPARENT

The Godparent(s) must be an Orthodox Christian(s) and a member(s) in good standing in an Orthodox Parish. If the Godparent(s) is/are not a member of St. Nektarios, we will require their Parish Priest to issue a Letter of Good Standing. For first-time Godparents, it is recommended that they meet with a priest to discuss the role and responsibilities of Godparents in the life of the child and to review the sacrament process. A handbook is available from the church upon request.

FEES

The sanctuary Event Support Fee for a baptism is \$50.00. That fee is paid online by completing the 'Preparation for Baptism Form' on the Sacraments page of our website, https://www.stnektarios.org/sacrament_planning.html. The priest(s) does/do not accept honorariums. Any additional offerings in honor of the sacraments may be made directly to church.

INFORMATION THE CHURCH NEEDS

- Before the Baptism, complete the online registration form. For those not having internet access, the form is available at the office.
- Notify the office if you will be using professional photographers/videographers.
- Confirm the number of people attending.
- Indicate the name of other Orthodox Clergy who may assist with the sacrament.

Please note that someone from the church office will be in contact by email to finalize the details needed for the paperwork and that day's schedule.

ITEMS NEEDED FOR THE BAPTISM

For **Infants** being baptized:

1. One (1) complete change of clothing, including undershirt, shoes or booties and a hat (preferably new and white)
2. One (1) flat, white, twin size sheet to receive the baptized child coming out of the font
3. One (1) white bath-size towel and two (2) white hand towels
4. One (1) white soap bar (Dove or Ivory recommended)
5. One (1) small bottle of olive oil (carafe is optional)
6. One (1) large baptismal candle and two (2) small candles
7. One (1) baptismal cross (gold, silver, or jeweled)

Please include a clean diaper, plastic bag for soiled diapers and wipes. It will be helpful to include a changing pad and/or small white blanket. Optional Oil Cloth packages include: 1 white under pant, 1 white undershirt, hat lining, sheet and towel) can be purchased from on-line Baptism supply vendors or from Ritsa Neary (704-845-6229). Please plan to have someone available other than the parents or godparents (such as grandmothers, aunts, etc,) to help dress the infant in the new baptismal outfit.

For **Adults and older children** being baptized:

1. One (1) white bath-size towel and two (2) white hand towels
2. One (1) small bottle of olive oil (carafe is optional)
3. One (1) baptismal candle
4. One (1) baptismal cross (gold, silver or jeweled)

DAY OF THE BAPTISM

- A volunteer will be on duty to open the church and assist the family.
- Please arrive 30 minutes before the scheduled Baptism so that we can complete the Certificate of Baptism and arrange items necessary for Baptism. (See List Above)
- First time Godparents should also arrive early for a brief walkthrough of the Sacrament with the priest.
- Although it is customary for the parents, to sit in the front row during the service, it is expected that one of the parents can be close to the infant if he/she becomes upset.
- For your convenience, there is a Baby Changing Room. Please ask ushers to direct you. This is where the baby is undressed and dressed.
- The Sanctuary is available to you for up to 30 minutes after the Sacrament for photos and guest greeting.

AT HOME AFTER THE BAPTISM

- After the Baptism, please place the Certificate of Baptism in a secure place so that it may be safeguarded for use in the future.
- Please be aware that oil cloths, linens and garments used during the baptism and afterwards should be hand washed in a receptacle to capture the water. The water should then be disposed by watering your plants inside or outside your home and not put down the drain. This honors the sanctity of the blessed waters and oil from the baptism.
- Similarly, the first bath water of the child should also be captured so that it may be respectfully disposed like cloths above.

OPTIONAL ITEMS

- Witness pins for guests, Jordan almond favors and decorated candles -- These may be purchased from any vendor online or you may contact the office for parishioner vendor.
- Flowers in the Sanctuary are optional and can be purchased from any vendor. Please consider leaving them for Sunday services.

We look forward to your Baptism at St. Nektarios as we follow our Lord's instruction to "...baptize all nations, in the Name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit..."