



## A GUIDE TO BAPTISM AT ST HILDA'S

We are delighted that you are considering the baptism of your child at St Hilda's of Whitby Chapel. We hope that these notes will assist you and your chosen godparents to prepare for this important occasion and make it more meaningful for you.

Baptism is the rite of initiation into the Church. A person is not baptised into a specific denomination, but rather into the Christian Church universal. In the Anglican Church, baptism is possible at any age. In baptism a person's faith is publicly professed, and the decision is made to follow the teachings of Jesus throughout their life.

When an infant or child is baptised, their parents and godparents make this profession and decision for them and speak on their behalf. To fulfil their duty of encouraging the child to grow in faith, all godparents must be baptised members of a Christian church. Ideally, at least one parent should also be baptised, though this is not essential. In time, it is expected that parents and godparents prepare their child for Confirmation.

When adults or older children are baptised, their Confirmation takes place at the same service, or very soon after, and this is presided over by a Bishop. There is no requirement for adults or older children to have godparents as they can speak on their own behalf, but they are encouraged to have sponsors who support them in their faith.

Some form of baptism preparation will be required which is usually a meeting arranged with the Chaplain to prepare both parents or the candidate for the service, and to answer practical as well as spiritual questions. The exact nature of this preparation will vary depending upon your circumstances, the date of the service and your proximity to Perth.

### **The Baptism Service**

Baptism services are held by arrangement on Saturdays or Sundays, during term time, depending on the availability of the Chaplain. There may be more than one baptism on any given date. The standard Anglican liturgy (The Order of Service for Baptism), including the promises made by parents and godparents, is used for the service and is available upon request beforehand. If you would like a bespoke printed order of service, this would be your responsible to organise, but it must follow the standard Anglican liturgy. As no fees are charged for baptism services, but we ask for a donation of your choice to the Chapel Fund. This is used to maintain the Chapel as an inspirational worship space for students and Old Scholars. Donations should be given to the Chaplain when this form is returned. The Chaplain can be contacted via email: [chaplain@sthildas.wa.edu.au](mailto:chaplain@sthildas.wa.edu.au)

### **Godparents**

For children being baptised it is important that a group of godparents are chosen to support their faith development in the coming years. During the baptism service godparents will make certain promises, along with the child's parents, to nurture and encourage the child as they grow in faith. It is therefore essential that they themselves are baptised, and preferably current members of a Christian church. They may belong to the Anglican Church or another Christian denomination. Evidence of each godparent's baptism will be required, usually by providing the Chaplain with a copy of their baptism certificates.

Traditionally, each child has three godparents: two of the same gender as the child, and one of the opposite gender. There is flexibility in this so please speak with the Chaplain regarding your personal circumstances. Persons may be chosen as godparents even if they cannot attend the baptism service, such as interstate relatives or friends, but it is preferable that they do attend.

*Please note: Godparents do not automatically have legal guardianship responsibilities in the event that their godchild's parents die or are otherwise unfit to care for them. If you wish for your child's godparents to also be their legal guardians, you will need to make this arrangement with your solicitor.*

## A Thanksgiving Service

An alternative thanksgiving service offers an opportunity for parents to give thanks to God for the birth of their child, or their adoption into the family, if they desire to leave baptism to a later date or even to a time when the child makes their own decision to be baptised. The Chaplain can provide you with further information if you feel this may be an option.

**Request for Baptism** *(these details will provide information to record the baptism in the register and on the certificate)*

Please complete (BLOCK LETTERS)

**Proposed Date of Baptism:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Approximate Number of Guests:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Candidate Name in Full:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of birth:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Parents' / Guardians' Names in Full</b>	<b>Baptised</b>	<b>Confirmed</b>	<b>Denomination</b> <i>(if not Anglican)</i>
_____	YES/NO	YES/NO	_____
_____	YES/NO	YES/NO	_____
_____			_____

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Occupation:** Father \_\_\_\_\_ Mother \_\_\_\_\_

**Godparents** *Godparents should be aware of the order of service and the promises they will make. They do not all have to be present as promises may be made by a proxy*

<b>Names in Full</b>	<b>Baptised</b> <i>(in any Christian tradition)</i>
_____	YES/NO
_____	YES/NO
_____	YES/NO
_____	YES/NO

Please return to the Chaplain ([chaplain@sthildas.wa.edu.au](mailto:chaplain@sthildas.wa.edu.au))