

# Jesuit High School of New Orleans

## Policy for Sacramental Baptism Ceremonies at Jesuit High School

### I. Statement of Purpose

As the spiritual center of Jesuit High School, the school chapels are always available for alumni and class Masses. In addition, the Jesuits associated with Jesuit High School are always honored when they are asked to join alumni in the sacramental celebrations of special times in their lives. At the same time, Jesuit High School recognizes and respects the fact that the proper "faith home" of all Catholics is their parish church, not their school.

### II. The Sacrament of Baptism

- a. The Sacrament of Baptism is "the basis of the whole of Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit, and the door which gives access to the other Sacraments" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, # 1213).
- b. Baptism is the beginning of the Christian journey through the cleansing of our soul by life-giving water. It is the starting point for our new life in Christ and our membership in the Church as the Body of Christ. Through Baptism, an individual is welcomed into the Christian family.
- c. "For the grace of Baptism to unfold, the parents' help is important. So too is the role of the godfather and godmother, who must be firm believers, able and ready to help the newly baptized -- child or adult -- on the road of Christian life. Their task is a truly ecclesial function. The whole ecclesial community bears some responsibility for the development and safeguarding of the grace given at Baptism" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, # 1255).

### III. Baptism of Infants and Children

The following statements apply to the baptism of infants and children who have not yet reached the age of formal religious instruction.

- a. Parents and godparents are asked to complete a written statement through which they indicate their commitment to the Catholic faith and to being good models of Christian living to the child.
- b. Parents must obtain a letter from the Pastor of their parish indicating his approval of having the child baptized at Jesuit High School.
- c. Both parents and godparents are to attend a baptismal preparation class at their parish prior to having their child baptized and have that parish provide a letter indicating the date of their participation.
- d. Parents must complete a brief "Parental Testimonial" statement. For a copy of the form, please [click here](#).

- e. If the priest doing the baptism does not have faculties from the Archdiocese of New Orleans, he must obtain a letter of good standing from his diocese or religious order. That letter should be sent to your appointed sacristan at Jesuit High School in advance of the scheduled baptism.
- f. Parents are expected to choose either one or two godparents (sponsors).
- g. The role of a godparent is to help a child, along with the parents, lead a Christian life in harmony with baptism. The Catholic Church makes a distinction between a sponsor (godparent) and a witness.
- h. To be admitted to the role of godparent, one must:
  - i.* be a Roman Catholic, at least 16 years of age, in good standing with the Church
  - ii.* have received the three sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation
  - iii.* lead a life in harmony with the faith of the Church.
- i. Each godparent must complete a brief "Godparent Testimonial" statement. For a copy of the form, please [click here](#).
- j. It is customary to have two Catholic sponsors, one male and one female, but if parents choose only one godparent according to the above criteria, they may also choose a "Christian witness" as an additional person who, as a non-Catholic baptized and practicing Christian, observes and attests to the faith commitment of the child's parents.

#### **IV. Chapel**

- a. Baptism ceremonies are restricted to the Holy Name of Jesus Chapel, more commonly referred to as the small chapel.
- b. The chapel is sacred place and should be treated as such. Its use is allowed with the understanding that its preservation will be honored. You are kindly asked that all of those involved in the ceremony know and will be respectful of the guidelines that have been established.
- c. All guests are asked to respect the sanctity of the chapel with reverent behavior and a quiet manner.
- d. The small chapel is located on the 2nd floor of the administration wing and has one (1) entrance from Banks St. through the switchboard (receptionist). There is elevator access in the stairwell nearest the switchboard.
- e. The small chapel can adequately hold 56 adults in the pews. Any larger number results in uncomfortable crowding. There are additional dedicated seats on the altar for the celebrant(s).
- f. The altar, pews, benches, etc. may not be moved.

**V. Policies and Procedures**

- a. Alumni interested in using the chapel for Baptisms should begin by filling out the online usage request form, indicating the preferred dates and times of the ceremony. The form and full school calendar are both available from the school's website. Note that it is also the policy of Jesuit High School not to host multiple events on campus during the same time frame. In other words, chapel availability may be affected by other events happening on campus at the same time even if they are not using the chapel. Once the request is received, the couple will be contacted by Jesuit High School's Events Coordinator to discuss the date(s) requested.
- b. Once the date has been approved, your appointed sacristan will contact you to ensure all the above steps have been completed and are in compliance with the prerequisites set forth by the Archdiocese of New Orleans for Baptismal ceremonies.
- c. Jesuit High School reserves the right to change times and dates of reservations in case of school need.
- d. A donation of \$100.00 is suggested for the sacristan. This donation should be submitted to the Jesuit High School Finance office at least 30 days before the ceremony.
- e. In accordance with the Safety & Security policies of Jesuit High School, please note the following: People attending events in the Holy Name of Jesus Chapel, St. Ignatius Hall, & other small attendance events will need to obtain a visitor's pass. All guests must enter via the main entrance located under the blue awning on Banks St. near the receptionist. Guest(s) must be escorted by the event organizer to the event location and escorted back to the reception desk after the event. Guests are not permitted to wander into areas of the building not being used by the event.

A M D G

*Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*