

The Ministry of Christian Initiation

Pastoral Guidance

for the

Rite of Baptism for Children



*A document revised and updated
in response to parish enquiries and emerging issues.
All the information you ever need in one place!*

Contents

The Provenance of this Document	3
Resources.....	4
Pastoral Guidance.....	5
What is Baptism? What does Baptism do?	5
What liturgical options does the Rite of Baptism of Children provide?	5
The Pastoral Context: Various family situations	6
How does the <i>Rite of Baptism of Children</i> accommodate various family situations?.....	8
What are the alternatives to Baptism?.....	9
Reflections of the Diocesan Liturgy Council.....	10
Summary	11
Supporting Information.....	12
Appendix 1: Eastern Catholic Churches.....	12
Appendix 2: Eastern Churches not in full Communion with the Roman Catholic Church.....	13
Appendix 3: Other Christian Churches	16
Appendix 4: Other Faiths	19
Appendix 5: From the Pre-Nuptial Enquiry	19
Appendix 6: Request for Baptism (Sample)	20
Appendix 7: Baptismal Certificate (Sample)	22
Appendix 8: List of Religious Denominations Recognised by the Australian Government for the purposes of the <i>Marriage Act 1961</i>	23
Appendix 9: Faculties and Instructions for Priests in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle Concerning Baptism.....	27
Appendix 10: Faculties and Instructions for Deacons in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle Concerning Baptism	30

THE PROVENANCE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document, in its current form, has a long history. It was originally composed in July 2013 by the Diocesan Liturgy Council (DLC) in response to a request from the then Diocesan Pastoral Council (DPC). The DPC was seeking input regarding various liturgical options for families for the baptism of their children, including ones specific to:

- inter-Church and inter-faith families,
- single parent families,
- those wanting a thanksgiving/blessing alternative.

In the intervening years, the Diocesan Liturgy Council and the Office of the Bishop have become aware of many emerging issues in the life of the Church and broader society that have prompted a review and revision of this document. Such emerging issues include:

- the situation of 'same-sex' parents presenting a child for baptism,
- families where divorced, or divorced and remarried parents seek a child's baptism,
- parents who are unbaptised themselves enquiring about a child's baptism,
- parishes requiring parents, and/or prospective godparents, to present copies of baptism certificates before agreeing to baptise a child,
- the names parents have given their children,
- parents or guardians who may not have legal custody of a child seeking to have the child baptised.

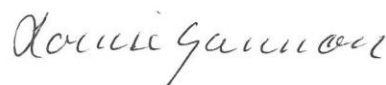
With the ever-evolving complexity of family life in Australian society, the issues indicated above are only the 'tip of the iceberg' when it comes to the variety of circumstances that may arise when parishes respond to requests for the baptism of a child.

The Diocesan Liturgy Council firmly believes that the most effective way of responding to emerging issues is to develop a thorough understanding of the Church's liturgical tradition and other resources. This document seeks to support the Church in developing that understanding and insight and provide resources to help ministers engage in meaningful conversation with families.



Cathy White

CHAIR, DIOCESAN LITURGY COUNCIL
12 MAY 2023



Louise Gannon rsj

SECRETARY, DIOCESAN LITURGY COUNCIL
12 MAY 2023

RESOURCES

In responding to the initial enquiry from the DPC and in this update, the Diocesan Liturgy Council (DLC) made use of the following resources:

- *Christian Initiation, General Introduction*, Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship, 8 September 1969, amended 23 September 1974. **[CIGI]**. NB: This document appears in both the Rite of Baptism for Children and the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults.
- *Rite of Baptism for Children*, Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship, 8 September 1969. **[RBC]**
- *The Book of Blessings*, Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship, 1984. References in this document are to the edition published in 1989 by Catholic Book Publishing Co. **[BB]**
- *Decree on Ecumenism (Unitatis Redintegratio)*, Second Vatican Council, 21 November 1964. **[UR]**
- *Decree on Catholic Eastern Churches (Orientalium Ecclesiarum)*, Second Vatican Council, 21 November 1964. **[OE]**
- *Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions (Nostra Aetate)*, Second Vatican Council, 28 October 1965 **[AE]**
- *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism*, Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, 25 March 1993. **[DAPNE]**
- *Code of Canon Law*, promulgated by Pope John Paul II, 25 January 1983. **[CIC]** NB: Baptism is dealt with in cann. 849-878.
- *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, promulgated by Pope John Paul II, 11 October 1992 **[CCC]**. NB: Baptism is addressed in nn. 1213-1284
- *Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations within the Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle*, and *Real Yet Imperfect*, Diocese of Maitland Newcastle Ecumenical Council, 2001. **[EIR]** and **[RYI]**, respectively.

Additional resources

The Ministry of Christian Initiation, including Baptism for children, is further resourced by two recent documents developed by the Diocesan Liturgy Council and its Christian Initiation Forum. These include:

[DoMN Sacraments of Initiation: A Fallow Year Resource](#)

Reimagining the Ministry of Christian Initiation: Come and See. This document will shortly be available on the diocesan website.

PASTORAL GUIDANCE

What is Baptism? What does Baptism do?

As a sacrament of faith, baptism is an action of Christ and the Church through the power of the Spirit. [CCC, n.1253, 1265-67]

Baptism incorporates us into Christ and the Church and forms us into God's people, enabling us to carry out the mission of God in the Church and the world. [CIGI, n.2, 4, 5, 6]

The sacrament of baptism constitutes a sacramental bond of unity amongst all the baptised. [DAPNE, n.92]

Baptism marks a significant moment in the journey of faith. It is the first of the three Sacraments of Initiation.

Children are baptised in the faith of the Church with the intention of being brought up in that faith. The true meaning of baptism is fulfilled in the latter. Indeed, the *Code of Canon Law* states that 'there be a well-founded hope that the child will be brought up in the Catholic religion'. [CIGI, n.7; RBC, n.2, 3; CIC, c.868§2]

The faith is not the private possession of the individual family, but the common treasure of the whole Church of Christ. [RBC, n.4]

Baptism is held in the highest honour by all Christians, including those with whom we do not share full communion. **Once validly celebrated, it is never to be lawfully repeated.** [CIGI, n.4; CIC, can.845] In circumstances where there is a legitimate doubt concerning the fact or validity of baptism, the minister would proceed with a conditional baptism, but only after all other enquiries have been exhausted.

What liturgical options does the Rite of Baptism of Children provide?

The *Rite of Baptism for Children* offers two foundational liturgical options:

- Rite of Baptism Outside Mass
- Rite of Baptism Within Mass [RBC, n.9, 29]

Within these foundational options, the *Rite* provides the following:

- The baptism of several children
- The baptism of one child

The *Rite* also provides for the following exceptional circumstances:

- Rite of Baptism by a Catechist when no Priest or Deacon is available, for several children and one child. *NB: This is the 'Shorter Rite' referred to in the Introduction and is for use 'in the absence of the ordinary minister'.* [RBC, n.20]

- Rite of Baptism for a Child in Danger of Death when no Priest or Deacon is available.
- Rite for Bringing a Baptised Child to the Church, with options for both outside Mass and within Mass. *NB: This rite is used when a child has been baptised in danger of death. It can be adapted to cover other contingencies, such as persecution or temporary disagreement between parents.*

Within the context of these various rites, the *Rite of Baptism for Children* also allows for the following:

- The inclusion of appropriate elements of a people's distinctive traditions and culture. [CIGI, n.30.2] Such adaptations are made by a Conference of Bishops and are to be approved by Rome.
- Regarding location:
 - Normally, the parish church which has a baptismal font. [RBC, n.10]
 - The Bishop may permit or direct a baptismal font to be placed within another church or public oratory within the parish boundaries. [RBC, n.11]
 - A private house, only in danger of death and with the Bishop's permission. [RBC, n.12]
 - Only in hospitals in emergencies or for some other pressing pastoral need. [RBC, n.13]
 - '... or even in some other fitting place'. It is to be noted that there must be a 'grave reason' for such an allowance. See *Code of Canon Law*, can.859,
- The possibility of celebrating baptism during a weekday Mass. [RBC, n.30]

The Pastoral Context: Various family situations

1. Families belonging to Eastern Catholic Churches

[cf. Vatican II, Decree on the Catholic Eastern Churches, (OR)]

Eastern Catholic Churches are Catholic. We share the same baptism. The different rites and laws of these particular Churches serve to enhance the unity of the Catholic Church. [See Appendix 1]

Generally, families belonging to Eastern Catholic Churches will have access to a parish and minister of their particular Church. When they are unable to do this, they may approach one of our parishes to have their children baptised. In this situation, our clergy baptise using our approved Rite, but the child becomes a member of their own particular Church, a fact that should be noted in our Baptism Register.

All priests of the Eastern Catholic Churches can confer Confirmation validly – either in conjunction with baptism or separately – on the faithful of any rite,

including the Latin Rite, as laid down by both common and particular canon law. [OE, n.13]

2. **Ecumenical or Inter-Church families**

[*cf. Vatican II, Decree on Ecumenism, (UR)*]

An “inter-church” family is one in which one parent is Catholic, and the other belongs to another Christian Church.

The ecumenical movement involves those Churches that ‘invoke the Triune God and confess Jesus as Lord and Saviour’. [UR, n.1] The theology of communion underpinning inter-Church practices can be stated simply as Christian Churches are in ‘real though imperfect communion’ because all Christians share faith and baptism in the risen Lord – unity with the Father, through Christ and in the Spirit. [DAPNE, n.13]

The Latin Catholic Church recognises as valid the baptism of those Churches who baptise with water using a Trinitarian formula: “I baptise you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” [CIGI, n.5; DAPNE, n.93, 95]

From the Catholic viewpoint, there are two principal **divisions among Christian Churches** [UR, n.13; DAPNE, n.18]:

a. **The Eastern Churches with whom we are not in full communion** [see Appendix 2]

Because these Churches have preserved apostolic faith and succession, they are more closely united to the Catholic Church. Our relationship with them is described as ‘in almost full communion’; we speak of them as ‘sister Churches’. [CCC, n.838; EIR, n.6.1]

Therefore, in the case of the various Eastern Churches, it is enough to establish the fact of baptism. [DAPNE, n.99a]

b. **Churches of the Reformation** [UR, n.13, 19; EIR, n.6.1] [See Appendix 3]

Among these, the Anglican Communion holds a special place.

3. **Inter-faith families**

[*cf. Vatican II, Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions, (NA)*]

An “inter-faith” family is one in which one of the parents is Catholic, and the other belongs to a faith or religion other than Christianity. [See Appendix 4]

For the purposes of this document, “inter-faith” could also include someone with no particular religious affiliation or belief.

4. Various family situations, including 'Single-Parent' families.

The *Rite of Baptism for Children* makes no distinction based on family circumstances.

How does the *Rite of Baptism of Children* accommodate various family situations?

The requirement for *baptism* is faith in Jesus Christ.

The Rite promotes pastoral engagement with all families. It seeks to respect and therefore accommodate the faith stance of families, primarily through the pastoral ministry of the priest and other parish members who assist in preparing families for the baptism of their children. In the celebration itself, it is the responsibility of the presiding minister to ensure that everyone is made feel welcome:

It is also the duty of the priest to arrange that baptism is always celebrated with proper dignity and, as far as possible, adapted to the circumstances and wishes of the families concerned. Everyone who performs the rite of baptism should do so with care and devotion; he must also try to be understanding and friendly to all. [RBC, n.7.2]

Such a pastoral approach requires deep knowledge and understanding of the Rite.

The Rite states that 'children should not be deprived of baptism, because they are baptised into the faith of the Church.' [RBC, n.2] It highlights the important role of parents, indicating that they should prepare to participate in the Rite, 'moved by their own faith or with the help of friends or other members of the community.' [CIGI, n.3, 7; RBC, n.5.1; cf. RBC, n.8.4 re faith of parents]

It would seem, therefore, that even in a situation where parents may lack faith themselves but desire it for their children, there is room for the baptism of children to be supported by the faith of the community.

The Rite itself, and consequently the pastoral ministry that prepares for it, promotes transparency, and requires the presence and public consent of the parents, no matter their faith.

It is very important that the parents should be present in the celebration in which their child is reborn in water and the Holy Spirit. [RBC, n.5.2]

While the *Rite of Baptism for Children* speaks of the importance of the mother and father of the child, it does not state that they must both be Catholic. In fact, the Rite makes provision for a non-Catholic parent:

If one of the parents cannot make the profession of faith (if, for example, he is not a Catholic), he may keep silent. All that is asked of him, when he requests baptism for the child, is that he should make arrangements, or at least give permission, for the child to be instructed in the faith of its baptism. [sic] [RBC, n.5.4]

Regarding godparents, a provision is also made to include non-Catholic Christians as Christian witnesses but not as a sponsor.

Those designated as godparents must also be members of the Catholic Church and be canonically free to carry out this office. At the request of parents, a baptised and believing Christian not belonging to the Catholic Church may act as a Christian witness along with a Catholic godparent. In the case of separated Eastern Christians with whom we do not have full communion the special discipline for the Eastern Churches is to be respected. [CIGI, n.10.4; DAPNE, n.98]

The *Rite of Baptism for Children* does indicate that for some families, the journey to the baptism of their child may need to take more time. In this situation, the '*Blessing for a Child not yet Baptised*' found in the *Book of Blessings* could be used carefully to support some families in their journey to baptism. **This Blessing is not an alternative to baptism and is not to be used without an explicit desire for baptism.** However, it might be used to sustain and support families for whom the journey is longer and more complex than usual.

It is interesting to note that the document *Christian Initiation General Introduction* states that no favouritism is to be shown. [CIGI, n.11.1]

Some specifics regarding inter-church families:

While we recognise the baptism of other Churches, baptism can only be celebrated within a given Church or ecclesial community. Therefore, in the case of inter-church families, the Catholic Church requires that only one minister confer the sacrament – the simultaneous pouring of water and proclamation. [CIGI, n.4; DAPNE, n.97]

Where appropriate, the Bishop may permit a minister of another Church or ecclesial community to participate in the other parts of the baptism liturgy, e.g. by reading a lesson, offering a prayer or reflection, giving a blessing, etc. 'Reciprocity is possible only if baptism celebrated in another Community does not conflict with Catholic principles or discipline.' [DAPNE, n.97; cf. EIR, n.7.2.2]

The pastoral sensitivity required by the Rite itself is reflected in the *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism* (n.150-151). In commenting on the pre-marriage promise required of the Catholic party to bring children up 'according to the law of Christ and his Church' [See Appendix 5], it notes that 'the Catholic parent will do so with respect for the religious freedom and conscience of the other parent, and with due regard for the unity and permanence of the marriage and for the maintenance of the communion of the family.' [DAPNE, n.151; cf. EIR, n.7.2]

What are the alternatives to Baptism?

The Catholic Church does not provide any alternative to baptism. As already stated, baptism is an expression of faith in Christ and a desire to be a member of the Church community. It would be hoped that the faith community engages with families as they discern whether baptism is what they desire for their child. Families who discern that their situation is best accommodated with something other than baptism might be

supported to use other social rituals, such as naming rituals. Indeed, if the faith community continues to support such families, they might, in time, come to seek baptism for their child.

Reflections of the Diocesan Liturgy Council

Like all sacraments of the Church, baptism requires faith. It does not work by magic. Like marriage, baptism celebrates ritually an existing reality. Because of this existing reality, and through the Grace of God, the celebration becomes an experience of conversion where people experience a deepening of the reality the sacrament celebrates. The ritual does not magically produce what does not already exist.

Therefore, the Diocesan Liturgy Council believes that simply searching for options and alternatives within the *Rite of Baptism for Children* is not likely to resolve complex pastoral challenges.

Given its reflection on the *Rite of Baptism for Children*, the Liturgy Council would like to draw attention to the **three important phases of baptism** indicated in the Rite:

- **Preparation** [CIGI, n.3, 7, 13; RBC, n.5, 8; CIC, c.867§1]
- **Celebration**
- **Ongoing formation/mystagogy**. The Catechism refers to a 'post-baptismal catechumenate' regarding infant baptism. [cf. RBC, n.3, 5; CCC, n.1231]

Renewed attention to all three stages might prove to be a fruitful path to enlivening and deepening the experience of baptism, both for the family of the child and the faith community.

Regarding preparation, the Rite suggests that this might begin before the child is born. What might this mean in reality? What opportunities and options might this suggest to a community? [RBC, n.8.2]

The *Book of Blessings* provides some resources that might prove helpful in supporting families as they prepare for the birth of their child. These might become significant steps in the journey parents make in discerning whether or not they will seek baptism for their child. For example:

- The Order of Blessing of Parents before Childbirth [BB, nn.215-235]
- Orders for the Blessing of a Mother before and After Childbirth [BB, nn.236-278]
- Order of Blessing for the Parents of an Adopted Child [BB, nn.302-321]

If the community is journeying with families in the lead-up to the birth of a child, then the *Book of Blessings* also provides resources for occasions when that journey may come to a tragic end. It also contains a blessing for parents after a miscarriage. [BB, nn.279-301).

Most of the blessings in the *Book of Blessings* invite the adaptation of the community, and as such, their use is open to the informed and creative engagement of the community.

The *Rite of Baptism for Children* indicates that preparation is not only about information but also experiences of prayer, particularly focused on the Word (not unlike the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*). Perhaps the Blessings mentioned above could provide opportunities that bring young families together for a social time that could also include some prayer, a context in which young families who have had their children baptised and are part of the faith community might mentor families discerning baptism.

In such a context, 'mentoring' families might engage in some mystagogy as they share their own reflections on the experience of the baptism of their children and how they are beginning to unpack the meaning of baptism in their families' lives as they begin to nurture the faith of their children.

It is worth noting that the *Book of Blessings* also has an 'Order for the Blessing of a Baptised Child' (BB p. 73). Again it is up to the community to imagine how such a blessing could be used with families post-baptism, though not as an alternative to baptism.

Such opportunities have more potential to meet people where they are – as Jesus did. And in time, it may lead them to seek baptism for their children and ultimately draw them into eucharist.

Summary

- Baptism is the means of initiation into Christ and the faith community.
- Baptism is not the private possession of the individual family.
- All who have faith in Christ and wish to be baptised into the Church are welcome.
- Parents have important parts to play before, during and after the ceremony. It is their duty "to enable the child to know God".
- The parish priest has various duties, including ensuring the preparation of the parents before baptism, helping in the ongoing formation of the child after baptism, and ensuring that baptism is always celebrated with proper dignity.
- There is no indication in the Rite of an alternative to baptism.
- Sample Baptism Request Form and Certificate are provided. [Appendices 6 and 7]

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The following appendices provide important information and some examples of forms to support parishes and ministers in negotiating some of the more complex aspects of pastoral ministry with those seeking the baptism of their children.

Appendix 1: Eastern Catholic Churches

Structured by liturgical tradition.

Alexandrian Tradition

- Coptic Catholic Church (Patriarchate)
- Eritrean Catholic Church
- Ethiopian Catholic Church

Byzantine Tradition

- Albanian Greek Catholic Church
- Belarussian Greek Catholic Church
- Bulgarian Greek Catholic Church
- Greek Byzantine Catholic Church
- Greek Catholic Church of Croatia and Serbia
- Hungarian Greek Catholic Church
- Italo-Albanian Catholic Church
- Macedonian Greek Catholic Church
- Melkite Greek Catholic Church *
- Romanian Greek Catholic Church
- Russian Greek Catholic Church
- Ruthenian Greek Catholic Church
- Slovak Greek Catholic Church
- Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church *

Chaldean Tradition

- Chaldean Catholic Church (Patriarchate) *
- Syro-Malabar Catholic Church *

Antiochian Tradition

- Antiochene Syriac Maronite Church (Patriarchate)
- Syrian Catholic Church (Patriarchate)
- Syro-Malankara Catholic Church

Armenian Tradition

- Armenian Catholic Church (Patriarchate)

* Entries marked have their own hierarchical structure within Australia.

Appendix 2: Eastern Churches not in full communion with the Roman Catholic Church

A. Oriental Orthodox Churches (also known as 'non-Chalcedonian' Churches)

Oriental Churches are not Truly Orthodox, especially in their expression of the Trinity or the nature of Jesus as truly God and truly human.

Alexandrian Tradition

- Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria
- French Coptic Orthodox Church
- Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church
- Eritrean Orthodox Tewahedo Church

Syro-Antiochene Tradition

- Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch (*not to be confused with the canonical Church of Antioch*)
- Jacobite Syrian Christian Church
- Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church (*aka Indian Orthodox Church*)

Armenian Tradition

- Armenian Apostolic Church
 - Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin
 - Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople
 - Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem
- Hoy See of Cilicia

NB: Some other churches identify as 'Oriental Orthodox', which may or may not be recognised or in communion with the Churches above or each other. Examples include the British Orthodox Church, the Celtic Orthodox Church, the Ancient British Church, and the Malabar Independent Syrian Church, among many others.

B. Church of the East

The Church of the East broke from the remainder of Christianity before the Council of Ephesus and adhered to the doctrine of Nestorianism.

- Assyrian Church of the East
 - Chaldean Syrian Church
- Ancient Church of the East

C. Orthodox Churches (also known as Eastern Orthodox Churches)

A communion of national and regional churches, most of whom recognise the Patriarch of Constantinople as a point of unity. The list below should be considered as a guide only as there is some internal disagreement within the communion about which churches are deemed to be independent (marked with '' where known).*

Some churches within the communion are considered autonomous (marked with '+'), and others are considered semi-autonomous (marked with '^'), while still others have limited self-government (marked with '#').

Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople
Estonian Apostolic Orthodox Church +
Orthodox Church of Finland +
Church of Crete ^
Monastic Community of Mount Athos #
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Italy and Malta #
Korean Orthodox Church #
Exarchate of the Philippines #
American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese #
Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada #
Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA #
Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria ('and all Africa')
Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch ('and All the East')
Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America +
Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem
Church of Sinai +
Patriarchate of Bulgaria
Apostolic Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Georgia
Serbian Orthodox Church
Russian Orthodox Church
Belarusian Orthodox Church +
Metropolis of Chişinău and All Moldova +
Orthodox Church in Japan + *
Chinese Orthodox Church + *
Estonian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate ^
Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia ^
Archdiocese of Russian Orthodox Churches in Western Europe #
Romanian Orthodox Church
Metropolis of Bessarabia +
Romanian Orthodox Metropolis of the Americas +
Romanian Orthodox Metropolis of Western and Southern Europe +
Ukrainian Orthodox Vicariate Sighetu Marmatei #
Church of Cyprus
Church of Greece
Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Albania
Macedonian Orthodox Church
Polish Autocephalous Orthodox Church
Orthodox Church of the Czech Lands and Slavakia
Orthodox Church in America *
Orthodox Church of Ukraine *

NB: The jurisdiction of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Moscow Patriarchate is currently in dispute following the invasion of Ukraine by Russia. It should not be confused with the Orthodox Church of Ukraine

The following churches are unrecognised by the above churches:

- Abkhazian Orthodox Church
- American Orthodox Catholic Church
- Belarusian Autocephalous Orthodox Church
- Latvian Orthodox Church
- Montenegrin Orthodox Church
- Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Kyiv Patriarchate
- Turkish Orthodox Church
- Any of the “Old Believers” Churches
- Any of the “Old Calendarist” or “True Orthodox” Churches

It should be recognised that many churches with ‘Orthodox’ in their name may not be recognised as truly being in communion with or recognised by the main Orthodox Churches listed here. If in doubt, it is best to seek advice.

Appendix 3: Other Christian Churches

The Churches listed immediately below have an agreement to recognise each other's baptism:

The Anglican Church of Australia
The Antiochian Orthodox Church
The Armenian Apostolic Church
The Congregational Federation of Australia
The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia
The Lutheran Church of Australia
The Roman Catholic Church of Australia (*noted here because the Catholic Church is on the list*)
The Romanian Orthodox Church
The Uniting Church in Australia (*a union of the Congregational Union of Australia, the Methodist Church of Australia, and the Presbyterian Church of Australia*)
The Presbyterian Church of Australia.

Other Churches and ecclesial communities whose baptism the Catholic Church recognises as valid but with whom we do not share an agreement include:

Adventists (*baptism but not infant dedication*)¹
African Methodist Episcopalian
Amish
Armenian Church
Assembly of God (*adult baptism but not Infant dedication*) (*aka Australian Christian Churches*)
Assyrian Church
Baptist Church (*adults only*)
Evangelical United Brethren
Church of the Brethren
Catholic Apostolic Church
Church of Christ
Church of God
Church of South India
Church of Sri Lanka
Christian and Missionary Alliance
Christian Outreach
Congregational Church
Countess of Huntington's Connexion
Connexion Czech National Church
Disciples of Christ

¹ Baptisms within the Seventh-day Adventist Church need to be closely checked as practices can vary from place to place and from time to time. Obtaining a baptism certificate and talking to the person or witnesses is highly advisable.

Dutch Reformed Church
 Episcopalians (Anglicans USA)
 Ethiopian Church
 Evangelical Churches
 Free Church of England
 French Protestant Church Union
 Four Square Gospel Church (min age 9)
 Holy Catholic Church of Japan (Japanese Anglican Church)
 Independent Calvinist Churches
 Jacobite Churches
 Liberal Catholic Church
 Lusitanian Church
 Lutherans
 Malabar Christians
 Mar Thoma Church (Christians of St Thomas)
 Mennonites (*Some communities invalid*)
 Moravian Church
 Church of the Nazarene
 Nestorian Churches
 Old Catholics
 Old Roman Catholics
 Pentecostal Churches (*only when the Trinitarian formula is used; not when a Unitarian formula is used*)
 Philippine Independent Church
 Philippine Episcopal Church (Anglican)
 Polish National Church
 Protestant Church of Tuvalu
 Reformed Churches
 South Eastern Christian Centre (*baptism when old enough to choose (as young as 5); infants are dedicated*)
 Spanish Reformed Episcopal Church
 Uncle Tom of the Friendly Road (*if baptised, though usually dedicated, need to check the original certificate for endorsement*)
 United Church of Canada
 United Church of Christ
 United Reformed Church
 Waldensians
 England – Wesleyan Chapel (*there are two branches: the second branch has baptism at 15 or over(?)*)
 Zion (*a movement in American Methodist; NOT the independent sects*)

NB: Please note that 'dedications' are different from baptism.

The Catholic Church does NOT recognise as valid the baptism of the following Churches and ecclesial communities:

Apostolic Church
 Bohemian Free Thinkers *(no baptism)*
 Children of God/'The Family'
 Christian Community
 Christian Scientists *(no baptism)*
 Christadelphians
 Church of Divine Science
 Church of the Latter Day Saints (Mormons) *(recognition changed with effect from 5 June 2001)*
 Doukhobors (Christians of the Universal Brotherhood)
 Evangelical Association *(the adult form of baptism unknown)*
 Iglesia ni Cristo
 Jehovah's Witnesses
 New Jerusalem Church
 Old Believers *(baptism practices suspect)*
 Pentecostal Churches *(when a Unitarian formula is used)*
 People's Church of Chicago
 Plymouth Brethren *(unknown)*
 Quakers (Friendly Society)
 Ratana (Maori Based)
 Reunification Church (Moonies)
 Salvation Army *(no baptism)*
 Shakers *(no baptism)*
 Spiritualist Church *(no baptism)*
 Swedenborgians
 Universalists/Unitarians
 England – Wesleyan Chapel *(branch like the Salvation Army has no baptism)*
 Zion *(the practice of independent sects unknown)*

NB: See Code of Canon Law, can.869

With thanks to Jane Dunn at the Diocesan Office of the Tribunal. These lists change over time, and questions of validity should be referred to the Tribunal.

It is always recommended to obtain a copy of a 'baptism certificate' to assist in reaching certainty about the validity of baptism. In the absence of a certificate, the testimony of a witness to the baptism is also acceptable.

For the purposes of information, Appendix 8 includes a list of Religious Denominations recognised by the Australian Government for the purposes of the Marriage Act, 1961. The list is quite comprehensive.

Appendix 4: Other Faiths

'Other Faiths' refers to faiths other than Christian and include, by way of example:

- Judaism (see CCC, n.839)
- Islam (Muslims) (see CCC, n.841)
- Hinduism
- Buddhism
- Indigenous Faiths

For the purposes of information, Appendix 8 includes a list of Religious Denominations recognised by the Australian Government for the purposes of the Marriage Act, 1961. The list includes non-Christian faiths.

Appendix 5: From the Pre-Nuptial Enquiry

The following question is asked of both the bride and bridegroom:

- Q. 10 Are you prepared to accept children lovingly (from God and bring them up according to his law) (from God and bring them up according to the law of Christ and his Church)?

.....

(Strike out which formula is not appropriate in the case of non-believers and non-Catholics)

Appendix 6: Request for Baptism (Sample)

Baptism Date _____

Child's Name _____

CATHOLIC PARISH OF FORSTER-TUNCURRY

REQUEST FOR BAPTISM OF A CHILD

I/We, the undersigned parent(s), request that our child be baptised into the community of faith that is the Church, and undertake to raise our child in the practice of that faith, by loving God and our neighbour as Jesus Christ has taught and commanded us.

OUR CHILD:	
Full Name: _____	M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/>
Date of Birth: _____	Place of Birth: _____

OURSELVES:
Father's Full Name: _____
Father's Religion: _____
Mother's Full Maiden Name: _____
Mother's Religion: _____
Address: _____ _____
Phone: (H) _____ (M) _____
Email: _____
<u>Details of Marriage:</u>
Place of Marriage: _____
Date of Marriage: _____

<p>PRESENTATION TO THE COMMUNITY:</p> <p><i>Having your child baptised means that they are being received into a faith community. We ask that you present your child to the faith community prior to the baptism liturgy, either on the day or in the weeks beforehand.</i></p> <p>Date of Presentation: _____</p> <p>6pm St Mary, Star of the Sea Tuncurry <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>7am St Mary, Star of the Sea Tuncurry <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>9am Holy Name of Jesus Forster <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>CELEBRATION OF BAPTISM:</p> <p><i>The celebration of Baptism takes place on most Sundays immediately after the 9am Mass at Forster, starting at approximately 10:15am. Please ask your guests to assemble in readiness to start at that time.</i></p> <p>Date of Baptism: _____</p> <p><i>It is also possible for the Baptism to be celebrated during Mass if desired. Please speak with Fr Andrew if you would like to consider this possibility.</i></p>
--	--

(please turn over)

OUR CHILD'S GODPARENTS:

To be admitted as a Godparent, a person must

1. *be a Catholic who has been confirmed and has already received the sacrament of Eucharist, and who lives a life in harmony with the Christian faith;*
2. *have completed their sixteenth year (an unless an exception is warranted);*
3. *be free to carry out the office of Godparent, and intend to do so; and*
4. *not be the father or mother of the child.*

A baptised Christian, who is not a Catholic, may also be admitted but only in company with a Catholic Godparent. At least one Godparent must be Catholic.

It is customary that the child have only one Godfather and one Godmother, and a request for more than this would need to be made to the Parish Priest.

In light of the above, I/we nominate the people below as Godparents to our Child:

	Name	Religion
1.	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____

Understanding the seriousness of the responsibility we accept in making this request, I/we undertake to assist our child to know God by living a Christian life, to prepare our child to receive confirmation and complete their initiation by participation in the Holy Eucharist.

Father's Signature

Mother's Signature

*A suggested donation of \$50 may be given to the priest on the day of the Baptism.
This amount is to help cover the cost of administration and supplies.*

OFFICE USE ONLY:

Date Received: _____	Preparation Meeting: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Baptised by: _____	Parish Register No: _____
<u>Permission for Baptism Outside Parish:</u>	
Required: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Date Received: _____
Date Notification Sent: _____	

Appendix 7: Baptismal Certificate (Sample)

Certificate of Baptism

Name:

Born:

was baptised with water
in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit

On:

At:

By:

Parents:

Address:

Godparents:

Confirmation:

Marriage:

Date of Issue:

Fr Andrew Doohan
Parish Priest

The following Churches have agreed that a Certificate used in this form is evidence of Christian Baptism:
the Anglican Church of Australia, the Antiochian Orthodox Church, the Armenian Apostolic Church, the
Congregational Federation of Australia, the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia, the Lutheran Church
of Australia, the Roman Catholic Church of Australia, the Romanian Orthodox Church, the Uniting Church in
Australia, the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

*With thank to Fr Andrew Doohan from Forster Tuncurry Parish for the sample forms in
Appendices 6 and 7.*

Appendix 8: List of Religious Denominations Recognised by the Australian Government for the purposes of the Marriage Act 1961.

The following religious denominations have been recognised for the purposes of the Marriage Act 1961 via the Marriage (Recognised Denominations) Proclamation 2018 dated 21 November 2018. They can nominate members of their 'clergy' to lawfully conduct marriages.

Other entities that are not included below, usually smaller independent communities, may also have 'religious marriage celebrants'. These are not nominated by the denomination itself but are registered individually.

A2A Ltd.

Aboriginal Evangelical Fellowship of Australia

Ananda Marga

Anglican Catholic Church in Australia, The

Anglican Church of Australia, The

Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese Church of Australia and New Zealand

Apostolic Church Australia Limited

Apostolic Church of Queensland, The

Armenian Apostolic Church in Australia, The

Assembly of God Church of Samoa in Australia Inc

Associated Christian Ministries

Associated Christian Spiritual Churches of Australia

Australian Christadelphian Ecclesia

Australian Christian Churches

Australian Church of Antioch, The

Australian Fellowship of Bible-believing Churches

Australian Fellowship of Mission Centres (Youth with a Mission)

Australian Indigenous Ministries

Australian Unitarian Druze

Australian Zoroastrian Association of NSW Incorporated

Autocephalic Greek Orthodox Church of America and Australia

Baha'i Faith

Baptist Union of Australia, The

Bethesda Ministries International Incorporated

Brethren

C3 Church Global

Caodai Overseas Missionary (Australia) Incorporated

Chinese Methodist Church in Australia

Christian and Missionary Alliance of Australia, The

Christian Church in Australia Incorporated

Christian Church, The

Christian Community Churches of Australia

Christian Israelite Church

Christian Outreach Centre

Christian Reformed Churches of Australia
 Churches of Christ in Australia
 Church of God (Australia) Limited
 Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Australia), The
 Church of Pentecost Australia, The
 Church of Scientology Incorporated, The
 Church of the Foursquare Gospel (Australia) Limited
 Church of the Foursquare Gospel in Australia
 Church of the Nazarene
 Church of Tonga in Australia, The
 Church of Torres Strait
 Community of Christ
 Congregational Christian Church in Samoa, The
 Congregational Federation of Australia and New Zealand
 Connexions Ltd
 Cook Islands Christian Church
 Coptic Orthodox Church of Australia
 CRC Churches International
 Crosslink Christian Network
 Dream Centre Christian Church Limited
 ECKANKAR Australia
 Edge Church International Ltd
 Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Debre Amin Abune Teklehaimanot Church
 Incorporated
 Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Australia, The
 Federation of Australian Buddhist Councils Incorporated
 Fellowship of Congregational Churches
 Fellowship of Evangelical Churches of Australia
 Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches
 Free Church of Tonga, The
 Free Reformed Churches of Australia
 Free Serbian Orthodox Church, Diocese for Australia and New Zealand
 Full Gospel Churches of Australia
 Goshen Ministry International Outreach
 Grace Communion International Ltd
 Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia
 Hillsong Church Australia
 Hindu Council of Australia, The
 Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East
 Hope Ministries Australia
 Hungarian Reformed Church of Australia, The
 Iglesia ni Cristo
 Independent Baptist Fellowship
 Independent Baptists of Australia
 Indian Orthodox Church Incorporated

International Buddhist Association of Australia Co-operative Limited
International Council of Spiritualists
International Society for Krishna Consciousness
Islam
Jehovah's Witnesses
Jewry
Korean Presbyterian Reformed Church Incorporated
Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church in Victoria, The
Liberal Catholic Church, The
Life Church International Limited
Lutheran Church of Australia Incorporated, The
Macedonian-Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Church
Macedonian Orthodox Church
Malankara Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church
Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar
Methodist Church of Samoa in Australia
Metropolitanate of Australia and New Zealand of the Serbian Orthodox Church
Ministers Fellowship International
National Sikh Council of Australia Inc
New Apostolic Church in Australia, The
New Church in Australia, The
Old Apostolic Church (Australia), The
One Light Federation
Pacific LMS Church Australasia Inc.
Peace Christian Ministries Limited
Pioneer Network Australia Incorporated
Potters House Christian Fellowship of Australia, The
Power of the Spirit Ltd
Presbyterian Church of Australia, The
Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia
Presbyterian Reformed Church
Reach Out International Limited
Reformed Presbyterian Church of Australia, The
Religious Society of Friends, The
Restoration Fellowships International
Revival Centres International
Revival Fellowship, The
Rhema Family Churches Australia
Riverview Church Incorporated
Roman Catholic Church
Romanian Orthodox Church
Rosa Veritas Incorporated
Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia
Sabian Mandaean Religious Community
Salvation Army, The

Seventh-day Adventist Church
Shia Islamic Assembly
Shree Sanatan Dharm Pratinidhi Sabha of Australia Inc
Siasi Uesiliana Tau'ataina'o Tonga i Aositelelia Limited
Society of Saint Pius X Limited
Southern Cross Association of Churches, The
Spirit of the Earth Medicine Society
Strict and Particular Baptist Churches of Australia, The
Syrian Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia and New Zealand (Patriarchal Vicarate)
Limited
Ukrainian Autocephalic Orthodox Church in Diaspora, Diocese of Australia and New
Zealand
Ukrainian Catholic Church in Australia
Unitarians
United Aborigines Mission
United Church of God—Australia
United Pentecostal Church of Australia
United Spiritualism of Australia
Uniting Church in Australia, The
Victorian Spiritualists' Union
Victory Life Centre Incorporated
Vineyard Churches Australia
Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Connexion in Victoria, The
Wesleyan Methodist Church, The
Westminster Presbyterian Church, The
Worship Centre Christian Churches Worldwide (Australia) Ltd

Appendix 9: Faculties and Instructions for Priests in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle Concerning Baptism

The following are extracted from the document Faculties and Instructions for Priests of the Diocese 2017, promulgated by Bishop Bill Wright with effect from 1 January 2017.

Section I: Faculties granted by universal law to Presbyters

- 2.3 Adults and children who belong to a Church *Sui Iuris* **are to be** referred to their parish priest.
- 3.1 The universal law of the Church specially entrusts the responsibility of oversight of the administration of baptism to parish priests, with the assistance of priests and deacons who are the ordinary ministers of the sacrament along with the bishop (CIC, cc. 530, 861).
- 3.2 Ordinarily baptism is to be celebrated in the parish church (CIC, c. 857 §2).
- 3.3 Outside the case of necessity, **you may not** confer the sacrament outside of your own parish without proper permission, i.e. from the parish priest (CIC, c. 862).
- 3.4.1 **You may** baptise catechumens seven years of age and older who have the use of reason, and confirm them in the same rite without referring them to the bishop (see CIC, cc. 863, 852 §1, 883 2°). This Faculty may not be sub-delegated. For the lawful exercise of this Faculty, the following conditions are to be observed:
 - 3.4.1.1 for those eighteen years of age and older, the candidate shall have progressed through the stages of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults.
 - 3.4.1.2 for children of catechetical age (between seven and eighteen), the candidate shall have progressed through the stages of the Rite of Christian Initiation Who Have Reached Catechetical Age and,
 - 3.4.1.3 in the extraordinary circumstances envisioned in the RCIA, paragraph 307, an abbreviated catechumenate is utilised.
- 3.5 Besides the case of danger of death, **you may** confer baptism in a private home if it is difficult for the one to be baptised to leave the house (CIC, c. 860 §1).
- 3.6.1 **You may** baptise anyone not yet validly baptised including:
 - 3.6.1.1 a fetus, provided the person is alive (CIC, cc. 864, 871)
 - 3.6.1.2 those who had the use of reason at any time during their life may not be baptised without having manifested this intention; they must also have some knowledge of the principal truths of the faith and must

promise to observe the commandments of the Christian religion (CIC, c. 865 §20 and

- 3.6.1.3 infants and children in danger of death are to be baptised without delay if baptism is requested by a parent or guardian (CIC, c 867 §2).
- 3.7.1 The Rite of Christian Initiation for the Dying is to be used if the ritual is available. *NB: This ritual is found in Pastoral Care of the Sick: Rites of Anointing and Viaticum (PCS).*
- 3.7.2 The one to be baptised must demonstrate "*some knowledge of the principal truths of the faith*" and also "*promise to observe the commandments of the Christian religion*". This demonstration and promise is ascertained by an affirmative answer to the four questions you are to ask at the beginning of the rite (PCS, 282).
- 3.8.1 If, after a serious investigation, there remain doubts about the validity of a non-Catholic baptism, **you may** conditionally baptise a candidate for reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church.
- 3.8.2 While the non-essential rites may be omitted, the renunciation of sin, the profession of faith, the water baptism, and anointing with Chrism must be included (CIC, c. 869).
- 4.1.1 With due regard for the rights of the parish priest, **you may make an exception** for a just cause to the required age of sixteen at baptism or confirmation (CIC, c. 874, §1, 2). Ordinarily, the exception should be of only one year.
- 4.1.2 **You may** admit a baptised person who belongs to a non-Catholic ecclesial community as a witness (*testis*) to baptism, but only in the company of a Catholic sponsor (CIC, c. 874, §2).
- 4.1.3 **You may** admit as a sponsor (*patrinus*) an Orthodox Christian, but only together with a Catholic sponsor (CIC, 874, §2).
- 13.8.1 For pastoral reasons, in particular circumstances, **you may** invite a minister of another church or ecclesial community to take part in the celebration by reading a lesson, offering a prayer, or the like. The actual baptism is to be celebrated by the Catholic minister alone.
- 13.8.2 This Faculty would be used typically at the baptism of an infant of parents in a mixed marriage where the non-Catholic party is active in his or her own denomination, or if the non-Catholic minister is a friend or relative of the couple.
- 13.9.1 DAPNE also states, "*Reciprocity is possible only if a baptism in another community does not conflict with Catholic principles or discipline.*"

13.9.2 Thus **you should not** participate in the baptism of another church or ecclesial community if either parent of the one baptised is Catholic (CIC, cc. 1125, 1366) or if the baptism of that community is invalid.

Section II: Faculties Granted by Universal Law to Parish Priests

16 Within the territory of their parish, by virtue of their office, parish priests are entrusted to administer baptism (CIC, c 530).

Appendix 10: Faculties and Instructions for Deacons in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle Concerning Baptism

The following are extracted from the document Faculties and Instructions for Deacons of the Diocese 2017, promulgated by Bishop Bill Wright with effect from 1 January 2017.

Section I: Faculties Granted by Universal Law to Deacons

- 4.1 The universal law of the Church specially entrusts the responsibility of oversight of the administration of baptism to parish priests, with the assistance of priests and deacons who are the ordinary ministers of the sacrament along with the bishop (CIC, cc. 530, 861).
- 4.2 ordinarily baptism **is to be** celebrated in the parish church (CIC, c. 857, §2) and
- 4.3 outside the case of necessity, **you may not** confer the sacrament outside of your own parish without proper permission, i.e., from the parish priest (CIC, c. 862),
 - 4.4.1 **you may** baptise catechumens seven years of age and older who have the use of reason without referring them to the bishop (CIC, cc. 863, 852 §1). This Faculty may not be sub-delegated. This Faculty assumes one has the agreement of the catechumens' proper pastor. For the lawful exercise of this Faculty, the following conditions are to be observed:
 - 4.4.1.1 for those eighteen years of age and older, the candidate shall have progressed through the stages of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults
 - 4.4.1.2 for children of catechetical age (between seven and eighteen), the candidate shall have progressed through the stages of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, Part II dealing with children who have reached catechetical age and,
 - 4.4.1.3 in the extraordinary circumstances envisioned in the RCIA, paragraph 307, an abbreviated catechumenate is to be utilised.
- 4.5 Besides the case of danger of death, **you may** confer baptism in a private home if it is difficult for the one to be baptised to leave the house (CIC, C. 860 §1). This Faculty may one be used within the territory of the parish to which you are appointed or within the limits of the pastoral community to which you are assigned.
- 4.6.1 **you may** baptise anyone not yet validly baptised including:
 - 4.6.1.1 a fetus, provided the person is alive (CIC, cc. 864, 871)
 - 4.6.1.2 those who had the use of reason at any time during their life may not be baptised without having manifested this intention; they must also

have some knowledge of the principal truths of the faith and must promise to observe the commandments of the Christian religion (CIC, c.865 §2) and

- 4.6.1.3 infants and children in danger of death are to be baptised without delay if baptism is requested by a parent or guardian (CIC, c. 867 §2).
- 4.7.1 the Rite of Christian Initiation for the Dying **is to be** used if the ritual is available. *NB: This ritual is found in Pastoral Care of the Sick: Rites of Anointing and Viaticum (PCS).*
- 4.7.2 the one to be baptised must demonstrate "some knowledge of the principal truths of the faith" and also "promise to observe the commandments of the Christian religion". This demonstration and promise is ascertained by an affirmative answer to the four questions you are to ask at the beginning of the rite (PCS, 282).
- 4.7.3 after asking the questions, if death is imminent, it suffices to observe what is necessary for validity: water, baptism, and the Trinitarian formula (CIC, cc. 850, 853; PCS, 277).
- 4.8.1 If, after a serious investigation, there remain doubts about the validity of a non-Catholic baptism, **you may** conditionally baptise a candidate for reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church and
- 4.8.2 while the non-essential rites may be omitted, the renunciation of sin, the profession of faith, the water baptism, and anointing with chrism must be included (CIC, c. 869).
- 4.9.1 for pastoral reasons, in particular circumstances, **you may** invite a minister of another church or ecclesial community to take part in the celebration of baptism by reading a text of Scripture, offering prayer, or the like and
- 4.9.2 the actual baptism is to be celebrated by the Catholic alone (DAPNE, 97).

Acknowledgements

Cover photo: © Mundy Family. Morisset Parish. All rights reserved. Used with permission.
With thanks to the late Cardinal Cassidy for his advice on appendices.

