

All sacraments celebrated after Baptism are recorded at the Church of Baptism, and it is important to have the right information properly recorded at that particular parish or, in the case of the military, at the Military Archdiocese. Even though baptismal certificates are issued on the day of Baptism, the actual recording of the sacrament does not take place until after the celebration to ensure that it has actually been celebrated. We have had situations here where a baptismal certificate was issued, but the sacrament was not celebrated on that particular day as scheduled.

We request a recently dated copy (dated no more than six months old) of the baptismal certificate to ensure that the sacrament was recorded and that all pertinent information was recorded properly. While it is true that the majority of families do not run into issues regarding another baptismal certificate, we have situations every year where the baptism was not recorded, or names of parents / godparents / dates of birth and baptism were incorrect. In the past, we have had sacramental notifications of First Communion sent to the Church of baptism, where that particular church notified us that they had no record of that child's baptism. Of course, the only way to know if all the information is incorrect or not recorded is to request a certificate.

We do this not to add any stress to the families, but to merely ensure that both you as parents and we as the parish have the appropriate information. Usually, it is a quick phone call to the Church of Baptism to request a new certificate, which most parishes are happy to do. We get numerous phone calls at St. John's requesting baptismal certificates as well and are able to produce a new certificate fairly quickly, at no expense to the family.

With a large parish of at least 2800 families, we request the cooperation of the parents in this matter, as we have almost 140 children preparing for First Communion every year, another 100 high school students preparing for Confirmation, and another 25 – 50 adults who are completing their sacramental journey in the Catholic Church. If parents know that all their children will be celebrating First Communion or Confirmation here at St. John's, some families go ahead and request baptismal certificates for all their children, which we would be more than happy to accept. Your cooperation helps us in facilitating a smooth sacramental process at St. John's.

Feel free to contact the parish office at (757) 426-2180 for any questions or concerns.