



*At Sacred Heart we are inspired by Jesus to be the very best we can be. We look after one another and show respect and love through our relationships with one another. Jesus is in our hearts.*

*'Let Your Light Shine' Matthew 5:16*



Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2015  
**Baptism Policy in the Parish of the Good Shepherd**

Dear Parents,

To encourage families to be part of our worshipping community on a Sunday and to help them understand the great gift of the sacraments as part of parish life I am updating our parish policy. As parents take on the responsibility of bringing their children up as Catholics at least one of the parents needs to be a Catholic and it is the responsibility of parents not other members of the family to request baptism.

For a baptism to take place within the parish the child and family need to live in the parish or have permission from the parish priest where they do live. Should a family who live within the parish wish the baptism to take place outside of the parish, for whatever reason, they require permission from the parish priest of the Good Shepherd Parish. From today anyone inquiring about a baptism within the parish needs to give six months notice (this corresponds with the practice for weddings within the diocese) and during that time attend mass regularly on a Sunday to demonstrate a strong commitment to their faith.

To help keep the sacrament of baptism separate to and untainted by primary school admissions we will now say that children who turn four after the 31st August will not be baptised between the 1st September and the 30th April. They will certainly be eligible for baptism (providing families have fulfilled the criteria above) but this will not take place until after the schools final admission meeting has taken place. We would hope that most Catholic Families would have their children baptised well before this time. Should families require permission for baptism elsewhere this will be granted within the guidelines of our own parish policy.

**Father Chris Gorton**