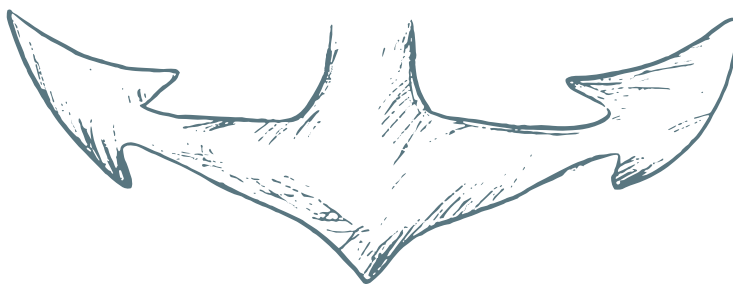


CLAIM



Leader Guide



Faith and Family Life
Catholic Ministries

AN INVITATION

You have been invited to welcome a new member into the Church! Oftentimes, these first moments can be missed opportunities. Baptism becomes a quick cultural celebration of faith, rather than the sacramental beginning of a new child into a life and community of faith. You have the chance to change this fundamental first encounter.

Claim is a resource to support you in this pursuit.

Claim ultimately calls parents into intentionality. It allows them to look at their own faith roots and encourages them to have thoughtful discussions about beliefs for their family going forward. Claim presents the sacrament of Baptism through content that helps parents understand its rich meaning and prepares them to participate more fully in the sacrament on Baptism day.

The vitality of your Church community will speak loudly as parents come to fill out paperwork, attend meetings, and meet other couples. Use this opportunity to let your hospitality, encouragement, and support be the place they meet Jesus.

“The catechesis of parents who are asking to have their children baptized: the community, in the person of the catechists, should take care to welcome, listen to, and understand the reasons for the parents’ request, and provide an appropriate pathway for them to reawaken the grace of the gift of faith that they have received. It is also good for the godparents to be involved in this journey, and to provide adequate time for it to unfold” (Directory for Catechesis 232c).

PARENT MEETINGS

Claim is an at-home experience designed for parents who are seeking to have their infant or young child Baptized in the Church. Over 5 at-home Parent Meetings they will be prepared to actively participate in the Rite and be inspired to live out their faith in their homes. Each meeting includes a teaching, accompanied by reflections and activities, and a closing prayer.

GODPARENT MEETING

Claim also includes 1 Godparent Meeting. This resource was designed specifically for godparents and accompanies the second parent meeting. Two envelopes are included

that contain a godparent guide and card to help prepare godparents for their important role on Baptism day and beyond.

In the journey of initiation into the Christian life, the Church calls for a re-evaluation of the identity and mission of the godfather and the godmother, as support for the educational effort of the parents. Their task is “to show the candidates how to practice the Gospel in personal and social life, to sustain the candidates in moments of hesitancy and anxiety, to bear witness, and to guide the candidates’ progress in the baptismal life.” It is known that often the choice of godparents is not motivated by faith but based on family or social customs: this has contributed in no small way to the degradation of these educational figures. In view of the responsibility that this role involves, the Christian community should indicate, with discernment and a creative spirit, pathways of catechesis for godparents, which may help them to rediscover the gift of faith and of belonging to the Church. Those who are selected for this role often feel called upon to reawaken their baptismal faith and to initiate a renewed journey of commitment and witness. The possibility that they might refuse to accept this responsibility may have consequences for them that should be evaluated with great pastoral care. In cases where the objective requirement for a person to be able to carry out this task are absent (requirements that should have been made clear in the discussion that precedes selection) in agreement with the families and according to the discernment of the pastors, godparents can be chosen from among the pastoral workers (catechists, teachers, organizers) who stand as witnesses of faith and of ecclesial presence. (DC 125)

A FEW TIPS

- By reading and experiencing the content yourself, you will be best equipped to accompany this program. We recommend first becoming familiar with the material before implementing it.
- Claim boxes can be given out individually to couples, but are most effective when accompanied by a Baptism team.
- Have deacons or a Baptism team call couples to set up a meeting to discuss the Claim box and to journey with them throughout the formation process. They can check in with couples after a certain number of meetings are completed to share takeaways.
- Invite couples to come together in-person for community and fellowship for 1-2 of the 5 Parent Meetings. They can be placed in pods of other parents to journey with throughout this process. The hope here is that they would find community and common ground with other young families.
- You may decide to have the couples complete a few Parent Meetings at-home and then gather a group together after they complete Parent Meeting 2 to share their Spiritual Family Trees with one another and how they plan to pass faith along to their children.

- It is important that you put in place next steps for these new families. For example: offer dinner with babysitting at the parish, family fun nights, parenting workshops, reaching out, etc.
- Claim can be preceded or succeeded by Seek and Root for Parents. Beginning or following up with these two programs will give them a solid foundation of faith to build upon.
- Passing on our faith is most importantly about our witness. Each time a couple interacts with our community, faith leaders have an opportunity for witness. Let us not be afraid of being witness forward rather than requirement forward. If they don't first know that the Lord is good they will never know the requirements are for their good.

SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

Meeting	Theme	Activity
Parent Meeting 1	Parents naming rights and responsibility to be the primary educators in the faith.	-I have called you by name print.
Parent Meeting 2	Faith is passed down from one generation to the next. We are part of a spiritual family tree with deep roots.	-Spiritual Family Tree -Letters to Godparents
Godparent Meeting	A reflection for godparents and an encouragement on how to best live out their special role.	-Letter to Godchild
Parent Meeting 3	The natural and supernatural signification of water throughout salvation history and in our lives today.	-Hooded Towel



Parent Meeting 4	Dive into the Explanatory Rites and how sacramentals keep us open to grace.	-Create Baptismal Candle
Parent Meeting 5	A resource to help lead a prayer experience at the Baptism celebration.	-Baptism Party Prayer experience.