

CANON CONCERNING BAPTISM 1992¹

Canon 21, 1998²

A canon concerning baptism.

The General Synod prescribes as follows:

1. This Canon may be cited as "Canon Concerning Baptism 1992".
2. The sacrament of Holy Baptism shall normally be administered at public worship.
3. Baptism shall take place by immersing a person in water or by pouring water upon the candidate and by pronouncing the words, **"I baptise you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."**
4. Due notice must be given to the minister of a church before a child is brought or a person comes to the church to be baptised.
5. Except in extreme circumstances -
 - (a) the minister, before baptising any person able to answer for himself or herself, shall be satisfied that such person has been instructed and prepared in the Christian faith; and
 - (b) the minister, before baptising an infant or person who cannot answer for himself or herself shall be satisfied that at least one of the parents or guardians of the infant or person have been instructed in the Christian faith, and that they are aware that the same responsibilities rest on them as are required of the godparents.
6. Subject to sections 4, 5, 7 and 8, no minister may refuse or, except for the purpose of preparing or instructing the parents or guardians or godparents, delay baptising a child who has a parent or guardian who professes to be a Christian.
7. A minister shall not normally baptise a child whose parents or guardians are not parishioners of or resident in the parish where it is proposed the baptism be administered unless at least one of the parents or guardians attends divine service in the parish or the minister has sought the advice of the minister of the parish where the parents or guardians reside or usually attend divine service.
8. Every child to be baptised shall have at least one, but usually three godparents or sponsors of whom at least two shall be of the same sex as the child and of whom

¹ See Appendix B on page 447.

² This canon was passed provisionally as Canon P5, 1992.

at least one shall be of the opposite sex. Either or both of the parents of a child may act as godparents or sponsors. Godparents or sponsors shall be baptised persons and should be persons who will faithfully fulfil their responsibilities both by their spiritual nurture and instruction of the children committed to their charge and by the example of their own godly living.

9. For every candidate for baptism who is able to answer for himself or herself one such sponsor shall suffice, whose responsibility shall be to encourage the candidate to continue in the Christian life.
10. This Church holds and teaches that the sign of the cross³ used in baptism is no part of the substance of the sacrament but retains that sign in baptism.
11. The minister shall, in a Register kept for the purpose, record or cause to be recorded the name of each person baptised, and the date and place of baptism, and provide the person and his or her godparents or sponsors with a certificate of baptism.
12. A diocesan synod may promulgate rules and guidelines not inconsistent with this canon for the administration of baptism within that diocese.
13. The Godparents Canon 1977 is repealed as regards a diocese which adopts this canon.
14. The canons numbered 29, 30, 68, 69 and 70 of the Canons of 1603, in so far as the same may have any force, have no operation or effect in a diocese which adopts this canon.
15. The provisions of this Canon affect the order and good government of this Church within a diocese and shall not come into force in a diocese unless and until the diocese adopts this Canon by ordinance of the synod of the diocese.

³ A fuller explanation of the sign of the cross at baptism is set out in A Prayer Book for Australia at page 822.