

## Guidelines for the Mysteries of Baptism and Chrismation

### *Authority*

All authority to conduct the sacred Mysteries and all worship services issues from the Metropolitan. The Mysteries of Baptism and Chrismation must therefore be celebrated by an Orthodox Priest according to the Liturgical Tradition of the Orthodox Church.

### *Periods when the Mysteries of Baptism and Chrismation are not Permitted*

The Mysteries of Baptism and Chrismation are not permitted on the following days:

Holy Week;

Pascha;

December 25 through January 6 (the “afterfeast” period of the Nativity);

All Feast Days of Our Lord and of the Theotokos.

### *Baptism and/or Chrismation of Minors*

If a person under 18 years of age requests of his/her own volition to become a candidate for Baptism and/or Chrismation, both parents or guardians shall provide written consent.

### *The Sponsor*

The Sponsor must be an Orthodox Christian in good standing with the Church. The following persons can not be Sponsors:

An Orthodox Christian who does not belong to a parish;

An Orthodox Christian under twelve years of age;

An Orthodox Christian who belongs to a parish not in Communion with the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese;

A married Orthodox Christian who has not been married in the Orthodox Church;

Any one who has been excommunicated or anathematized from the Orthodox Church;

An Orthodox Deacon, Priest, or Bishop.

Normally there is only one sponsor.

The Sponsor should be sufficiently mature enough to understand the responsibilities he/she is undertaking. For this reason he or she should normally be over twelve years of age.

The selection of a Baptismal sponsor should take into account the fact that the spiritual relationship established is one of spiritual parent to a spiritual child, and in fact this relationship is considered closer and more intimate than that of biological parents with their children since the spirit is higher than the body. Thus the subsequent marriage of godchildren is affected by the proscriptions against incest in the same way as these apply to blood relationships.

So as to preclude any possible future marriage impediment, it is therefore customary for individuals only to be sponsors of children of the same sex; e.g., for a woman to choose only to be the godmother exclusively of girls (or exclusively of boys). This is not necessary, of course, when there is a vast