

Baptism

What is Baptism?

In the sacrament of Baptism you as parents are thanking God for his gift of life, and have decided to start your child on a journey of faith, and ask the Church for its support.

Baptism is the beginning of a journey of faith which starts by turning towards Christ and becoming a member of the body of Christ through the local and worldwide church. In this sacrament we see a visible sign of God's love and as that love is publicly acknowledged showing that we all need to turn away from evil and make as new start with Christ

When did Baptism Start?



Jesus himself was baptised in the river Jordan by John. This was a turning point in his life, as we are told in the beginning of St. Mark's gospel. Jesus then told his disciples to baptise others as a sign that they had turned away from their old way of life and begun a new life as Christ's disciples, members of his body.

Baptism often took place in a river: new Christians were dipped under the water, making their death to an old way of life, and lifted up again as a sign of new birth. Today in most churches a "Font" (the word means springs of water) is used which holds the water which is used to pour on the Childs head

Decisions & Promises

When you bring your child for baptism, you will be asked to publicly declare on behalf of your child that you believe in God and that you will bring your child up to follow Jesus.

You will be asked to answer on behalf of your child, that you have decided to turn away from everything which is sinful and to turn instead towards Christ. These declarations which are made by the parents and Godparents are made in front of the church congregation. The Christian community will promise to support you and pray for you and your child as they grow in the faith.

The Affirmation of Faith & Baptismal Covenant.

During the service you will be asked the following questions:

Do you turn to Christ?

I turn to Christ.

Do you repent of your sins?

I repent of my sins.

Do you reject evil?

I reject evil.

Do you believe and trust in God, who made you and all life?

I believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in his Son Jesus Christ,

Who redeemed you and all mankind?

I believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in his Holy Spirit,

who gives life to you and all the people of God?

I believe and trust in him.

What happens in a Baptism Service?

Your Child will be welcomed into the church, in turn the church promise to support and pray for you and your child.

The Priest will make sure you know where to sit and when you need to move. Some parts of the service will be for the whole congregation to join in, some will be for you and the godparents. The actual Baptism takes place around the font, and you and the godparents gather with the priest.

As you present your child for baptism the priest will explain what baptism is about and ask if you and the godparents are willing to accept the responsibilities which you will have.

Then your child will be signed the sign of the cross (which is explained about later). Then you make the affirmation of faith and baptismal covenant/promise which were discussed in the earlier section.

The water is then blessed by the priest and then your child is actually baptised. After this your child is anointed with oil and a lighted candle is given.

Important Symbols

As you can see during the baptism a variety of symbols are used:

The sign of the Cross the priest will make the sign of the cross of on your child's forehead. This is like an invisible badge to show that Christians are united with Christ and must be never ashamed to stand up for their faith.



Water The priest will first bless the water in the font to set it apart for baptism. The priest will then pour water over your child's head three times. Water is a sign of washing and cleansing. In baptism it is a sign of being washed free from sin and beginning a new life with God.



Water is a sign of life, but also a symbol of death. When we are baptised our old life is buried in the waters (like drowning) and we are raised to new life with Christ.

Anointing The priest will then anoint the crown of the child's head with the oil of Chrism, a sign of the sealing of the Holy Spirit.



Candles Jesus is called the light of the world, the priest will light a candle from the Easter candle, as a reminder of the light which has come into your child's life.



*Receive the Light of Christ
to show that you have passed
from darkness to light.
Walk in the light and keep the flame of faith
alive in your heart, that when the Lord comes
you may be ready to greet him.*

The Welcome The Church congregation will say some formal words of welcome to acknowledge that your child has joined the Church and to show how pleased they are to have a new member among them.

*We welcome you into the Lord's family.
We are members together of the Church,
the Body of Christ,
Children of the same heavenly Father,
and inheritors of the Kingdom of God.*

Some Useful Information...

When you book your child's baptism you will need to supply some information so that the registers can be filled in. You can have as many godparents as you wish, at least one male and one female and they must all be baptised themselves.

A priest will then arrange to come and see you before the baptism and go through the service and answer any questions that you have, a rehearsal will also be arranged, this will usually happen the week before the baptism is about to take place.

You will be asked not to take any photographs or to use video cameras during the service but may do so afterwards.

There is no charge for a baptism; you may however wish to make a donation to the Church in thanksgiving for your child's baptism. If you are tax payer then you are encouraged to use a gift aid envelope, please ask for more information.

If you require any other information or have any questions please contact:

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