

# Holy Baptism

## Concerning Holy Baptism

Holy Baptism stands at the beginning of Christian Life, not principally because it is frequently administered to young children, but because it is the beginning of all sacramental grace. This is clear from the fourfold nature of the "inward and spiritual grace" of the sacrament.

Baptism is first of all the washing away of sin. When Baptism is administered to those old enough to know right from wrong, their past sinful actions are forgiven; their actual sins are washed away. Even more, all those who are baptized are forgiven what has been traditionally known as original sin. This means that all of the fallenness of our nature which stands as an obstacle to a true relationship with God is done away. God establishes a relationship with us by removing the guilt of our fallen condition.

This new relationship is God's adoption of Christians as His children. Thus - and this is the second part of the grace of the sacrament - we are reborn. The font is a kind of womb bringing forth the new life in Christ. Just as we were born to a physical life from our earthly mothers, so from the font we are born to a spiritual life. This is a life which partakes of the life of God and thus of immortality. As spiritual birth, it is the beginning of Christian life. That life must still be lived, and there is much growth which must follow the birth. But the birth is real, and like our earthly birth, unrepeatable.

In being reborn we are incorporated into Christ and especially into His death and resurrection. St. Paul has termed it "putting on Christ" and putting off "the old man." Coming to the font, we first renounce the devil, the world, and the flesh, and then turn to Jesus and accept His Lordship over our lives. This incorporation into the death and resurrection of Christ is graphically symbolized when the baptism is by immersion: going down into the waters under which human life cannot survive and being raised up through death to a new life.

As a result of the putting on of Christ, we are made members of His Body, the Church. For all of its profound effects on our individual souls, Baptism is also profoundly corporate. In uniting us with Christ, it unites us also with all other Christians who are similarly united with the Head of the Church. Symbolizing this entrance into the Church, the font is often placed near the door to remind us how it is that we have come here.

All of these four elements of the Sacramental grace of Baptism emphasize God's initiative in the Sacrament. This properly expresses the comfortable Gospel of grace: that God saves us quite apart from any merits or good deeds of our own. In Baptism, God takes us to Himself, establishing by His own sovereign mercy a relationship which is intended to bear fruit both in this life and the next.

Holy Baptism is especially appropriate at the Easter Vigil, on the Day of Pentecost, on All Saints' Day or the Sunday after All Saints' Day, and on the Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord (the First Sunday after the Epiphany). It is also appropriate to reserve Baptisms for the visitation of a Bishop.

# Holy Baptism

*A hymn, psalm, or anthem may be sung.*

*The people standing, the Celebrant says*

✠ Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.  
*People*      **And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever.  
Amen.**

*In place of the above, from Easter Day through the Day of Pentecost*

*Celebrant*      ✠ Alleluia. Christ is risen.  
*People*              **The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

*In Lent and on other penitential occasions*

*Celebrant*      ✠ Bless the Lord who forgiveth all our sins;  
*People*              **His mercy endureth for ever.**

*The Celebrant then continues*

*People*              There is one Body and one Spirit;  
*Celebrant*        **There is one hope in God's call to us;**  
*People*              One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism;  
*People*              **One God and Father of all.**

*In addition to, or in place of the preceding, the Celebrant may say*

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*The Celebrant may read the following sentence, or one of the other sentences on page 246.*

Hear what our Lord Jesus Christ saith:

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it: thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

*The Deacon or Celebrant then says*

Let us humbly confess our sins unto Almighty God.

*Silence may be kept*

*Minister and People*

**Almighty God,  
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
maker of all things, judge of all men:  
We acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and  
wickedness,  
which we from time to time most grievously have  
committed,  
by thought, word, and deed, against thy divine Majesty,  
provoking most justly thy wrath and indignation against us.  
We do earnestly repent,  
and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings;  
the remembrance of them is grievous unto us,  
the burden of them is intolerable.  
Have mercy upon us,  
have mercy upon us, most merciful Father;  
for thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake,**

**forgive us all that is past;  
and grant that we may ever hereafter  
serve and please thee in newness of life,  
to the honor and glory of thy Name;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

*The Bishop when present, or the Priest, stands and says the following  
or similar words*

The Almighty and merciful Lord grant you ✠ absolution and  
remission of all your sins, true repentance, amendment of life,  
and the grace and consolation of his Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

*Here may be sung or said*

Lord, have mercy upon us.		Kyrie eleison
<b>Christ, have mercy upon us.</b>	<i>or</i>	<b>Christe eleison</b>
Lord, have mercy upon us.		Kyrie eleison

*When appointed, the following is sung or said, in addition to, or in  
place of, the preceding, all standing.*

Glory be to God on high,  
and on earth peace, good will towards men.

We praise thee, we bless thee,  
we worship thee,  
we glorify thee,  
we give thanks to thee for thy great glory,  
O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.

O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ;  
O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,  
that takest away the sins of the world,  
have mercy upon us.

**Thou that takest away the sins of the world,  
receive our prayer.  
Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father,  
have mercy upon us.**

**For thou only art holy;  
thou only art the Lord;  
thou only, O Christ,  
with the Holy Ghost,  
✠ art most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

*The Celebrant then continues*

*People*           The Lord be with you.  
*Celebrant*       **And with thy spirit.**  
                    Let us pray.

The Collect of the Day

*People*           **Amen.**

*At the principal service on a Sunday or other feast, the Collect and Lessons are properly those of the Day. On other occasions they are selected from "At Baptism."*

The Lessons

*The people sit. One or two Lessons, as appointed, are read, the reader first saying*

A Reading (Lesson) from \_\_\_\_\_.

*A citation giving chapter and verse may be added.*

*After each Reading, the reader may say*

*People*            **The Word of the Lord.  
Thanks be to God.**

*or the Reader may say*

Here endeth the Reading (Epistle).

*Silence may follow.*

*A Psalm, hymn, or anthem may follow each Reading.*

*Then, all standing, the Deacon or a Priest sings or reads the Gospel,  
first saying*

*People*            **The Lord be with you.  
And with thy spirit.**

*Reader*           **The ☩ Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ  
according to \_\_\_\_\_.**

*People*            **Glory be to thee, O Lord.**

*After the Gospel, the Reader says*

*People*            **The Gospel of the Lord.  
Praise be to thee, O Christ.**

**The Sermon**

## Presentation and Examination of the Candidates

*Here the Deacon or Celebrant may say*

Beloved in the Lord, we have come together in the presence of Almighty God our heavenly Father to witness the Sacrament of Holy Baptism by which *these persons are* to be made *members* of Christ's Body, the Church. By the working of this holy sacrament, ordained by Christ himself, *these persons* will die to sin and be raised to newness of life, receiving the fullness of God's grace that *they* may faithfully serve him all the days of *their lives*.

*The Celebrant says*

The Candidate(s) for Holy Baptism will now be presented.

### Adults and Older Children

*The candidates who are able to answer for themselves are presented individually by their Sponsors, as follows*

*Sponsor* I present N. to receive the Sacrament of Baptism.

*The Celebrant asks each candidate when presented*

Wilt thou be baptized in this Faith?

*Candidate* That is my desire.

### Infants and Younger Children

*Then the candidates unable to answer for themselves are presented individually by their Parents and Godparents, as follows*

*Parents and Godparents*

I present *N.* to receive the Sacrament of Baptism.

*When all have been presented the Celebrant asks the Parents and Godparents*

Wilt thou on thy part take heed that this child whom thou dost present be brought up in the Christian faith and life [*learn the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, and all other things which a Christian ought to know and believe to his soul's health*]?

*Parents and Godparents*

I will by God's help.

*Celebrant*

Wilt thou by thy prayers and witness help this child to grow into the full stature of Christ [*and take heed that this child, so soon as sufficiently instructed, be brought to the Bishop to be confirmed by him*]?

*Parents and Godparents*

I will by God's help.

*Then the Celebrant asks the following questions of the candidates who can speak for themselves, and of the Parents and Godparents who speak on behalf of the infants and younger children.*

*Celebrant*

Dost thou renounce Satan and all the spiritual forces of wickedness that rebel against God?

*Answer*

I renounce them all.

*Celebrant*

Dost thou renounce the evil powers of this world which corrupt and destroy the creatures of God?

*Answer*

I renounce them all.

*Celebrant*

Dost thou renounce all sinful desires that draw thee from the love of God?

*Answer*

I renounce them all.

*If it is desired to anoint the candidate(s) with the Oil of the Catechumens, the priest says the following.*

I anoint thee with the Oil of salvation, in Christ Jesus our Lord, that thou mayest have eternal life.

*Celebrant*

Dost thou turn to Jesus Christ and accept him as thy Savior?

*Answer*

I do.

*Celebrant*

Dost thou put thy whole trust in his grace and love?

*Answer*

I do.

*Celebrant*

Dost thou promise to follow and obey him as thy Lord and Master?

*Answer*

I do.

*When there are others to be presented, the Bishop says*

The other Candidate(s) will now be presented.

*Presenters*

Right Reverend Father-in-God: I present *these persons* for Confirmation.

*or* I present *these persons* to be received into this Communion.

*or* I present *these persons* who desire to reaffirm their baptismal vows.

*The Bishop asks the candidates*

Dost thou reaffirm thy renunciation of evil?

*Candidate*            I do.

*Bishop*                Dost thou renew thy commitment to Jesus Christ?

*Candidate*            I do, and with God's grace I will follow him as my Savior and Lord.

*After all have been presented, the Celebrant addresses the congregation, saying*

Will ye who witness these vows do all in your power to support *these persons in their* life in Christ?

*People*        **We will.**

*The Celebrant then says these or similar words*

Dearly beloved, let us join with *those who are* now committing *themselves* to Christ Jesus and here renew our own baptismal covenant.

## The Baptismal Covenant

*Celebrant*        Dost thou believe in God the Father?

*People*        **I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth.**

*Celebrant*        Dost thou believe in Jesus Christ,  
the Son of God?

*People*        **I believe in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord;  
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, dead, and buried.  
He descended into hell.  
The third day he rose again from the dead.  
He ascended into heaven,  
and sitteth on the right hand of God  
the Father almighty.  
From thence he shall come to judge  
the quick and the dead.**

*Celebrant* Dost thou believe in God the Holy Ghost?

*People* **I believe in the Holy Ghost,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
✠ and the life everlasting.**

*Celebrant* Wilt thou continue in the apostles' teaching  
and fellowship, in the breaking of bread,  
and in the prayers?

*People* **I will, by God's help.**

*Celebrant* Wilt thou persevere in resisting evil, and,  
whenever thou dost fall into sin,  
repent and return unto the Lord?

*People* **I will, by God's help.**

*Celebrant* Wilt thou proclaim by word and example  
the Good News of God in Christ Jesus?

*People* **I will, by God's help.**

*Celebrant* Wilt thou seek and serve Christ in all men,  
loving thy neighbor as thyself?

*People* **I will, by God's help.**

*Celebrant* Wilt thou strive for justice and peace  
among all men, and respect the dignity  
of every person?

*People* **I will, by God's help.**

## Prayers for the Candidates

*The Celebrant then says to the congregation*

Beloved in the Lord, let us now pray for *these persons who are* to receive the Sacrament of new birth (and for *these persons who have renewed their* commitment to Christ).

*or the Celebrant may say*

Dearly beloved, forasmuch as our Savior Christ saith, None can enter into the kingdom of God, except he be regenerate and born anew of Water and of the Holy Ghost; I beseech you to call upon God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that of his bounteous mercy he will grant to *these persons* that which by nature *they* cannot have; that *they* may be baptized with Water and the Holy Ghost, and received into Christ's holy Church, and be made (a) living member(s) of the same.

*A Person appointed leads the following petitions*

- Leader* Deliver *them*, O Lord, from the way of sin and death.
- People* **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- Leader* Open *their hearts* to thy grace and truth.
- People* **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- Leader* Fill *them* with thy holy and life-giving Spirit.
- People* **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- Leader* Keep *them* in the faith and communion of thy holy Church.
- People* **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- Leader* Teach *them* to love others in the power of the Holy Ghost.
- People* **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- Leader* Send *them* into the world in faithful witness to thine abounding love.
- People* **Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Leader* Bring *them* to the fullness of thy peace and glory.  
*People* Lord, hear our prayer.

*The Celebrant says*

Grant, O Lord, that all who are baptized into the death of Jesus Christ thy Son may live in the power of his resurrection and look for him to come again in glory; who liveth and reigneth now and for ever. **Amen.**

*or one of the following*

Almighty and everlasting God, mercifully look upon the devout prayers of thy servants now seeking regeneration and desiring the fountain of thy waters, even as the hart desireth the water-brooks; and of thy goodness grant that they who thirst after thy faith may in this mystery of thy Holy Baptism obtain sanctification both of body and soul. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Almighty and immortal God, the aid of all who need, the helper of all who flee to thee for succor, the life of those who believe, and the resurrection of the dead: We call upon thee for these thy *Servants (Children)*, that *they* coming to thy holy Baptism, may receive remission of sin, by spiritual regeneration. Receive *them*, O Lord, as thou hast promised by thy well-beloved Son, saying, Ask, and ye shall have; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. So give now unto us who ask; let us who seek, find; open the gate unto us who knock; that *these* thy *Servants (Children)* may enjoy the everlasting benediction of thy heavenly washing, and may come to the eternal kingdom which thou hast promised by Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*If blessed salt is to be given, it is given here, with these words*

Receive the salt of wisdom: may it be unto thee a pledge of everlasting life. **Amen.**

## Thanksgiving over the Water

*The Celebrant blesses the water, first saying*

The Lord be with you.

*People* **And with thy spirit.**

*Celebrant* Lift up your hearts.

*People* **We lift them up unto the Lord.**

*Celebrant* Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.

*People* **It is meet and right so to do.**

*The Celebrant continues*

We give thee thanks, Almighty God, for the gift of water, over which thy Holy Spirit moved in the beginning of creation; through which thou didst lead the children of Israel out of their bondage in Egypt into the land of promise; in which thy Son Jesus Christ received the baptism of John and the anointing of the Holy Spirit, being manifested thereby as the Messiah, the Christ, who leadeth us, through his precious death and mighty resurrection, from the bondage of sin unto life everlasting.

We give thee thanks, O Father, for the water of Baptism, in which we are buried with Christ in his death; by which we partake of his resurrection; through which we are made regenerate of the Holy Spirit. Therefore in joyful obedience to thy Son, we bring into his fellowship them that come to him in faith, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

*At the following words, the Celebrant touches the water*

Now sanctify this water, we beseech thee, by thy Holy Spirit, that those here cleansed from sin and made regenerate may continue forever in the risen life of Jesus Christ our Savior, to whom, with thee and the same Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever. **Amen.**

## Consecration of the Chrism

*The Bishop may then consecrate oil of Chrism, placing a hand on the vessel of oil, and saying*

Eternal Father, whose blessed Son was anointed by the Holy Ghost to be the Savior and servant of all, we beseech thee of thy mercy so as to consecrate this oil, that those who are sealed by it may share in the royal priesthood of Jesus Christ; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. **Amen.**

## The Baptism

*Celebrant* Name this child (person).

*The Parents and Godparents or other presenters state the child's or person's name. The Celebrant, or an assisting priest or deacon, then immerses, or pours water upon the candidate, saying*

N., I baptize thee in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. **Amen.**

*The Celebrant continues*

We receive *this Child (Person)* into the congregation of Christ's flock; and do sign *him* with the sign of the Cross, in token that

hereafter *he* shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under his banner, against sin, the world, and the devil; and to continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto *his* life's end. **Amen.**

*Then the Bishop or Priest places a hand on the person's head, marking the forehead with the sign of the cross [using Chrism if desired] and saying to each one*

*N.*, thou art sealed by the Holy Ghost in Baptism and marked as Christ's own for ever. **Amen.**

*If desired, a white garment may be given, the Priest saying*

We give this white vesture, for a token of the innocency bestowed upon thee, and for a sign whereby thou art admonished to give thyself to pureness of living, that after this transitory life, thou mayest be partaker of the life everlasting. **Amen.**

*A Baptismal Candle may be lighted from the Paschal Candle and presented, the Celebrant saying*

Receive the light of Christ, so that when the Bridegroom cometh, thou mayest go forth with all the saints to meet him; and see that thou dost keep the grace of thy Baptism. **Amen.**

*or*

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

*When this action has been completed for all candidates, the Bishop or Priest, at a place in full sight of the congregation, prays over them saying*

Let us pray: We most heartily thank thee, O heavenly Father, that by water and the Holy Spirit thou hast bestowed upon *these thy servants* the forgiveness of sin, and hast raised *them* unto the new life of grace. Sustain *them*, O Lord, in thy Holy Spirit. Give unto *them* (an) inquiring and discerning heart(s), the courage to will and to persevere, a spirit to know and to love thee, and the gift of joy and wonder in all thy works. Amen.

*When all have been baptized, the Celebrant says*

Let us welcome the newly baptized.

*Celebrant and People*

**We receive you into the household of God: Confess the faith of Christ crucified, proclaim his resurrection and share with us in his eternal priesthood.**

*If Confirmation, Reception, or the Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows is to follow, the prayers which begin on page 396 are used. The Peace may now be exchanged.*

*Celebrant*    The peace of the Lord be always with you.  
*People*        And with thy spirit.

*The service then continues with the Offertory.*

*Whenever possible, Baptism should take place within the context of the Eucharist. At other times, the service may conclude with the Lord's Prayer, other suitable prayers, a blessing and dismissal.*