

Holy Baptism

¶ Pastoral Introduction

This may be read by those present before the service begins.

Baptism marks the beginning of a journey with God which continues for the rest of our lives, the first step in response to God's love. For all involved, particularly the candidates but also parents, godparents and sponsors, it is a joyful moment when we rejoice in what God has done for us in Christ, making serious promises and declaring the faith. The wider community of the local church and friends welcome the new Christian, promising support and prayer for the future. Hearing and doing these things provides an opportunity to remember our own baptism and reflect on the progress made on that journey, which is now to be shared with this new member of the Church.

The service paints many vivid pictures of what happens on the Christian way. There is the sign of the cross, the badge of faith in the Christian journey, which reminds us of Christ's death for us. Our 'drowning' in the water of baptism, where we believe we die to sin and are raised to new life, unites us to Christ's dying and rising, a picture that can be brought home vividly by the way the baptism is administered. Water is also a sign of new life, as we are born again by water and the Spirit. This reminds us of Jesus' baptism. And as a sign of that new life, there may be a lighted candle, a picture of the light of Christ conquering the darkness of evil. Everyone who is baptized walks in that light for the rest of their lives.

As you pray for the candidates, picture them with yourself and the whole Church throughout the ages, journeying into the fullness of God's love.

Jesus said, 'I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.'

John 10.10

Holy Baptism

¶ Preparation

The Greeting

The president says

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with you all
All **and also with you.**

Introduction

The president may say

Our Lord Jesus Christ has told us
that to enter the kingdom of heaven
we must be born again of water and the Spirit,
and has given us baptism as the sign and seal of
this new birth.
Here we are washed by the Holy Spirit and made
clean.
Here we are clothed with Christ,
dying to sin that we may live his risen life.
As children of God, we have a new dignity
and God calls us to fullness of life.

The Collect

*The president introduces a period of silent prayer
with the words 'Let us pray' or a more specific
bidding.*

Heavenly Father,
by the power of your Holy Spirit
you give to your faithful people new life in the
water of baptism.
Guide and strengthen us by the same Spirit,
that we who are born again may serve you in
faith and love,
and grow into the full stature of your Son, Jesus
Christ,
who is alive and reigns with you in the unity of
the Holy Spirit
now and for ever.
All **Amen.**

¶ The Liturgy of the Word

At the end the reader may say

This is the word of the Lord.
All **Thanks be to God.**

At the end the reader may say

This is the word of the Lord.
All Thanks be to God.

Gospel Reading

When the Gospel is announced the reader says

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to *N*.

All Glory to you, O Lord.

At the end

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
All Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Preacher: None

¶ The Liturgy of Baptism

Presentation of the Candidates

The candidates may be presented to the congregation. Where appropriate, they may be presented by their godparents or sponsors.

The president asks those candidates for baptism who are old enough to answer for themselves

Do you wish to be baptized?

I do.

Testimony by the candidates may follow.

The president addresses the whole congregation

Faith is the gift of God to his people.
In baptism the Lord is adding to our number
those whom he is calling.
People of God, will you welcome *these children/candidates*
and uphold *them* in *their* new life in Christ?

All With the help of God, we will.

The president then says to the parents and godparents

Parents and godparents, the Church receives
these children with joy.

Today we are trusting God for *their* growth in
faith.
Will you pray for *them*,
draw *them* by your example into the community
of faith
and walk with *them* in the way of Christ?
With the help of God, we will.

In baptism *these children* begin *their* journey in
faith.
You speak for *them* today.
Will you care for *them*,
and help *them* to take *their* place
within the life and worship of Christ's Church?
With the help of God, we will.

The Decision

A large candle may be lit. The president addresses the candidates directly, or through their parents, godparents and sponsors

In baptism, God calls us out of darkness into his
marvellous light.
To follow Christ means dying to sin and rising to
new life with him.
Therefore I ask:

Do you reject the devil and all rebellion against
God?

I reject them.

Do you renounce the deceit and corruption of
evil?

I renounce them.

Do you repent of the sins that separate us from
God and neighbour?

I repent of them.

Do you turn to Christ as Saviour?

I turn to Christ.

Do you submit to Christ as Lord?

I submit to Christ.

Do you come to Christ, the way, the truth and the
life?

I come to Christ.

Signing with the Cross

The president or another minister makes the sign of the cross on the forehead of each candidate, saying

Christ claims you for his own.
Receive the sign of his cross.

The president may invite parents, godparents and sponsors to sign the candidates with the cross.

When all the candidates have been signed, the president says

Do not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified.

All Fight valiantly as a disciple of Christ against sin, the world and the devil, and remain faithful to Christ to the end of your life.

May almighty God deliver you from the powers of darkness,
restore in you the image of his glory,
and lead you in the light and obedience of Christ.

All Amen.

Prayer over the Water

The ministers and candidates gather at the baptismal font.

The president stands before the water of baptism and says

Praise God who made heaven and earth,
All who keeps his promise for ever.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All It is right to give thanks and praise.

We thank you, almighty God, for the gift of water to sustain, refresh and cleanse all life.
Over water the Holy Spirit moved in the beginning of creation.

Through water you led the children of Israel from slavery in Egypt to freedom in the Promised Land.

In water your Son Jesus received the baptism of John

and was anointed by the Holy Spirit as the Messiah, the Christ,
to lead us from the death of sin to newness of life.

We thank you, Father, for the water of baptism.
In it we are buried with Christ in his death.
By it we share in his resurrection.
Through it we are reborn by the Holy Spirit.
Therefore, in joyful obedience to your Son,

we baptize into his fellowship those who come to him in faith.

Now sanctify this water that, by the power of your Holy Spirit,
they may be cleansed from sin and born again.
Renewed in your image, may they walk by the light of faith
and continue for ever in the risen life of Jesus Christ our Lord;
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit
be all honour and glory, now and for ever.

All Amen.

Profession of Faith

The president addresses the congregation

Brothers and sisters, I ask you to profess together with *these candidates* the faith of the Church.

Do you believe and trust in God the Father?

All I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

Do you believe and trust in his Son Jesus Christ?

All I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

Do you believe and trust in the Holy Spirit?

All I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Baptism

If the candidate(s) can answer for themselves, the president may say to each one

N, is this your faith?

Each candidate answers in their own words, or
This is my faith.

The president or another minister dips each candidate in water, or pours water on them, saying

N, I baptize you
in the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

All Amen.

A minister may say

You have been clothed with Christ.
As many as are baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

The president says

May God, who has received you by baptism into his Church,
pour upon you the riches of his grace,
that within the company of Christ's pilgrim people
you may daily be renewed by his anointing Spirit,
and come to the inheritance of the saints in glory.

All Amen.

The president and those who have been baptized may return from the font.

Commission

We have brought *these children* to baptism knowing that Jesus died and rose again for *them* and trusting in the promise that God hears and answers prayer. We have prayed that in Jesus Christ *they* will know the forgiveness of *their* sins and the new life of the Spirit.

As *they* grow up, *they* will need the help and encouragement of the Christian community, so that *they* may learn to know God in public worship and private prayer, follow Jesus Christ in the life of faith, serve *their* neighbour after the example of Christ, and in due course come to confirmation.

As part of the Church of Christ, we all have a duty to support *them* by prayer, example and teaching. As *their* parents and godparents, you have the prime responsibility for guiding and helping *them* in *their* early years. This is a

demanding task for which you will need the help and grace of God. Therefore let us now pray for grace in guiding *these children* in the way of faith.

Faithful and loving God,
bless those who care for *these children*
and grant them your gifts of love, wisdom and faith.

Pour upon them your healing and reconciling love,

and protect their home from all evil.

Fill them with the light of your presence
and establish them in the joy of your kingdom,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

God of grace and life,
in your love you have given us
a place among your people;
keep us faithful to our baptism,
and prepare us for that glorious day
when the whole creation will be made perfect
in your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ.

All Amen.

N and N,
today God has touched you with his love
and given you a place among his people.
God promises to be with you
in joy and in sorrow,
to be your guide in life,
and to bring you safely to heaven.
In baptism God invites you on a life-long journey.
Together with all God's people
you must explore the way of Jesus
and grow in friendship with God,
in love for his people,
and in serving others.
With us you will listen to the word of God
and receive the gifts of God.

Giving of a Lighted Candle

God has delivered us from the dominion of darkness
and has given us a place with the saints in light.

You have received the light of Christ;
walk in this light all the days of your life.

**All Shine as a light in the world
to the glory of God the Father.**

Thanksgiving for the Gift of a Child

Introduction

The minister welcomes the people using a liturgical greeting (see [here](#)) or other suitable words.

A hymn or song may be sung.

The service may be introduced in these or similar words

We are here today to give thanks for *these children*, with *their* family and friends, and to support *their* parents in their responsibilities with prayer and love. God became one of us in Jesus, and understands all that surrounds the arrival and upbringing of children. It is God's purpose that children should know love within the stability of their home, grow in faith, and come at last to the eternal city where his love reigns supreme.

The following may be used

The works of the Lord are great:
All his mercy endures for ever.

Mary gave birth to a child and called him Jesus:
All he will save his people from their sins.

He will be called the Prince of Peace:
All his kingdom will last for ever.

The minister says

Loving God,
you hold all things in life
and call us into your kingdom of peace;
help us to walk the path of your truth
and fill our lives with gratitude and faith,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

Reading(s) and Sermon

A suitable passage from the Bible is read (see [here](#)).

A sermon may be preached.

A hymn may be sung.

Thanksgiving and Blessing

Where parents wish to recognize the role of supporting friends it may be appropriate for them to stand with the parents at the thanksgiving. One of them may present the children to the minister, and informal words may be said.

The minister says

Do you receive *these children* as a gift from God?

We do.

Do you wish to give thanks to God and seek his blessing?

We do.

The minister says

God our creator,
we thank you for the wonder of new life
and for the mystery of human love.
We thank you for all whose support and skill
surround and sustain the beginning of life.
We thank you that we are known to you by name
and loved by you from all eternity.
We thank you for Jesus Christ,
who has opened to us the way of love.
We praise you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

All Blessed be God for ever.

The minister may say for each child

What name have you given this child?

A parent or supporting friend replies

His/her name is N.

The minister may take the child.

The minister says

As Jesus took children in his arms and blessed them,
so now we ask God's blessing on *N*.
Heavenly Father, we praise you for *his/her* birth;
surround *him/her* with your blessing
that *he/she* may know your love,
be protected from evil,
and know your goodness all *his/her* days.

When all the children have been prayed for

All May *they* learn to love all that is true,
grow in wisdom and strength
and, in due time, come through faith and
baptism
to the fullness of your grace;
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

The minister prays for the parents

May God the Father of all bless *these parents*
and give *them* grace to love and care for *their children*.
May God give *them* wisdom, patience and faith,
help *them* to provide for the *children's* needs
and, by *their* example,
reveal the love and truth that are in Jesus Christ.

All Amen.

Giving of the Gospel

A copy of a Gospel is presented, with these words

Receive this book.
It is the good news of God's love.
Take it as your guide.

The minister may address the supporting friends and say

Will you do all that you can to help and support *N*
and *N* in the bringing up of *N*?

With the help of God, we will.

The minister may address the wider family and friends and say

Will you do all that you can to help and support
this family?

With the help of God, we will.

Prayers

This prayer may be said by the parents or by the whole congregation

God our creator,
we thank you for the gift of *these children*,
entrusted to our care.
May we be patient and understanding,
ready to guide and to forgive,
so that through our love
they may come to know your love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

The minister may say additional prayers (see [here](#)), ending with the Lord's Prayer.

Jesus taught us to call God our Father,
and so in faith and trust we say

All

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.

Ending

The minister says one of these or another suitable blessing

The love of the Lord Jesus
draw *you* to himself,
the power of the Lord Jesus

strengthen *you* in his service,
the joy of the Lord Jesus fill *your* hearts;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among *you* and remain with *you* always.

All Amen.

(or)

The Lord bless *you* and watch over *you*,
the Lord make his face shine upon *you*
and be gracious to *you*,
the Lord look kindly on *you* and give *you* peace;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among *you* and remain with *you* always.

All

Amen.

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