



Baptism

A child of God

When a person is baptised into the Church he enters into a relationship. He or she no longer lives as an individual entity but as a member of the Body of Christ. The baptismal ceremony marks the beginning of this new life of union and ongoing commitment. A baptised adult says 'Yes, I want to be one with you; I want to live a life faithful to the Gospel'. When an infant is baptised, the parents and godparents make this commitment on the child's behalf.

At the same time, we, the Christian community, pledge ourselves to be in relationship with that person.

Some children in our school for a variety of reasons are not baptised. If your child expresses interest in being baptised, or you would like to have them baptised, please feel welcome to contact your local parish to discuss this further. This, of course, applies to any member in your family who wants to become part of the sacramental life of the Church. Everyone is welcome in our Church and their presence would be a great gift to our Church family.

Ways to prepare for and celebrate your child's Baptism.

- 1. Pray for them.** Place a photograph or memento of your child in your Prayer Space and pray for them each day. Ask family and friends, and especially their godparents, to pray also.
- 2. Prepare a Baptismal candle.** Many parishes and Catholic bookshops sell candles already decorated with baptismal symbols. Some families like to decorate their own candle. (Try fabric paint, use pins to hold ribbons, lace or decorative paper in place).
- 3. Prayer that lasts.** Write a prayer (or copy one) that expresses your heartfelt longing for your child to know how deeply loved and treasured they are by God. Write it out in a beautiful card or print it and frame it for your child's room.
- 4. Baptism symbols.** Place the the symbols (or pictures or words of them) used in baptism in your prayer space. Talk about what each symbol represents:
 - Water** recalling the waters of birth - we are born again and become God's children. Water also symbolises cleansing - we are washed clean of sin.
 - Oil** is used to anoint - it symbolises healing, strengthening. It also symbolises being set aside for a holy purpose.
 - Chris**m is a mixture of olive oil and balsam. It is used to anoint kings and queens. In baptism we become a princess or prince in God's kingdom.
 - White garment** recalls the resurrection and symbolises the beginning of a new life in Christ.
 - Candle** reminds us that Christ is the light of the world and has now entered the child's life. It is lit from the Paschal candle and the flame symbolises the flame of faith, which will burn through the life of the child.
- 5. My Beloved Child.** Read the story of Jesus' baptism in the gospels. Talk to your child about how God the Father will embrace him/her as his beloved child. Tell them about their natural birth and share your delight when they were born. Explain that this is how God the Father will respond at their baptism.
- 6. God's Family.** The baptism of anyone in the family or among your friends is an opportunity to revisit the meaning of our own baptism. Talk about what it means to be a child of God, to be part of the Christian family.

Information for adults about the Catholic Faith: www.catholicenquiry.com

