

Lesson 13: Baptism

Please click twice to watch the video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SKisfEgd3IY&list=PLKsOUfYtz1JU-jXLBXoSJzxZcrQmyJtDw&index=1>

Our baptism is an important first step in our faith journey, but what is begun at baptism takes a lifetime to grow into. We never finish becoming Christian.

Baptism is not a small thing. Using such potent symbols as water, oil, and fire, Baptism is a powerful sacrament that washes away original sin and its effects. It gives us a new identity, connects us to a new community of believers, initiates us into a new way of living, and provides a clear mission in life.

Baptism is a sacrament of initiation, cleansing, strengthening, and welcoming. Baptism welcomes us into the community of Christian believers. It offers us a new life in which we become the adopted children of God, followers of Christ, and temples in which the Holy Spirit dwells. Baptism leaves a permanent spiritual mark on our soul that makes us holy and opens us to salvation and eternal life with God.

Like any sacrament, Baptism makes visible an invisible reality. In other words, we use physical signs and rituals to express our experience of God and his grace in our lives. The symbols you see at a Baptism ceremony include the following:

The Sign of the Cross is traced on the forehead of the one being baptized. This ritual action expresses that the mystery of the cross is at the heart of our faith.

The immersion in water (or pouring on of water) of the one being baptized reminds us that we die with Jesus to conquer sin and rise with him so we might enter into new life. In this action we are reminded of how Moses led the Hebrews on their escape from Egypt and how he parted the waters of the Red Sea as the gateway to liberation, away from slavery and into the Promised Land. We also recall Jesus' death and Resurrection, which free us from sin and bring us into a new way of living.

The words of Baptism, "I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," are spoken while the water is poured or the one to be baptized is immersed. These words reveal that God in the Trinity is both the source of life and our life's goal.

The newly baptized is anointed with sacred oil to signify that the Holy Spirit dwells within the heart of this new Christian. It's also a sign of being anointed to a mission to live and love as Jesus lived.

A white garment reflects that in Baptism we "put on Christ," taking our new and truest identity as a son or daughter of God.

A baptismal candle, lit from the Easter candle, represents the one true light of Christ, a light to guide the new believer throughout his or her life.

We are baptized into a community. Indeed, one of the most significant reasons to baptize our children is to claim them as children of God within the community of believers. As Pope Francis reminds us, “No one can be a believer alone.” We are given our faith traditions from those who have traveled before us, and we pass along our faith to those just beginning their journey. We are part of something much bigger than ourselves.

Baptism is the one sacrament that all Christian denominations share in common.

In the Catholic Church, infants are baptized to welcome them into the Catholic faith and to free them from the original sin they were born with.

Baptism is the first holy sacrament followed by: Eucharist, Confirmation, Reconciliation, Anointing of the sick, Marriage and Holy Order.

The Four Symbols of Baptism

Water



When we are baptized, the priest or deacon pours water over us, or we may be “dipped” into the baptismal font. The word “baptize” means “to dip.” Water washes us clean. We go down into the waters of baptism with Jesus, and rise to new life with him.

Anointing with Chrism



Chrism is one of the three holy oils used in the Catholic Church. We are anointed with chrism at our baptism. The chrism has a wonderful smell to it. We will be anointed with chrism again at our confirmation.

White Garment



After we are anointed with chrism, we are clothed in a white garment. White is a symbol of purity and cleanliness. Our white baptismal garment shows that we are a “new creation”, a new member of Christ’s Body, the Church.

Light



We receive a lighted candle at our baptism. This candle is lighted from the Paschal (Easter) Candle in church. Jesus is the Light of the World. As baptized Christians, we spread the Light of Jesus to the whole world!