



What's What

A weekly communication that provides an opportunity for our faith community to grow together in faith.

Baptism

Are you unaware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life.—Romans 6:3-4

In his dialogue with Nicodemus, Jesus taught that Baptism was necessary for salvation. “No one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit” (Jn 3:5). After his Resurrection, Jesus met with the eleven Apostles and gave them the commission to preach the Gospel and baptize, telling them, “Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved” (Mk 16:16). The word *baptism* in its origins is Greek and means “immersion” and “bath.” Immersion

in water is a sign of death, and emersion out of water means new life. To bathe in water is also to undergo cleansing. St Paul sums up this truth when he says, “You were buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead” (Col 2:12).

The origin and foundation of Christian Baptism is Jesus. Before starting his public ministry, Jesus submitted himself to the baptism given by John the Baptist. The waters did not purify him; he cleansed the waters. “He comes to sanctify the Jordan for our sake... to begin a new creation through the Spirit and water” (St Gregory Nazianzen, *Liturgy of the Hours*, I, 634). Jesus’ immersion in the water is a sign for all hu-

man beings of the need to die to themselves to do God’s will. Jesus did not need to be baptized because he was totally faithful to the will of his Father and free from sin. However, he wanted to show his solidarity with human beings in order to reconcile them to the Father. By commanding his disciples to baptize all nations, he established the means by which people would die to sin—Original and actual—and begin to live a new life with God.

US Catholic Catechism for Adults
USCCB, 2006, pgs 183-184

Issue 7 — Baptism

January 13, 2008

Things to talk about:

- What do you know about your baptism?
- Who are your godparents and why were they chosen?
- St Paul tells us that in Baptism we die and rise with Christ. Why is it necessary to remember the “dying” part?
- If you were to do a survey of what Baptism means to people, what answers do you think you would hear?

GOD THE FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST
HAS FREED YOU FROM SIN,
GIVEN YOU A NEW BIRTH BY WATER AND THE HOLY SPIRIT,
AND WELCOMED YOU INTO HIS HOLY PEOPLE.
HE NOW ANOINTS YOU WITH THE CHRISM OF SALVATION.
AS CHRIST WAS ANOINTED PRIEST, PROPHET AND KING,
SO MAY YOU LIVE ALWAYS AS MEMBERS OF HIS BODY,
SHARING EVERLASTING LIFE. AMEN.

- PRAYER FOR ANOINTING WITH CHRISM,
RITE OF BAPTISM

Signs & Symbols

The baptismal ceremony has eight major parts that can help us to better understand this Sacrament and our life in Christ.

The Sign of the Cross: Reminds us of Christ’s saving death and the redemption it brought.

Scripture Readings: Hearing the Word of God helps to build the faith of all gathered.

Exorcism and Anointing: An exorcism prayer is recited

over the person being baptized and they are anointed with the Oil of the Catechumens, both which prepare them to renounce sin and be released from evil.

Baptismal Water is Blessed: The prayer asks God that the Holy Spirit be sent upon the water so that those who will be baptized may be “born of water and the Spirit” (Jn 3:5)

Renunciation of Sin and Profession of Faith: We (or par-

ents, godparents, and the community present, if the person being baptized is an infant) are asked to reject sin and Satan and to profess our faith in the Trinity.

The Rite of the Sacrament: Pouring or immersing in water helps us to see that our sins are buried and washed away as we die with Jesus and that we are filled with God’s light and life as we rise from the water.

Anointing with Sacred

Chrism: we are anointed with sacred Chrism so we may remain a member of Christ, who is Priest, Prophet, and King.

White Garment and Candle: The white garment shows that we have put on Christ and have risen with him. The candle, lit from the Paschal Candle, represents Christ and reminds us of the light of Christ we have received. It also reminds us that we are called to be lights for the world.



Saint in the Spotlight — Saint Fabian (c. 250)

Fabian was a Roman layman who came into the city from his farm one day as clergy and people were preparing to elect a new pope. Eusebius, a Church historian, says a dove flew in and settled on the head of Fabian. This sign united the votes of clergy and laity and he was chosen unanimously.

He led the Church for 14 years and died a martyr's death during the persecution of Decius in a.d. 250. St. Cyprian wrote to his successor that Fabian was an "incomparable" man whose glory in

death matched the holiness and purity of his life.

In the catacombs of St. Callistus, the stone that covered Fabian's grave may still be seen, broken into four pieces, bearing the Greek words, "Fabian, bishop, martyr."

We can go confidently into the future and accept the change that growth demands only if we have firm roots in the past, in a living tradition. A few pieces of stone in Rome are a reminder to us that

we are bearers of 20 centuries of a living tradition of faith and courage in living the life of Christ and showing it to the world. We have brothers and sisters who have "gone before us marked with the sign of faith," as the First Eucharistic Prayer puts it, to light the way for us.

www.americancatholic.org/Features/SaintOfDay

The Role of a Godparent

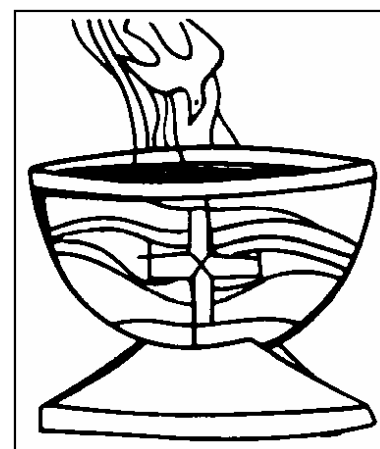
In today's society, while carrying no legal right to custody, the role of the godparent is completely spiritual. A godparent must pray for the child and should be actively involved as a Christian role model in the child's life.

The sponsor, another term used for godparent, should be a spiritual "coach" who teaches by example. Just as we use the lives of saints to give us examples of how to live our faith, godparents should

be living examples of how to live our faith in today's world.

A godparent commits to guiding the newly baptized to an adult relationship with Christ. Maintaining the connection between sponsor and catechumen can be done in simple ways, like exchanging letters on the anniversary of baptism.

Godparents also help parents in the Catholic education of the child. They



are not the primary educators of the child, a role reserved for the parents, but support them along the way.

Want to know more?

Would you like to know more about Advent? Check out the following books or websites for more information:

- [United States Catholic Catechism for Adults](#), United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2006
- [The Catholic Family Handbook](#), Lovasik, Sophia Institute Press, 2000
- <http://www.americancatholic.org/Features/Sacraments/Baptism.asp>

These are just suggestions. In providing these we assume no responsibility for, nor do we necessarily endorse these books or websites, their content, or their sponsoring organizations.

"What's What" is a publication of the Youth Ministry Department of St Mary, Canandaigua, and St Bridget, Bloomfield.

Our Youth Ministry Mission Statement [Draft]:

Building on the mission of our parishes to follow the way of Christ in our thoughts, words, and deeds, and to make Christ more fully present in all who live within our community, the Youth Ministry mission is to empower young people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in the world today; to affirm the gifts of our youth and provide opportunities for young people to share their gifts with the larger community; and to meet the religious, spiritual and social needs of all youth with the committed leadership, guidance and support of our parish family, providing an opportunity for our entire faith community to grow together in Christian faith.

Connections to Doctrine & Tradition

- Baptism is birth into new life in Christ (CCC 1214-1824)
- Jesus submitted to John's baptism and transformed it into something new (CCC 1223, 438, 536-37, 720)
- Our baptisms echo and participate in Jesus's baptism (SC 37-40, 64, 65; CIC 851, 865-866, 868; CCC 1212-1321, esp 1229-1233)

CCC: Catechism of the Catholic Church; CIC: Code of Canon Law ; GS: Gaudium et Spes; LG: Lumen Gentium; NDC: National Directory for Catechesis; SC: Sacrosanctum Concilium. These documents can be found online at www.vatican.va or www.usccb.org.