

Just Parents...

Today your children were introduced to the Sacrament of Baptism...

One of the primary symbols of the sacrament of Baptism is the assembly or the Christian community. Baptism can only happen as part of the community of believers. Without the community there can be no Baptism. The people in the pews are as important to the celebration as the parents and Godparents. When we participate in a Baptism celebration, we are pledging to help support and guide the faith growth of the person being baptized.

- There are seven additional symbols and rituals used in the celebration—**Naming, Water, Oil, Garment, Candle and Light, Sign of the Cross, and Profession of Faith.** Each one reminds us of an important aspect of our being baptized as followers of Christ.

Symbol 1. Water

Water in the Bible—Baptism of Jesus

The story of Jesus' baptism is found in all four Gospels—signaling what an important event it was. Although Jesus, being sinless, has no need of repentance, and therefore no need of baptism, he acts as humanity's representative. He identifies himself with sinners. His baptism is an acceptance of becoming human. Jesus goes down into the water. When he comes up, God declares him "my beloved Son." In the Sacrament of Baptism we, too, are claimed as sons and daughters of God.

Read the story of Jesus' baptism from one of the four Gospels: Matthew 3:13-17 or Mark 1:9-11 or Luke 3:21-22 or John 1:29-34.

Rite of Baptism

In our lives water is an essential element for life. A person will die from lack of water (dehydration) much quicker than from lack of food. Our bodies consist of over ninety percent water, and water covers much more of the earth's surface than land. It was from the murky waters that God created life. Water is a source of life, and a means for cleansing and making all things new. In Baptism, we are immersed into water as a sign of our dying with Christ, and then rising out of the water into new life with Christ. Christ becomes our source of living water, and we are called to become "living water for a thirsty world." Through the waters of Baptism we are cleansed of our sins and receive the grace of the Holy Spirit.

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Symbol 2. Oil

Reference: *Catechism of the Catholic Church* #1241-42

Oil in the Bible

Oil is utilized in the Bible to anoint a person for an important mission. Read John 12:1-8 (Mary anoints Jesus.)

Rite of Baptism

In our lives, oil is used to strengthen (as a source of nutrition), protect (as a lubricant in machines) and heal (as a medical suave). In the sacrament of Baptism, oil is a sign of being “anointed” by the Holy Spirit, our spiritual source of strength, protection and healing.

Symbol 3. New Garment

Reference: *Catechism of the Catholic Church* #1243

Rite of Baptism

For special occasions in our lives we wear particular types of clothing, partly to reflect our own personal style and also to reflect the nature of the occasion or event we are attending. In Baptism, the newly baptized are given a white garment, which symbolizes that the person baptized has “put on Christ.” The garment is white, reflecting the purity of being cleansed of sin. As a garment, it is quite simple and plain, since the beauty and gift of the individual comes from God who dwells within each person. All the baptized are clothed in similar white garments, for all of them are equal in the eyes of God, and equally valued as new members of our faith community.

Symbol 4. Candle and Light

3. Connect

In the celebration of Baptism, a candle is lit from the Paschal (Easter) candle and given to each newly baptized person. The lighted candle signifies that Christ has enlightened the baptized person, and in Christ those who are

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baptized become the “light of the world.” It is the light of Christ that guides our lives as Christians, and we are called to bring that light of Christ to our world by being Christ-like in our daily lives.

In the Rite of Baptism, an individual candle is lit from the Easter candle to symbolize that the newly baptized are the light of the world. They bear the light of Christ in their lives. Christians are called to be people of the light.

The Meaning of the Sacrament of Baptism

Being baptized means...

Here are several examples to get your started.

Being baptized means...

- being Christ’s light to the world
- being welcomed into the church and becoming a person who is welcoming
- being healed and becoming a person who is healing
- seeing others as Christ would see them
- being positive and life-giving in our attitudes and actions
- turning to Christ for guidance through prayer
- serving those in need
- turning to the faith community for support in times of need, confusion, and doubt
- staying connected to Jesus and to the faith community by participating in the Mass and the sacraments, service projects, prayer services, and church activities

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Celebrating the Sacrament of Baptism: Rite and Symbols

1. Reception of the Child

- : Naming the Child and Request of Parents
- : Commitment of Parents and Godparents
- : Sign of the Cross



2. Celebration of God's Word

- : Scriptural Readings and Homily
- : Intercessions (Prayer of the Faithful)
- : Prayer of Exorcism and Anointing (optional) before Baptism



3. Celebration of the Sacrament

- : Blessing and Invocation of God over Baptismal Water
- : Renunciation of Sin and Profession of Faith
- : Baptism
Water: symbol of death and life. Water can destroy; in Baptism a person dies with Jesus, Water gives life; in Baptism a person receives new life in the risen Christ.



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3. Celebration of the Sacrament

- : Anointing with Sacred Chrism

Oil of Chrism: “signifies the gift of the Holy Spirit to the newly baptized, who has become a Christian, that is, one ‘anointed’ by the Holy Spirit, incorporated into Christ, who is priest, prophet, and king” (*Catechism* #1241); “Christ” comes from the Greek *Christos* which means “anointed one.”

- : Clothing with the White Garment

White Garment: “symbolizes that the person baptized has ‘put on Christ, has risen with Christ’ (*Catechism* #1243)

- : Light Candle

Lighted Candle: symbol of the light of Christ.

- : Ephphetha or Prayer over Ears and Mouth (optional)

4. Conclusion of the Rite

- : Lord’s Prayer
- : Blessing