

HOLY BAPTISM

(OF INFANTS)

The minister ascertains beforehand that the children have not already been baptized.

When the people are gathered at, or proceeding to, the place of baptism, a hymn may be sung, after which the minister says:

Our help is in the name of the Lord:

Who has made heaven and earth.

Let us pray

Almighty God, you Shepherd of Israel, who did deliver your chosen people from the bondage of Egypt, and did establish with them a sure covenant, have mercy, we ask you, on your flock, and grant that these children, who are by baptism to be received into your heritage, may be delivered from the bondage of sin through the covenant of grace, and attain the promise of eternal life which you have given us in your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. **AMEN**

The people may be seated.

EXHORTATION

Dearly beloved, we are gathered together to administer holy baptism to these children, that according to Christ's command, they may be sealed as members of Christ, children of God, and heirs of the kingdom of heaven.

Hear therefore, the words of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ:

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.
Matthew 28: 18-20

Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit.

John 3: 5

Hear also what is written in the Gospel according to St. Mark:

People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it." And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.
Mark 10: 13-16

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. He loves children and is ready to receive them to embrace them with the arms of his mercy, and then we can with confidence pray, that he will grant them that gift which will enable them to grow up as his own sons and daughters; and will give them the blessing of eternal life.

Our Lord Jesus also said.

Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.
John 3: 3

Such a new birth God alone can give and it is promised to us through the working of the Holy Spirit in the sacrament of baptism. God will grant his gift to this child in baptism when we ask in faith. Throughout the ages the Church of God has been built up of those who received God's gift of new birth and were incorporated into the body of Christ in their baptism either in infancy, or as adults.

As the Lord Jesus granted forgiveness of sins and healing to the paralytic in response to the faith of his friends who brought him to the Lord, so God will grant new birth to this child by the power of the Holy Spirit when we ask him in faith. Let us therefore place this child in God's loving hands, trusting that he will give *him/her* all that is necessary for *his/her* salvation and growth in grace.

The minister expounds the teaching of the Scripture concerning baptism in his/her own words, and then says:

Let us pray.

O God our Lord, you desire that none of your children should perish, and you have raised up your Church so that in its common life your children may receive spiritual nourishment and grow in your likeness. We thank you for promising new life and fellowship with you to those who are born of water and the Holy Spirit. We thank you for the sacrament of baptism; which signifies that in union with Christ, they die to sin and rise again to newness of life.

O loving and merciful God, we bring this *child/children* to you, who alone can renew and save those who come to you in faith. Receive *him/her* and make *him/her* yours forever in the body of Christ; renew and save *him/her* and make *him/her* an instrument of your redeeming love in the world. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to do far more abundantly than all that we can ask or think, to him be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, for ever and ever. AMEN

THE PROFESSION OF FAITH

All stand. The minister says to the parents (and godparents):

It is the duty of those who present children for baptism to make confession of the faith in which they are baptized and to promise to bring them up in the way of Christ.

Do you believe and trust in God the Father almighty, who created heaven and earth?

We believe.

Do you believe and trust in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who for our salvation died on a cross, was raised from the dead, lives now in glory as the Saviour and Lord of all, and will come again to judge the living and the dead?

We believe.

Do you believe and trust in the Holy Spirit of God who renews, guides and strengthens the people of God?

We believe.

The minister says to the congregation: Let us therefore profess our faith.

The Apostles' Creed is said or sung by all:

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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.**

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

The minister says to the parents (and godparents):

Do you who have brought this child for baptism promise before God and in the presence of this congregation that you will yourself steadfastly affirm and uphold the faith of the Church?

We do, God being our helper.

Do you promise that by your prayers for this child, by your own manner of life, and by your guidance, you will help *him/her* as *he/she* grows up to pray and to worship God, to study the Bible, to follow the example and teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ, to share generously what *he/she* has with others and to take an active part in the Church's witness to Christ?

We do, God being our helper.

Do you promise that you will help this child to grow in the knowledge and experience of Christ, and encourage *him/her* later to be received into the full fellowship of the Church by confirmation; so that, established in faith by the Holy Spirit, *he/she* may partake of the Lord's Supper and go forth into the world to serve God faithfully in his Church?

We do, God being our helper

The minister says to the congregation:

Dearly beloved, will you be faithful to your calling as members of the church of Christ, so that these and all other children in your midst may grow up in the knowledge and love of him?

The congregation answers

We will, God being our helper; and we welcome *him/her/them* into our ' fellowship.

THE BAPTISM

Let us pray in silence for the *child/children* about to be baptized, that *he/she/they* may receive the fullness of God's grace.

The people may kneel.

Silence is kept for a space. Then the minister says:

The Lord be with you:

And with your spirit.

The minister prays in his/her own words.

Or, the following litany or the prayer that follows is said:

Blessed are you, O Lord God, heavenly Father, who has created all things and given us the element of water:

Blessed are you, O Lord.

Blessed are you, O Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, who was baptized in the Jordan and did die and rise again:

Blessed are you, O Lord.

Blessed are you, O Lord, the Holy Spirit, who did descend upon Jesus Christ and upon the Church:

Blessed are you, O Lord.

Be present, O God, with us who call upon your threefold name, and bless this water, that it may signify the washing away of sin, and that those who are baptized therein may be born again to eternal life:

Gracious God, hear us.

Grant them your Holy Spirit, that they may be baptized into the one body, and ever remain in the number of your faithful and elect people:

Gracious God, hear us.

Grant that, being united with Christ in his death and resurrection, they may be dead to sin, and live to righteousness

Gracious God, hear us.

Grant that they may put off the old person and become a new creation in Christ Jesus

Gracious God, hear us.

From darkness, lead them to light; from death lead them to everlasting life:

Gracious God, hear us.

OR

O holy and loving God, your Word became flesh so that, in union with him, all people may be enabled to be your children. Accept this child, we pray, and make *him/her* your own in the body of Christ. Send your Holy Spirit and sanctify this water, that, as water cleanses and refreshes the body, so this

child now to be baptized in this water may be born anew, and may have the blessing of eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you, O Father, and with the Holy Spirit lives and reigns to the end of the ages. **AMEN**

All stand; and the minister; having asked for the child's name, pours or sprinkles water upon each child, saying:

N, I baptise you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **AMEN**

THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

The minister says over each child baptized:

We have received this child into the congregation of Christ's flock and do sign *him/her* with the sign of the cross (*here the minister may make a cross upon the child's forehead*).

Then the minister says:

May this child never be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, but continue as Christ's faithful servant unto *his/her* life's end.

The Lord bless you and keep you: the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you: the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace. **AMEN**

Then the doxology may be sung:

**Praise God, from whom all blessing flow;
Praise him all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. AMEN**

A procession may be made from the place of baptism into the body of the church.

THE LIGHT

The parents of the children baptized may be given lighted lamps or tapers.

When they have received them, the minister says:

Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works; and give glory to your Father in heaven. Matthew; 5:16

Or some other brief forms of words may be said.

THE THANKSGIVING

The minister says:

Let us pray:

Our Father in heaven, holy be your name. Your kingdom come; your will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. AMEN

The minister says, or the minister and people say together:

We give you heartfelt thanks most merciful Father, that it has pleased you to receive *this child/these children* as your own *child/children* by adoption and to incorporate *him/her/them* into your holy Church. And we humbly ask you to grant that *he/she/they* may more and more show forth in *his/her life/ their lives* that which *he/she is/they are* now by your calling; so that, as *he/ she is/they are* made partakers of the death of your Son, *he/she/they* may also be partakers of his resurrection, and finally with all your Church, inherit your everlasting kingdom; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. **AMEN**

OR

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, in your mercy you have called all people to enter into your kingdom through the redeeming work of Christ our Saviour. We thank you for making *this child/these children* your own this day through baptism, by giving *him/her/them* new birth in water and the Holy Spirit, and making *him/her a member/them members* of the body of Christ. Guide, strengthen and sanctify *him/her/them* all the days of *his/her life/their lives*. Enable *his/her/their* parents (and godparents) to fulfil the promises they have made, so that under their care *this child/these children* may grow up in the knowledge of your love and in devotion to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with you, Father, and the Holy Spirit, one God in wisdom, power and love, we offer thanks and praise, now and always. **AMEN**

The minister says:

Faithful and loving God, whose blessed Son shared at Nazareth the life of an earthly home; bless we ask you, the *home/homes* of *this child/these children*, and grant wisdom and understanding to all who care for *him/her/them*, that *he/she/they* may grow up in your constant fear and love. Pour upon *him/her/them*, your healing and reconciliation, and protect *his/her home/their homes*. Fill *him/her/them* with your loving kindness and presence, and establish *him/her/them* in the joy of your kingdom, through the same your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. **AMEN**

A hymn may be sung here, and the thanks offering is taken.

Lord's prayer

Our Father in heaven, holy be your name. Your kingdom come; your will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. AMEN

If the baptism is administered otherwise than at the Lord's Supper or at Morning or Evening Worship, the minister dismisses those that are gathered together with this blessing:

May God almighty, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love, that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints the breadth and length and height and depth of the love of Christ which surpasses all knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. **AMEN**