

HOLY BAPTISM

(OF PERSONS ABLE TO ANSWER FOR THEMSELVES)

RECEIVING A CANDIDATE FOR BAPTISM

The admission of a person for catechism should normally be at a service of public worship and may take place after the lessons. After the lessons the candidate is brought forward by his/her sponsors and the minister says:

N desires to be received as a candidate for baptism. Let us therefore pray for *him/her* with sympathy and love.

Almighty and most merciful God, we ask you to look graciously upon this person who desires to find salvation through your Son Jesus Christ, and to become a member of your family, the Church. Grant that *he/she* may now make a sincere profession of *his/her* purpose, and may be enabled by your grace to persevere in the path, which *he/she* has chosen; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **AMEN**

N, what do you desire?

I ask of you Christian teaching and holy baptism.

Are you willing to accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour, and to follow him faithfully?

I am willing.

Are you willing to place yourself under our guidance and instruction that you may be prepared for admission into the Church by baptism?

I am willing.

Will you be diligent in prayer and the study of the Bible, regular at the public worship of the Church, and faithful in receiving instruction and in witnessing to others?

I will, God being my helper.

All stand.

Then the minister says:

Jesus says: I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no one comes to the Father, except by me.

O Lord Jesus Christ, Good Shepherd who gave your life for the sheep; mercifully receive this person into your fold, Join *him/her* with your own flock, and lead *him/her* to the pleasant pastures of eternal life; for your mercy's sake. **AMEN**

The minister greets the candidate according to local custom and says:

We receive you as a candidate for baptism, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. May the almighty God, who has put these good desires into your heart, bring them also to good effect. **AMEN**

Let us pray:

Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, look upon this your servant, give *him/her* a new heart, and renew within *him/her* a right spirit to know and to do your will. Prepare *him/her* for the holy sacrament of baptism, unite *him/ her* to your holy Church and give *him/her* a share in your divine mysteries; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **AMEN**

HOLY BAPTISM

The minister ascertains beforehand that the candidates 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.

PRESENTATION OF THE CANDIDATES

The candidates may be presented to the congregation. Where appropriate; they may be presented by their sponsors.

The minister asks those candidates for baptism who are able to answer for themselves:

Do you wish to be baptized?

I do

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 on your flock, and grant that *N*, who *is/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 Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. **AMEN**

OR

God, our Lord, you alone are the source of all good desires and right actions. We thank you for calling *N* into a closer union with Christ in baptism. Purify *his/her/their* intentions; grant *him/her/them* a clear vision of the life in Christ and the courage to yield completely to the leading of the Holy Spirit; and unite *him/her/them* and us in the fellowship of your Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. **AMEN**

The people may sit.

EXHORTATION

Dearly beloved, we are gathered together to administer holy baptism to *N*, that according to Christ's command *he/she/they* may be sealed as a member/ members of Christ, *child / children* of God, and *heir / heirs* of the kingdom of heaven.

From time immemorial, water has been regarded by people of many faiths as a symbol of life and spiritual cleansing. By the sign of water God cleanses from sin, renews life, and prefigures the reconciliation of all things promised in Christ. Baptism proclaims the faith of the Church. In baptism we are given the Holy Spirit as the pledge of this reconciliation. The same Spirit binds us to each other and to Christ, and inspires us to be the foretaste of the reign of God.

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 the Word of God declared by the Apostles concerning baptism:
Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
Acts 2: 38

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

Romans 6: 3-4

As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 3:27-28

You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.
I Peter 2: 9

There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.
Ephesians 4: 4-6

The minister expounds the teaching of Scripture concerning baptism in his/ her own words.

Or the minister says:

Obedying the word of our Lord Jesus, and confident of his promises, we baptize those whom God has called. In baptism God claims us, and seals us to show that we belong to God. God frees us from sin and death, uniting us with Jesus Christ in his death and resurrection. By water and the Holy Spirit, we are made members of the Church, the body of Christ, and joined to Christ's ministry of love, peace and justice:

You **N** have come to be baptized, have heard that baptism is a sign of sharing in the death and resurrection of Christ and of receiving new life. It is therefore necessary for you to be willing to accept this new life as a gift from God. God alone can transform your life and enable you to continue in the new life as a disciple of Christ.

THE DECISION

You must therefore in the presence of this congregation openly declare your faith in him and your desire to follow the Lord Jesus Christ.

I therefore ask you:

Do you believe and trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour of all?

Yes, I do.

Do you believe and trust in one God, the Father almighty who created all things?

Yes, I do.

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

Yes, I do.

Do you repent of all your past sins, and of all that you know to have been unworthy of God in your life?

Yes, I do:

Do you renounce all sinful desires that draw us away from the love of God and from the love of our fellow human beings?

Yes, I do.

Will you obey Christ, boldly bear witness to him in the world, and love and serve others as he did?

Yes, I will, with God's help.

Do you therefore desire to be baptized and to commit yourself to Jesus Christ as your Saviour, Lord and Guide in the fellowship of his Church?

Yes, I do.

THE PROFESSION OF FAITH

Do you believe in one God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit?

I believe.

Let us all with joy and boldness profess our faith together:

All stand

Apostles' Creed

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 PROMISES

Those who are baptized are called to worship and serve God. Do you desire to be baptized in this faith?

I do

Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?

With the help of God, I will.

Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

With the help of God, I will

Will you proclaim by word and example the good news of God in Christ?

With the help of God, I will

Will you seek and serve Christ in all people, loving your neighbour as yourself?

With the help of God, I will

Will you acknowledge Christ's authority over human society, by prayer for the world and its leaders, by defending the weak, and by seeking peace and justice?

With the help of God, I will.

*(If the candidates are **husband and wife**, the minister says to them:*

Will you, in obedience to Christ's teaching, continue together in love, and nurture your children in the Christian faith?

Husband and wife answer together:

By God's grace we will.)

May Christ dwell in your heart(s) through faith, that you may be rooted and grounded in love and bring forth the fruit of the Spirit. **AMEN**

Let us pray in silence for those about to be baptized, that 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 also with you.

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

Almighty and everlasting God, your blessed Son our Lord Jesus Christ has commanded us to make disciples of all nations, and to baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Send your Holy Spirit, heavenly Father, to sanctify this water, and grant that N now to be baptized in it may die to *his/her/their* sinful nature and rise to the new life in union with Christ. *May he/she/they* be filled with your power and peace, and grow as *a member/members* of the body of Christ. To him, to you Father, and to the Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory to the end of the ages. **AMEN**

THE BAPTISM

All stand; and the minister, having asked for the name/s, dips each candidate in the water, or pours, or sprinkles water upon him/her saying:

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

THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

The minister makes the sign of the cross on the forehead of each candidate, saying:

Christ claims you for his own. Receive the sign of his cross.

Then minister says for all together:

May you never be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, but continue as Christ's faithful servant unto your 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 blessings 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 PUTTING ON OF A WHITE GARMENT

The newly baptized may now put on white garments.

When they have assembled, the minister says to them:

We will rejoice greatly in the Lord:

Our souls shall be joyful in our God.

For he has clothed us with the garments of salvation:

He has covered us with the robes of righteousness.

Put off your old nature, and be renewed in the spirit of your minds:

We will put on the new nature, created after the likeness of God.

THE LIGHT

The newly 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 used.

THE THANKSGIVING

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

We give you humble thanks, most merciful Father, that it has pleased you to receive *this/these* your *servant/s* for 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 increasingly show forth in *his/her/their life/lives* that which *he/she/they* now *is/are* by your calling; so that as *he/ she/they is/are* made a *partaker/partakers* of the death of your Son, *he/she/ they* may also be a *partaker/partakers* of his resurrection, and finally, with all your church, inherit your everlasting kingdom; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. **AMEN.**

Almighty God, in your mercy you draw the hearts of believers to yourself through the revelation of your love in Jesus Christ our Lord. We thank you for this work of grace in *N* who *has/have* now been baptized, and for planting in *him/her/them* the seed of new life in fellowship with you and with all your people. We pray that *he/she/they* may be continually strengthened by your Spirit in a deeper knowledge of you, and in holiness of life. Grant that *he/she/they* may go forward in faith and obedience to your will, with sure hope in your promise of eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit, be all praise and glory for ever. **AMEN**

WELCOME

The minister may say to the congregation:

These our brothers and sisters in Christ have, after profession of their repentance and faith, been received into the household of God. I charge you, and especially the elders among you, to befriend them, and to remind them what solemn promises they have made before this congregation. Support them therefore with your prayers, and encourage them to attend diligently to right instruction in God's holy Word, [and so to prepare themselves for confirmation,] that, being established in faith by the Holy Spirit, they may come with due preparation to receive the Lord's Supper, and may go forth into the world to serve God faithfully in the fellowship of his church. Will you endeavour to do all these things?

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

And then speaking to the newly baptized, the minister says

N, today God has touched you with his love and given you a place among his people. God promises to be with you in joy and in sorrow, to be your guide in life, and to bring you safely to heaven. In baptism God invites you on a life-long journey. Together with all God's people you must explore the way of Jesus and grow in friendship with God, in love for his people, and in serving others. With us you will listen to the Word of God and receive the gifts of God. May God, who has received you by baptism into his Church, pour upon you the riches of his grace, that within the company of Christ's pilgrim people you may daily be renewed by his anointing Spirit, and come to the inheritance of the saints in glory. **AMEN**

** This phrase may be omitted if the church traditions do not insist on the rite of confirmation after adult baptism*

The minister introduces the Peace in these or other suitable words:

We are all one in Christ Jesus. We belong to him through faith, heirs of the promise of the Spirit of peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you;

And also with you.

The minister may say:

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

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 the following:

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**