**The Sacrament of Baptism**

**An Order**

*The minister moves to the baptismal font before saying:*

Baptism is a gift from God.

With visible signs and words of promise,

God moves toward us

to claim us as children of the new covenant

and members of the household of God.

In baptism, God acts to unite us to Christ,

to deliver us from the power of sin and death,

and call us into a new life of growth and service.

In the sacrament of baptism

the church recognizes God's covenant of grace.

We receive God's gift with reverent joy

and respond in faith and obedience.

Remember the words of Peter on the day of Pentecost:

"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name

of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven;

and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

For the promise is for you,

for your children,

and for all who are far away,

every one whom the Lord our God calls." Acts 2:38-39.

*A hymn or psalm may be sung while candidates, sponsors, and parents if appropriate, assemble at the baptismal font. An elder or other representative of the congregation may lead the procession to the font, carrying a large pitcher of water.*

*The minister may read one or more of the following or proceed directly to page 125.*

Hear the words of the risen 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,

teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you;

and remember, I am with you always,

to the close of the age." *Matt. 28:18-20.*

**OR**

Jesus said:

Unless you are born of water and the Spirit,

you cannot enter the kingdom of God.

What is born of the flesh is flesh,

and what is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Do not be astonished that I said to you,

`You must be born from above.'  *John 3:5-7.*

**OR**

For as many of you as were baptized into Christ

have clothed yourself with Christ.

There is neither Jew nor Greek,

there is neither slave nor free,

there is neither male nor female;

for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.  *Gal. 3:27-28.*

**OR**

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.  *Rom. 6:3-4*.

**OR**

You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood,

a holy nation, God's own people,

that you may declare the wonderful deeds of God,

who called you out of darkness

into God's marvellous light.

ALL **Once we were no people**

**but now we are God's people;**

**once we had not received mercy**

**but now we have received mercy.**

*Based on I Peter 2:9-10.*

**OR**

Obeying the command of Jesus Christ

and believing in his promises

the church baptizes those whom the Lord our God calls.

God acts for us in baptism

as God has acted for our salvation

from the beginning of time.

As we stand before the waters of baptism

we hear again the words spoken to the Israelites

as they stood before the waters of the sea.

"Do not be afraid, stand firm,

and see the deliverance

that the Lord will accomplish for you this day; . . .

The Lord will fight for you,

and you have only to be still."

The Lord commanded Moses, . . .

"Tell the people of Israel to go forward.

. . . stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it,

that the people of Israel may go into the sea

on dry ground." *Ex. 14:13-16.*

Through the waters of baptism

we go forward with Christ, from death to new life.

We move on a firm foundation of dry ground

that is none other than

the faithfulness of God

whose loving mercy endures forever.

So let us take courage.

The promises of God are for us and for our children.

Let us move forward through the waters

trusting in the faithfulness of God,

secure in the love made known in Jesus Christ,

confident that the Holy Spirit is acting now

to free us from sin and death,

to lead us to a new life of love and service

in union with Jesus Christ

in whom we become heirs of the covenant.

**OR**

*The minister may read this short statement, saying:*

By the waters of baptism

and the power of the Holy Spirit

God claims us

and calls each one by name.

God unites us to Christ in his death and resurrection

and grafts us into the body of Christ

as members of the church.

God washes us clean by forgiving our sin;

commissions us to be a royal priesthood with Christ

in his ministry to the world;

empowers us to live in newness of life as people of the Word;

and invites us to be renewed at the Lord's Table

until we feast with him in glory.

By grace you have been saved through faith;

and this is not your own doing,

it is the gift of God.  *Eph. 2:8.*

**The Presentation**

*The minister says:*

Who comes to receive the gift of baptism?

*An elder presents each candidate for baptism saying:*

On behalf of the session,

I present \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_,

to receive the sacrament of baptism.

**AND/OR**

On behalf of session,

I present \_\_\_\_\_\_,

child of \_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_,

to receive the sacrament of baptism.

**Adults And Older Children**

*The minister addresses candidates who are seeking baptism by making their own profession of faith.*

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_, do you desire to be baptized?

**I do.**

**Parents Of Infants And Young Children**

*The minister addresses parent(s) of infants and younger children:*

Do you desire that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ be baptized?

**I do.**

**Renunciation and Affirmation**

*The minister addresses adult or young candidates for baptism and the parents of infant candidates*.

Trusting in the gracious mercy of God

who has been faithful to us in all generations,

do you turn away from sin,

renounce all evil powers in the world

which rebel against God

or oppose God's rule of justice and love?

**I renounce them.**

Do you renounce the ways of sin which separate you from the love of God?

**I renounce them.**

Do you turn to Jesus Christ,

accepting him as Lord and Saviour,

trusting in his grace and love?

**I do.**

Do you desire, in dependence on the Holy Spirit,

to mature as a Christian in the church,

to seek the guidance of Christ as you listen for his Word,

to celebrate his death and life at the table he provides,

and to engage in his mission to the world?

**I do.**

*The minister addresses parents of young candidates for baptism only:*

Do you promise to raise your child (children) in the love and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ within the home and the fellowship of the church?

**I do.**

*The minister asks the congregation to stand and questions them and the sponsors saying:*

Do you, as members of the church of Jesus Christ,

promise to guide and nurture \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,

by word and deed,

with love and in prayer,

encouraging him/her (them) to follow the way of Christ

and to be (a) faithful member(s) of his church?

**We do.**

*The minister calls all present to profess their faith by saying:*

Do you believe in God, the Father almighty?

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,**

**creator of heaven and earth.**

Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

**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.**

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

**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.**

**Prayer of Thanksgiving**

*Water is poured visibly and audibly into the font.*

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

We give you thanks, O gracious God,

for the gift of your Spirit and the sign of water.

In the beginning,

when your Spirit moved over the waters,

you gave order and life to your planet earth.

By the waters of the flood you cleansed the world,

and established with Noah and his family

a new beginning for all people.

In the time of Moses, you led your people

out of slavery through the waters of the sea,

making covenant with them in a new land.

In the fullness of time you sent Jesus Christ,

who was formed in the water of a woman's womb.

In the water of Jordan,

Jesus was baptized and anointed by your Holy Spirit.

[In his ministry to the world,

Jesus offered living water to the woman of Samaria,

washed the feet of his disciples,

and sent them forth to baptize all nations by water and the Spirit.

And now, with your people of all times and places,

we wait with eager longing

as we look for the city of God,

from which will flow the river of life

for the healing of the nations.]  *Rom. 8; Rev. 22.*

Gracious God;

by the gift of water and your Holy Spirit

you sustain all life.

*The prayer continues as the minister raises a handful of water and pours it into the font.*

Almighty God;

by the power of your Holy Spirit,

by the sign of this water,

you cleanse from sin through the death of Jesus Christ,

those who receive this sacrament;

you raise them to new life through his resurrection,

and you graft them into his body, the church.

Pour out your Spirit upon these your children (this your child)

That \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ may have power to do your will

and continue forever as (a) servant(s) of Christ

to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit

be all honour and glory

now and forever.

**Amen.**

**The Act of Baptizing**

*All candidates for baptism except infants may kneel. The minister pours or sprinkles generous amounts of water on each head, while saying:*

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, I baptize you \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, is baptized,

in the name of the Father**, OR**  in the name of the Father,

and of the Son, and of the Son,

and of the Holy Spirit. and of the Holy Spirit.

The minister lays a hand on the head of the baptized person saying:

May the Spirit of God dwell in you

and uphold you, now and forever.

**Amen.**

*OR An alternative may be used:*

May the Holy Spirit be upon you \_\_\_\_\_\_, child of God, disciple of Christ, member of the church.

**Amen.**

**Declaration and Welcome**

*Following the baptism and blessing, with all standing, the minister says:*

See what love God has given us

that we should be called the children of God;

and that is what we are. *I John 3:1*.

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_,

you are now received by Christ's appointment

into the holy, catholic church.

Through baptism, God has made you

(a) member(s) of the household of God

to share with Christ in the priesthood of all believers.

Remember your baptism and give thanks.

Be one with us in the church.

*The minister and congregation may say together:*

**Come, grow with us into Christ who is our head.**

**"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 us all,**

**who is above all and through all and in all."**   *Eph. 4:4-6.*

**AND/OR**

*The congregation may say or sing the Aaronic Blessing:*

**The Lord bless you and keep you.**

**The Lord be kind and gracious to you.**

**The Lord look upon you with favour**

**and give you peace. Amen.**   *Num. 6:24-26, TEV.*

*The Peace may be exchanged here if it has not been used earlier.*

The peace of Christ be with you.

**And also with you.**

*A hymn may be sung as all return to their places.*

*The service continues. Prayers of intercession will include prayers for the newly baptized and those who nurture them.*

*When Holy Communion is celebrated, it is appropriate for the newly baptized to receive Communion before the other people.*