

rite *of* baptism *for several children*

A shorter version of the Rite used within the Western Catholic Church.

It includes every element, but a limited range of options.

Many instances of the name Christ are changed to the name Jesus where it seems more appropriate in the context – like talking about Jesus being anointed.

*Includes scripture readings from the Revised New Jerusalem Bible
and Revised Grail Psalms.*

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INTRODUCTION

RECEPTION OF THE CHILD

The celebrant greets all present, and especially the parents and godparents, reminding them briefly of the joy with which the parents welcomed this child as a gift from God, the source of life, who now wishes to bestow his own life on this little one. The celebrant begins with a liturgical greeting and then questions the parents:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

The grace and peace of God our Father, the love of the Lord Jesus, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you.

All: And with your Spirit.

What name have you given your child?

Parents: [Name]

What do you ask of God's Church for [Name]?

Parents: Baptism.

77. The celebrant speaks to the parents in these or similar words:

Parents, you have asked to have your children baptised. In doing so you are accepting the responsibility of training them in the practice of the faith. It will be your duty to bring them up to keep God's commandments as Christ taught us, by loving God and our neighbour.

Do you clearly understand what you are undertaking?

Parents: We do.

78. Then the celebrant turns to the godparents and addresses them in these or similar words:

Godparents, are you ready to help the parents of these children in their duty as Christian parents?

Godparents: We are.

79. The celebrant continues:

Dear children, the Christian community welcomes you with great joy.

In its name I claim you for Jesus our Saviour by the sign of his cross.

I now trace the cross on your forehead and invite your parents, (godparents and grandparents) to do the same.

He signs the child on the forehead, in silence. Then he invites the parents (and the godparents) to do the same. The celebrant invites the parents, godparents, and the others to take part in the liturgy of the word.

CELEBRATION OF GOD'S WORD

OLD TESTAMENT READING

A reading from the prophet Ezekiel

(36:24–28) *Clean water, a new heart, a renewed spirit.*

The Lord says this: For I shall take you from among the nations and gather you back from all the lands and bring you home to your own land. I shall pour clean water over you and you will be cleansed; I shall cleanse you of all your filth and of all your foul idols. I shall give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I shall remove the heart of stone from your bodies and give you a heart of flesh. I shall put my spirit in you and make you keep my laws and respect and practise my judgements. You will live in the land which I gave your ancestors. You will be my people and I shall be your God.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the prophet Ezekiel

(47:1–9,12) *The water of salvation.*

The angel brought me back to the entrance of the Temple where a stream was flowing eastwards from under the Temple threshold, for the Temple faced east. The water was flowing from under the right side of the Temple, south of the altar. He took me out by the north gate and led me right round outside as far as the outer east gate where the water was flowing out on the right-hand side. The man went off to the east holding his measuring line and measured off four hundred metres; he then made me wade across the stream: the water reached my ankles. He measured off another four hundred metres and made me wade across the stream again: the water reached my knees. He measured off another four hundred metres and made me wade across the stream again: the water reached my waist. He measured off another four hundred metres: it was now a river which I could not cross; the stream had swollen and was now deep water, a river impossible to cross. Then he said, 'Do you see, son of man?'

Then he took me and brought me back to the bank on the river. Now, when I reached it, there was an enormous number of trees on each bank of the river. He said, 'This water flows east down to the Arabah and to the sea; and flowing into the sea it makes its waters wholesome. Wherever the river flows, all living creatures teeming in it will live. Fish will be very plentiful, for wherever the water goes it brings health, and life teems wherever the river flows.'

Along the river, on either bank, will grow every kind of fruit tree with leaves that never wither and fruit that never fails; they will bear new fruit every month because this water comes from the sanctuary. And their fruit will be good for eating and their leaves for healing.'

The word of the Lord.

Reader, then all repeat:

The Lord is my light and my salvation.

The Lord is my light and my salvation;
whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold of my life;
whom should I dread?

The Lord is my light and my salvation.

There is one thing I ask of the Lord,
only this do I desire:
to live in the house of the Lord
all the days of my life,
to gaze on the beauty of the Lord,
to seek him in his holy Temple.

The Lord is my light and my salvation.

It is your face, O Lord, that I seek;
hide not your face from me.
Dismiss not your servant in anger;
you have been my help.

The Lord is my light and my salvation.

I believe I shall see the Lord's goodness
in the land of the living.
Wait for the Lord; be strong;
be bold and wait for the Lord!

The Lord is my light and my salvation.

Psalms 33(34):2-3, 6-7, 9, 18-19. R. v. 9a

Reader, then all repeat:

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

I will bless the Lord at all times,
praise of him is always in my mouth.
In the Lord my soul shall make its boast;
the humble shall hear and be glad.

All: Taste and see that the Lord is good.

Look towards him and be radiant;
let your faces not be abashed.
This lowly one called; the Lord heard,
and rescued him from all his distress.
Taste and see that the Lord is good.
Blessed the warrior who seeks refuge in God.

All: Taste and see that the Lord is good.

When the righteous cry out, the Lord hears,
and rescues them in all their distress.
The Lord is close to the broken-hearted;
those whose spirit is crushed he will save.

All: Taste and see that the Lord is good.

NEW TESTAMENT READINGS

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

(8:28-32)

We have become more perfectly like God's own Son.

We know that for those who love God everything works together for good, for those who have been called in accordance with his purpose, because those he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that he should be the eldest among many brothers and sisters; those he called he also justified, and those he justified he also glorified.

What more shall we say? If God is for us, who can be against us? Since he did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for the sake of us all, will he not with him give us everything else?

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

(6:3-5)

Baptism: a sharing in Christ's death and resurrection.

Do you not realise that we who were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death? So by baptism into his death we were buried with him, so that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the Father's glory, we too should live in newness of life. If we have become united to him by dying a death like his, so we shall be united by a resurrection like his.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians

(12:12-13)

Baptised in one Spirit to form one body.

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, just so with Christ. And indeed we were all

baptised into one body in a single Spirit, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all given the same Spirit to drink.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Galatians

(3:26-28)

Now that you have been baptised you have put on Christ.

For you are all children of God, through faith in Christ Jesus, since as many of you as have been baptised into Christ have been clothed in Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male or female – for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians

(4:1-6)

One Lord, one faith, one baptism.

I, the prisoner in the Lord, urge you therefore to lead a life worthy of the vocation to which you were called. With all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing one another in love. Take every care to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, one body, and one Spirit, just as you were called in the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, through all and in all.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the first letter of St Peter

(2:4-5, 9-10)

A chosen race, a royal priesthood.

Come to Jesus, the living stone, rejected by human beings but chosen and precious before God: as a spiritual house be built up, you too, into a holy priesthood to offer the spiritual sacrifices, made acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

But you are *a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people to be a personal possession* to declare the qualities of God who called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were *not a people* and now you are the people of God; once you were *outside his mercy*; now you *have received mercy*.

The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATIONS

John 14:6

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

I am the way, the truth and the life, says the Lord;
no one comes to the Father except through me.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
 I am the light of the world, says the Lord,
 anyone who follows me will have the light of life.
 Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Eph 4:5-6

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
 There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism,
 one God, the Father of all.
 Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

John 3:16

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
 God loved the world so much, he gave us his only Son,
 that all who believe in him might have eternal life.
 Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

During Lent (if Baptisms are celebrated) alternative acclamations are used:

- Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus Christ.
- Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.
- Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ.
- Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory.

GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

(28:18–20)

The apostles are sent to preach the gospel and to baptise.

Jesus came up and spoke to them. He said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe everything I have commanded you. And look, I am with you always till the end of time.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

(1:9-11) *The baptism of Jesus.*

It was in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptised in the Jordan by John. And at once, as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit, like a dove, descending on him. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; in you I am well pleased.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

(10:13-16)

Let the little children come to me.

People were bringing little children to Jesus, for him to touch them. The disciples rebuked 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. Amen I say to you, whoever does not welcome the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.' Then he took them in his arms, and blessed them, laying his hands upon them.

The Gospel of the Lord.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

(3:3,21-22)

John, the son of Zechariah, went into the whole Jordan area proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. Now it happened that while all the people were being baptised and while Jesus, after his own baptism, was at prayer, heaven opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in a physical form, like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; in you I am well pleased.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

(3:1-6)

The meeting with Nicodemus.

There was one of the Pharisees called Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said, 'Rabbi, we know that you have come from God as a teacher; for no one could perform the signs that you do if God were not with him.'

Jesus answered:

'Amen, Amen I say to you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.'

Nicodemus said, 'How can anyone be born who is already old? Can anyone enter into the mother's womb a second time and be born?' Jesus replied:

'Amen, Amen I say to you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit;
what is born of the flesh is flesh; what is born of the Spirit is spirit.

The Gospel of the Lord.

45. After the reading, the celebrant gives a short homily explaining to those present the significance of what has been read. His purpose will be to lead those who are present to a deeper understanding of the mystery of baptism and to encourage the parents and godparents to a ready acceptance of the responsibility which arise from the sacrament.

46. After the homily, or in the course of or after the litany, it is desirable to have a period of silence while all pray at the invitation of the celebrant. If convenient, a suitable song follows.

INTERCESSIONS (PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL)

47. Then the prayer of the faithful is said:

Priest: *My dear brothers and sisters, let us ask our Lord Jesus Christ to look lovingly on these children who are to be baptised, on their parents and godparents, and on all the baptised.*

Leader: By the mystery of your death and resurrection, bathe these children in light, give them the new life of baptism and welcome them into your holy Church. We pray to the Lord:

ALL: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Lead them by a holy life to the joys of God's kingdom.
We pray to the Lord:

ALL: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Make the lives of their parents and godparents examples of faith to inspire these children. We pray to the Lord:

ALL: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Keep their family always in your love. We pray to the Lord:

ALL: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Renew the grace of our baptism in each one of us. We pray to the Lord:

ALL: Lord, hear our prayer.

or Priest: My fellow Christians, let us ask the mercy of Jesus Christ our Lord for these children who will receive the gift of baptism, for their parents and godparents, and for all baptised persons.

Leader: Through baptism, make these children God's own sons and daughters.
We pray to the Lord:

ALL: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Help these tender branches grow to be more like you, the true vine, and be your faithful followers. We pray to the Lord:

ALL: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: May they always keep your commands, walk in your love, and proclaim your Good News to all people. We pray to the Lord:

ALL: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: May they be counted as God's friend through your saving work, Lord Jesus, and may they inherit eternal life. We pray to the Lord:

ALL: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Help their parents and godparents to lead them to know and love God.

ALL: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Inspire all people to share in the new birth of baptism. We pray to the Lord:

ALL: Lord, hear our prayer.

The invocation of the saints follows.

LITANY OF SAINTS

48. The celebrant next invites all to invoke the saints.

Holy Mary, Mother of God	pray for us.
Saint John the Baptist	pray for us.
Saint John the Evangelist	pray for us.
Saint Joseph, protector of the church,	pray for us.
Saint Mary Magdalene	pray for us.
Saint Peter and Saint Paul	pray for us.
Saint Justin and Saint Benedict	pray for us.
Saint Francis and Saint Clare	pray for us.
Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop	pray for us.

The names of other saints may be added, especially the patrons of the children to be baptised, and of the church or locality. The litany concludes:

All holy men and women:	pray for us.
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PRAYER OF EXORCISM

86. After the invocation, the celebrant says:

Almighty and ever-living God,
you sent your only Son into the world
to cast out the power of Satan, spirit of evil,
to rescue people from the kingdom of darkness,
and bring them into the splendour of your kingdom of light.
We pray for these children: set them free from original sin,
make them temples of your glory,
and send your Holy Spirit to dwell within them.

(We ask this) through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

or

Almighty God, you sent your only Son
to rescue us from the slavery of sin,
and to give us the freedom only your sons and daughters enjoy.
We now pray for these children
who will have to face the world with its temptations,
and fight the devil in all his cunning.

Your Son died and rose again to save us.
By his victory over sin and death,
bring these children out of the power of darkness.
Strengthen them with the grace of Christ,
and watch over them at every step in life's journey.

(We ask this) through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

ANOINTING BEFORE BAPTISM

87. The celebrant continues:

We anoint you with the oil of salvation
in the name of Christ our Saviour;
may he strengthen you with his power,
who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

He anoints the child on the breast with the oil of catechumens.

CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENT

90. When they come to the font, the celebrant briefly reminds the congregation of the wonderful work of God whose plan it is to sanctify man, body and soul, through water. He may use these or similar words:

My dear brothers and sisters, we now ask God to give these children new life in abundance through water and the Holy Spirit.

BLESSING AND INVOCATION OF GOD OVER BAPTISMAL WATER

91. Then, turning to the font, he says the following blessing (outside the Easter season):

Celebrant: Praise to you, almighty God and Father,
for you have created water to cleanse and give life.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, the Father's only Son,
for you offered yourself on the cross,
that in the blood and water flowing from your side,
and through your death and resurrection,
the Church might be born.
Praise to you, God the Holy Spirit,
for you anointed Jesus at his baptism in the waters of Jordan,
so that we might all be baptised into you.
Come to us, Lord, Father of all, and make holy this water ✠
which you have created, so that all who are baptised in it may be
washed clean of sin, and be born again to live as your children.

The celebrant touches the water with his right hand and continues:

Lord, make holy this water ✠ which you have created,
so that all those whom you have chosen
may be born again by the power of the Holy Spirit,
and may take their place among your holy people:
in the name of the Father ✠ and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
All: **Amen.**

RENUNCIATION OF SIN AND PROFESSION OF FAITH

94. The celebrant questions the parents and godparents.

Celebrant: Do you reject Satan and all his works and all his empty promises?

Parents and godparents: I do.

95. Next the celebrant asks for the threefold profession of faith from the parents and godparents:

Celebrant: Do you believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth?

Parents and godparents: I do.

Celebrant: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified, died, and was buried,
rose from the dead, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father?

Parents and godparents: I do.

Celebrant: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

Parents and godparents: I do.

96. The celebrant and the congregation give his assent to this profession of faith:

Celebrant: This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church.
We are proud to profess it, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

All: Amen.

If desired, some other formula may be used instead, or a suitable song by which the community expresses its faith with a single voice.

BAPTISM

97. *The celebrant invites the family to the font and questions the parents and godparents:*

Is it your will that **[Name]** should be baptised in the faith of the Church, which we have all professed with you?

Parents and godparents: It is.

He baptises the child, saying:

[Name], I baptise you in the name of the Father,

He immerses the child or pours water upon it.

and of the Son,

He immerses the child or pours water upon it a second time.

and of the Holy Spirit.

He immerses the child or pours water upon it a third time.

After the child is baptised, it is appropriate for the people to sing a short acclamation. If the baptism is performed by the pouring of water, it is preferable that the child be held by the mother (or father).

THE EXPLANATORY RITES

ANointing WITH CHRISM

98. *Then the celebrant says:*

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 Jesus was anointed Priest, Prophet, and King, so may you live always as a member of his body, sharing everlasting life.

All: Amen.

Then the celebrant anoints the child on the crown of the head with the sacred chrism, in silence.

CLOTHING WITH THE WHITE GARMENT

99. *The celebrant says:*

Children, you have become a new creation, and have clothed yourself in Christ.

See in this white garment the outward sign of your Christian dignity.

With your family and friends to help you by word and example, bring that dignity unstained into the everlasting life of heaven.

All: Amen.

The white garment is put on the child. It is desirable that the family provide the garment.

LIGHTED CANDLE

100. The celebrant takes the Easter candle and says:

Receive the light of Christ.

Someone from the family (such as the father or godfather) lights the child's candle from the Easter candle. The celebrant then says:

Parents and godparents, this light is entrusted to you to be kept burning brightly. These children of yours have been enlightened by Christ Jesus. They are to walk always as children of the light. May they keep the flame of faith alive in their hearts. When the Lord comes, may they go out to meet him with all the saints in the heavenly kingdom.

PRAYER OVER EARS AND MOUTH

101. In the rite of Ephphetha the celebrant touches the ears and mouth of the child with his thumb (or gestures towards them to avoid cross-infection), saying:

The Lord Jesus made the deaf hear and the dumb speak.
May he soon touch your ears to receive his word,
and your mouth to proclaim his faith, to the praise and glory of God the Father.

All: Amen.

CONCLUSION OF THE RITE

102. Next there is a procession to the altar, unless the baptism was performed in the sanctuary. The lighted candle is carried for the child. A baptismal song is appropriate at this time, for example:

You have put on Christ,
in him you have been baptised.
Alleluia, alleluia. *(Praise and bless his name).*

LORD'S PRAYER

103. The celebrant stands in front of the altar, and addresses the parents, godparents, and the whole assembly in these or similar words:

Dearly friends, these children have been reborn in baptism. They are now called children of God, for so indeed they are. In confirmation they will receive the fullness of God's Spirit. In holy communion they will share the banquet of Christ's sacrifice, calling God their Father in the midst of the Church. In their name, in the Spirit of our common adoption, using the words our Saviour taught us, let us dare to pray:

104. *All present join the celebrant in singing or saying:*

**Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation:
but deliver us from evil.**

BLESSING

105. *The celebrant first blesses the mother, who holds the child in her arms, then the father, and lastly the entire assembly:*

[Mother] God the Father, through his Son, the Virgin Mary's child, has brought joy to all Christian mothers, as they see the hope of eternal life shine on their children. May he bless you, the mothers of these children. May you be one with your child in thanking God for ever in heaven, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

All: Amen.

[Father] God is the giver of all life, human and divine. May he bless you, the fathers of these children. You and your spouse will be the first teachers of your children in the ways of faith. May you also be the best of teachers, bearing witness to the faith by what you say and do, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

All: Amen.

[All] By God's gift, through water and the Holy Spirit, we are reborn to everlasting life. In his goodness, may he continue to pour out his blessings on all present, who are his sons and daughters. May God make you always, wherever you may be, faithful members of his holy people. May God send his peace upon all who are gathered here, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

All: Amen.

May the loving and merciful Lord bless you:
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.

All: Thanks be to God.