



BAPTISM

What is baptism?

Baptism is a simple ceremony of washing in water, practised by Christians since the time of Jesus. It is a sign of turning to God, and of faith in Jesus Christ our Lord. At the same time, baptism symbolises Jesus' own death and resurrection. Those who ask for baptism recognise that their standing with God depends on what Jesus did for them by his dying and rising again.

All who are baptised are received into the family of the Christian church.

What is necessary for an effective baptism?

From one point of view, baptism represents what God does for us. He gives us a new birth by his Holy Spirit. This is what we pray for when we are baptised. The one essential thing on the part of the person being baptised is sincere faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the case of an infant, this response of faith must be made in the name of the infant by sponsors (parents and godparents) until such time as the infant can make his or her own response.

Who may be godparents?

Godparents are members of the church who have themselves been baptised and have confirmed their faith. They may be either the parents themselves, or others close to the family who are interested in the child's spiritual nurture. Godparents should be able to answer 'Yes' to the following two questions;

- Are you yourself a follower of Jesus Christ and a member of his Church, sincerely believing the promises of God.
- Are you willing to sponsor this child, answering for him/her now, and accepting responsibilities for his/her Christian upbringing?

A boy usually has two godfathers and a godmother and a girl usually has two godmothers and a godfather.

The duties of godparents

Those who act as godparents in baptism are accepting the responsibility, with parents, of providing encouragement, teaching and the help of a good example so that the children may be brought up to follow Christ and become faithful members of the church.

What is promised or undertaken in baptism?

Three promises are made by all candidates for baptism, and these also are the undertakings made by godparents when the candidate is a child:

- a renunciation of 'the world, the flesh, and the devil', which means a rejection of all that is opposed to the will of God;
- a belief in God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, which means trust in God as the one who made us, in Jesus as the one who saves us, and in the Holy Spirit who makes us like Jesus;
- a firm intention to obey God and follow his leading in our lives.

When should baptism take place?

Baptism should, whenever possible, be at a public service on Sundays. This means the whole congregation may witness the admission of the newly baptised into Christ's church, and welcome them. However, if necessary, it may take place at other times. This should be discussed with the minister of the parish church where the parents live, or where they regularly attend church. It is most important that a firm link be formed with the church in which the child is likely to be brought up.

What else can parents do?

Pray for the child. Baptism is not just a naming ceremony; it can be a most meaningful occasion for establishing yourselves, your home and family in a right relationship with God. You may have been out of touch with the church, or you may wish to ask about baptism or confirmation for yourself. Do not hesitate to discuss any questions you may have with your minister. Even if you are not certain that you are ready to bring your child for baptism, there is a brief service of 'Thanksgiving for the Birth of a Child' in *An Australian Prayer Book* and 'Thanksgiving for a child' in *A Prayer Book for Australia*, which you may like to ask your minister about.

When arrangements for a baptism have been made with the minister, ask him which form of service will be used, so that you and the godparents can read it carefully beforehand.

Is there a fee for baptism?

No. Parents should feel no obligation in this respect. If they wish to make a thank offering, either through the normal offertory or in some other way, they are free to do so.

Baptism Application Form

TO: The Minister at:

Name of Parish

We wish to apply for Christian Baptism for:

Proposed Christian Names

Surname of Child

Date of Birth

Address

Postcode

Telephone: _____ *(Home)*

_____ *(Mobile)*

email: _____

We also wish to nominate the following persons as godparents:

Full Names: 1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Parent's Signatures: Father _____

 Mother _____

Family details *(please print)*

Occupation

Father: _____

Mother: _____

Other members of family: _____

Declaration of godparents

It is my intention, with God's help, to provide teaching, good example and encouragement to this child and accordingly I agree to act as a godparent to him/her to learn to worship God, to pray to him, to put his/her faith and trust in Him and take his/her place in the life of the Church.

Signed: _____

It is my intention, with God's help, to provide teaching, good example and encouragement to this child and accordingly I agree to act as a godparent to him/her to learn to worship God, to pray to him, to put his/her faith and trust in Him and take his/her place in the life of the Church.

Signed: _____

It is my intention, with God's help, to provide teaching, good example and encouragement to this child and accordingly I agree to act as a godparent to him/her to learn to worship God, to pray to him, to put his/her faith and trust in Him and take his/her place in the life of the Church.

Signed: _____

Appointment for baptism

I have arranged for your child

To be baptised at

Church

_____ 20 _____

on

at

Minister

Phone No.