



## BAPTISM

During a service of Baptism for a child we thank God for his gift of life and we pray for the child who at Baptism begins her/his own journey of faith but with the support of their parents, godparents and the Church itself. We also ask for God's blessing upon the child and for the guidance of the Holy Spirit to anoint them, this is symbolised when the child is anointed with oil. We also pray that the Light of Christ will shine in and through them, the light of Christ is symbolised by the giving of a Baptismal candle, which is lit from the Paschal candle, this is a special candle which the Church lights for the first time at Easter and which represents Jesus Christ, the Risen Lord and light of the world. In Baptism the child being baptised is washed clean from sin, this is symbolised by the pouring of water over the child's head. When anointed, the sign of the cross is made upon the child's forehead as an invisible mark which will stay on the child for the rest of their life and it shows that the child now belongs to Jesus Christ.

### Parents and Godparents

Parents and godparents play a central role in the Baptism of a child for they make promises on behalf of them. You and they will have to declare publicly your faith in God, that you renounce evil, turn from sin and intend to bring your child up to follow Jesus as Lord and Saviour. These promises are made before the entire congregation, and it is a good idea that you check that your chosen godparents feel able to make these promises and declarations before others in a public. You can read the promises and declarations here.

Godparents are normally two of the same gender as the child and one the opposite gender. They need to be baptised themselves and they not only need to be able to genuinely make the declarations and promises on behalf of the child, but they should also be people that you can rely on to take a genuine interest in your Child's spiritually, and in you and your child during life's ups and downs.

The whole congregation then promises to support you and your family in helping you bring up your child in the Christian faith, and to pray for you.

Some people also mistakenly think of Baptism as a thanksgiving service for the safe arrival of a new child, whereas it is actually an initiation rite into the Christian Church.

The Church now has a special service for the Thanksgiving of a Gift of a Child and this may be more appropriate in some cases and it may well be that Baptism follows at a later date.

### Adult Baptism

Adult Baptism normally takes place when a person who has not been baptised or 'christened' as a child subsequently decides that they would like to be baptised. Baptism in this case marks their own personal turning from darkness to light, and their decision to follow Jesus Christ; Baptism as an adult is the first step of Christian Initiation and is very often followed by Confirmation. See <http://www.cofe.anglican.org/lifeevents/baptismconfirm/sectionc.html>

Jesus Christ Himself was baptised, he asked John the Baptist to baptise Him in the river Jordan. When John pointed out that he was "not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals".(Mark 1:7) Jesus insisted saying "Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfil all righteousness

The main difference between Infant and Adult Baptism, is that adults make their own declarations and promises instead of godparents and parents. Adults normally have two sponsors who will act as prayer supporters and friends. They will often be more mature Christians who have played a significant part in their journey to faith.

### **The Baptism Service**

Because Baptism is a service of initiation into the Christian Church it can take place during one of our Sunday morning Masses, at a specific Baptism Service usually at 1pm on a Sunday which take place at various times in the four Churches which make up the Team Parish.

Alternatively you can arrange your Baptism as a standalone service which take place following our Sunday Masses. The time of your service will vary according to which church you choose for your service but it will always start between 12:00 and 12:30pm.

Full details of your Baptism service time will be provided with confirmation of your Baptism booking.

Whichever option you choose, we do also ask that you attend at least three Sunday Services in the Parish before your Baptism takes place and one of our Priests will contact you to discuss your Baptism in the days leading up to the service itself.

If you would like to arrange a Baptism or if you wish to speak to a Priest about Baptism please come to the Parish Office, see our website calendar for full details.

Further information about Baptism can be found by following the link below

<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/lifeevents/baptismconfirm/>