

Baptism



John 3:3-5 "Jesus answered and said to him: Amen, amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith to him: How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born again? Jesus answered: Amen, amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

Matthew 28:19 "Going therefore, teach ye all nations: baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."

Acts 2:38-39 "But Peter said to them: Do penance: and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins. And you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is to you and to your children and to all that are far off, whomsoever the Lord our God shall call."

First, what are the effects of Baptism? What does Baptism *do*? Baptism:

- remits all sins (both original sin and personal sin) and their temporal punishments. If one were to die immediately after Baptism, he would go straight to Heaven (assuming one presents no obstacles).
- imprints an indelible mark on the soul of the baptized which marks him as God's, initiates him into the life of the Church, and allows him to receive the other Sacraments. It is through Baptism that we are born again -- regenerated -- of water and Spirit and receive new life.
- infuses sanctifying grace, supernatural gifts, and virtues (according to the disposition of the soul receiving the Sacrament and providing he puts up no obstacles), making us true adopted children of God.

There is only one Baptism, therefore the Sacrament may be received only once (if one is unsure whether he was validly baptized, he is baptized conditionally. See below). For those who have reached the age of reason, the Sacrament must also be received in faith. If one does not have faith in Baptism but receives it anyway, he is still validly baptized, but the fruits of his Baptism will be delayed until he does have faith. In the case of infants, it is the faith of the parents that operates until the child himself reaches the age of reason.

There are a two ways to enter the Church through Baptism:

- **Private Baptism:**

An emergency, bare-essentials baptism which can be performed anywhere, by anyone -- Catholic, pagan, Jew, Protestant -- who uses the proper matter and form and *intends to do what the Church does* when She baptizes. Because of that last condition, Baptism by heretics or apostates should always be followed by a conditional Baptism (see below). Note that Baptism must only be administered to those who request it; Baptism must never, ever be against the will of the person to be baptized, or his parents' will if he is a child. Also, rest assured that those who, with contrite hearts, have expressed a true desire for Baptism and have vowed to receive the Sacrament, but die before receiving it are baptized "by desire." In any case, a person baptized in a private Baptism should participate in the Solemn Rite of Baptism if and when he is able.

- **Solemn Baptism:**

Baptism by a priest, who is the usual minister of Baptism, during the Rite of Baptism which includes ceremonies such as a formal renunciation of Satan and all his works, exorcism, the use of water blessed at the Easter Vigil or Pentecost, the imposition of blessed salt, an anointing with Chrism, etc. One may be solemnly baptized as an infant; or by preparing oneself through catechesis and being baptized by a priest outside the Easter Vigil; or, as is most common, by being baptized at the Easter Vigil by a priest and after a period of official catechesis.

Private Baptism

The bare necessity for Baptism -- and the procedure used to baptize someone in an emergency -- is to say the following words *while pouring* clean water (hot or cold, fresh or salt -- though cold and fresh is preferred) over the forehead of the one to be baptized. The water must *touch* and *flow over* the skin of the head:

I baptize thee in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

Latin:

Ego te baptizo in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti.

Small variations may occur in this formula -- e.g., the use of "christen" for "baptize," "you" instead of "thee," "Holy Spirit" instead of "Holy Ghost," etc. -- but "baptize" or "christen" must be used in the English language, the Most Holy Trinity must be invoked using their Biblical titles, water must be used, it must be at least poured over the forehead such that it touches the skin (immersion, of course, is fine, too), and the words of Baptism must be said *as* the water is being poured or as the person is being immersed. However, the form written above is the precise method that should be encouraged and that every Catholic should know and teach their children in case they ever find themselves in the position of having to administer the Sacrament to someone in emergency need. *Ideally*, there should be a triple pouring or immersion -- once during each invocation of a Divine Person (e.g., "I baptize thee in the Name of the Father [pour] and of the Son [pour] and of the Holy [pour] Ghost").

If there is any doubt that Baptism validly took place, that is, according to the method above, a "conditional Baptism" is later administered. A conditional Baptism is also the style of private Baptism used when baptizing someone who is not sure he is baptized. The words of a conditional Baptism are:

If thou art not baptized, I baptize thee in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Latin:

Si non es baptizatus (-a), ego te baptizo in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti.

Again, private Baptism should always be followed, if possible, by the formal Solemn Rite of Baptism.

Solemn Baptism

First things first: Catholic parents should arrange for the Baptism of their newborn as soon as possible. Do not delay! It should be the first thing on the new parents' minds (well, maybe just after they count fingers and toes...).

The [name you choose for your child](#) should, ideally, be that of a Saint; at the least, he should not be given a name that conflicts with the Faith or recalls anything unsavory. The name you, as a Christian parent, give your child is known as his "Christian name" for a reason (note that he will receive a new name at Confirmation, too).

Choosing Sponsors

When planning for a Baptism, sponsors (called "godparents" in the case of children) are chosen -- by the parents or by the catechumen himself, if he is of age -- to stand up for the catechumen during the Rite. The godparents act as witnesses and perform ritually in the same way that the Jewish *kvatterin* ("godmother") and *kvatter* ("godfather") pass a child to be circumcised from the former to the latter until the child reaches the *mohel* (the rabbi who circumcises).

There should, ideally, be one male and one female for this task, both baptized Catholics who are in good standing with the Church and who've reached the age of sixteen. If two sponsors are unavailable, one will suffice. Among those who may *not* act as sponsor are: members of religious orders, spouses in respect to each other, parents in respect to their own children, infidels, heretics, members of condemned secret societies, and public sinners (Note: the 1983 Code of Canon Law does not mention that spouses may not sponsor each other and that members of religious orders may not act as sponsors. As to Christian heretics, it says that while Protestants may not act as sponsors, they may act as "witnesses").

The spiritual relationship formed between sponsor and the one sponsored is so close that, traditionally speaking, it is considered an impediment to marriage if a sponsor were to attempt to marry anyone s/he sponsors, or even a parent of the one sponsored (the 1983 Code of Canon Law doesn't mention this tradition).

What Sponsors Do

In the case of children, the role of the godparent is to be that of "spiritual guardian" who takes up any "slack" in the child's catechesis, helps ensure that his godchild learns the Faith, and prays for the godchild throughout his life. St. Thomas Aquinas writes in his *Summa Theologica* III-67-8:

Now it has been stated...that godparents take upon themselves the duties of a tutor. Consequently they are bound to watch over their godchildren when there is need for them to do so: for instance when and where children are brought up among unbelievers. But if they are brought up among Catholic Christians, the godparents may well be excused from this responsibility, since it may be presumed that the children will be carefully instructed by their parents. If, however, they perceive in any way that the contrary is the case, they would be bound, as far as they are able, to see to the spiritual welfare of their godchildren.

This is a very solemn obligation, not one to be entered into lightly. Parents should choose their child's godparents very carefully and select traditional Catholics who know the Faith, understand the obligations of godparenting, and are willing and able to live up to them. Parents and godparents should work together for the goal of helping the child to know, love, and serve God! During the Rite of Baptism, the godparents will answer for the child, that is, they will make the replies to the questions asked by the priest of the one to be baptized.

Sponsors for adults should express the same type of concern for the newly baptized soul, helping to ease the person into Church life and answer questions that may arise. During the Rite of Baptism, the sponsors for adults stand silent, with a hand on the candidate's shoulder (and sometimes signing the catechumen with the Cross, in some variations of the Rite); the one to be baptized answers the priest's questions himself.

Cultural notes:

- it is common for sponsors to give a gift to the newly baptized on the day of his Baptism, and also common for the godparents of children to give gifts throughout the year, on days such as [Christmas](#), [Name Days](#), and birthdays -- to sort of act as an aunt or uncle would toward the child on special days such as these. These gifts need not be anything expensive, of course, but should be religious in nature.
- Christening parties often follow Baptism -- especially after the Baptism of babies; they are usually small "family and close friends affairs" involving the serving of dessert and coffee. At these parties in Spanish cultures, the godfather will throw handfuls of coins to the children to scamper to gather up for "good luck."
- it is typical for guests at a Christening to give small gifts or cards to the newly baptized on the day of his Baptism, just as it is the custom for guests to do so for those who receive their [First Communion](#), who are [Confirmed](#), or who receive the Sacraments of [Holy Matrimony](#) or [Holy Orders](#).
- it is customary to give the priest a stipend for his time, especially for a "stand-alone" Baptism, i.e., a Baptism that does not take place during the course of a regularly scheduled Mass.

The Rite of Baptism Itself

If the one to be baptized enters the Church during the most gorgeous Easter Vigil, the Rite of Baptism takes place during the Mass itself, after the Litany of the Saints and the Blessing of the Baptismal Waters. If the one to be baptized is an infant, the Baptism takes place as soon as possible after birth. Otherwise, Baptism may take place any time the priest agrees. When adults are baptized, they usually receive [Confirmation](#) and their first [Holy Communion](#) at the same time.

Infants are dressed in beautiful white christening gowns -- gowns which often become heirlooms and are carefully packed away to be used by future children (you might see baby boys dressed in tiny little white suits); these special christening outfits, which can be homemade or purchased at Catholic gift stores, aren't necessary, of course, but Baby should be dressed in white. Adult catechumens will wear either their "Sunday best" or, possibly, white albs, especially if they are received into the Church during the Easter Vigil.



Baptism can take place as a "stand alone" ceremony, or in the context of a Mass. The Rite itself is divided into 4 parts with different sub-parts, each bringing the catechumen further into the church building with each step, symbolizing initiation into the Church Herself:

Part I: In the Narthex of the Church:

The Questioning, the Exsufflation, The Sign of the Cross, The Imposition of Hands, The Imposition of Salt

Part II: Admission into the Church Building:

Exorcism, The Sign of the Cross, The Imposition of Hands, The Admission into the Church, The Credo and Pater

Part III: In the Nave:

The Solemn Exorcism, The Ephphetha, The Renunciation of Satan, The Anointing

Part IV: At the Font:

The Profession of Faith, Baptism, The Anointing with Chrism, The White Linen Cloth, The Lighted Candle, The Last Words of Good Will

(Note that if a person is to be baptized during the Easter Vigil, the first 3 parts above might take place some time earlier than the Vigil itself. Then, during the Vigil, the rite is continued again starting with the Part IV.)

The Rite of Baptism

Part I Outside the Church

The priest (wearing a violet stole), sponsors, and the catechumen stand in the narthex of the church, symbolizing that at this point, the candidate is not a member of the Church.

The Questioning

Priest: N., what do you ask of the Church of God?

Sponsor/Catechumen: Faith.

Priest: What does Faith offer you?

Sponsor/Catechumen: Life everlasting.

Priest: If then you desire to enter into life, keep the commandments. 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul and with thy whole mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.'

Priest: N., quid petis ab Ecclesia Dei?

Sponsor/Catechumen: Fidem.

Priest: Fides, quid tibi præstat?

Sponsor/Catechumen: Vitam æternam.

Priest: Si igitur vis ad vitam ingredi, serva mandata. Diligis Dominum Deum tuum ex toto corde tuo, et ex tota anima tua, et ex tota mente tua, et proximum tuum sicut teipsum.

The Exsufflation

The priest then breathes 3 times on the candidate in the form of a Cross, recalling the Spirit (breath, wind, "ruach") of God.

Priest: Go forth from him (her), unclean spirit, and give place to the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete.

Priest: Exi ab eo (ea), immunde spiritus, et da locum Spiritui Sancto Paraclito.

The Sign of the Cross

The priest now makes the Sign of the Cross with his thumb on the candidate's forehead and breast.

Priest: Receive the Sign of the Cross both upon your forehead + and also upon your heart +; take to you the faith of the heavenly precepts; and so order your life as to be, from henceforth, the temple of God.

Priest: Let us pray: Mercifully hear our prayers, we beseech Thee, O Lord; and by Thy perpetual assistance keep this Thine elect, N, signed with the sign of the Lord's cross, so that, preserving this first experience of the greatness of Thy glory, he (she) may deserve, by keeping Thy commandments, to attain to the glory of regeneration. Through Christ our Lord.

Sponsor/Catechumen: Amen.

Priest: Accipe signum Crucis tam in fronte, quam in corde, sume fidem cælestium præceptorum: et talis esto moribus, ut templum Dei iam esse possis.

Priest: Oremus: Preces nostras, quaesumus, Domine, clementer exaudi; et hunc electum tuum (hanc electam tuam), N. crucis Dominicae impressione signatum (-am), perpetua virtute custodi; ut magnitudinis gloriae tuae rudimenta servans, per custodiam mandatorum, ad regenerationis gloriam pervenire mereatur (-antur). Per Christum Dominum nostrum.

Sponsor/Catechumen: Amen.

The Imposition of Hands

The priest places his hands on the candidate's head.

Priest: Let us pray: Almighty, everlasting God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, look graciously down upon this Thy servant, N., whom Thou hast graciously called unto the beginnings of the faith; drive out from him (her) all blindness of heart; break all the toils of Satan wherewith he (she) was held: open unto him (her), O Lord, the gate of Thy loving kindness, that, being impressed with the sign of Thy wisdom, he (she) may be free from the foulness of all wicked desires, and in the sweet odor of Thy precepts may joyfully serve Thee in Thy Church, and grow in grace from day to day. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

Priest: Through the same Christ our Lord.

Sponsor/Catechumen: Amen

Priest: Oremus: Omnipotens sempiterne Deus, Pater Domini nostri Iesu Christi, respice dignare super hunc famulum tuum (hanc famulam tuam), N, quem (quam) ad rudimenta fidei vocare dignatus es: omnem caecitatem cordi ab eo (ea) expelle: disrumpe omnes laqueos Satanae, quibus fuerat (-ant) colligatus (-a); aperi ei, Domine ianuam pietatis tuae imbutus (-a), omnium cupiditatum foetoribus careat (-ant), et ad suavem odorem praeceptorum tuorum laetus tibi in Ecclesia tua deserviat, et proficiat de die in diem Per eundem Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Priest: Per eundem Christum Dominum nostrum.

Sponsor/Catechumen: Amen

The Imposition of Salt

Now the priest puts a little blessed [salt](#) in the candidate's mouth. Salt is the symbol of that wisdom which gives a relish for the sweetness of divine nourishment; preserves, by the teaching of the Gospel, from the corruption of sin, and prevents evil passions from growing in men's souls. Adult catechumens might be signed on the brow, ears, eyes, nostrils, mouth, breast, and between the shoulders before the imposition of salt. If this procedure is followed, afterwards the candidate will kneel, recite the Our Father several times, and a Cross is made on his forehead, first by the sponsor and then by the priest.

Priest: N., Receive the salt of wisdom; let it be to thee a token of mercy unto everlasting life. May it make your way easy to eternal life.

Sponsor/Catechumen: Amen.

Priest: Peace be with you.

Sponsor/Catechumen: And with your spirit.

Priest: Let us pray: O God of our fathers, O God the Author of all truth, vouchsafe, we humbly beseech Thee, to look graciously down upon this Thy servant, N., and as he (she) tastes this first nutriment of salt, suffer him (her) no longer to hunger for want of heavenly food, to the end that he (she) may be always fervent in spirit, rejoicing in hope, always serving Thy name. Lead him (her), O Lord, we beseech Thee, to the laver of the new regeneration, that, together with Thy faithful, he may deserve to attain the everlasting rewards of Thy promises. Through Christ our Lord.

Priest: Through the same Christ our Lord.

Sponsor/Catechumen: Amen

Priest: N., accipe sal sapientiae: propitiatio sit tibi in vitam aeternam.

Sponsor/Catechumen: Amen.

Priest: Pax tecum.

Sponsor/Catechumen: Et cum spiritu tuo.

Priest: Oremus: Deus patrum nostrorum, Deus universae conditor veritatis, te supplices exoramus, ut hunc famulum tuum (hanc famulam tuam) respicere digneris propitius, et hoc primum pabulum salis gustantem, non diutius esurire permittas, quo minus cibo expleatur caelesti, quatenus sit semper spiritu fervens, spe gaudens, tuo semper nomini serviens. Perduc eum (eam), Domine, quaesumus ad novae regenerationis lavacrum, ut cum fidelibus tuis promissionum tuarum aeterna praemia consequi mereatur. Per Christum Dominum nostrum.

Priest: Per eundem Christum Dominum nostrum.

Sponsor/Catechumen: Amen

Part II: Admission into the Church Building

The Exorcism

The priest makes the Sign of the Cross over the candidate three times and says:

Priest: I exorcise thee, unclean spirit, in the name of the Father + and of the Son, + and of the Holy + Spirit, that thou goest out and depart from this servant of God, N. For He commands Thee, accursed one, Who walked upon the sea, and stretched out His right hand to Peter about to sink. Therefore, accursed devil, acknowledge thy sentence, and give honor to the living and true God: give honor to Jesus Christ His Son, and to the Holy Spirit; and depart from this servant of God, N. because God and our Lord Jesus Christ hath vouchsafed to call him (her) to His holy grace and benediction and to the font of Baptism.

Priest: Exorcizo te, immunde spiritus, in nomine Patris + et Filii + et Spiritus + Sancti, ut exeas, et recedas ab hoc famulo (hac famula) Dei N.: ipse enim tibi imperat, maledicte damnate, qui pedibus super mare ambulavit, et Petro mergenti dexteram porrexit. Ergo, maledicte diabole, recognosce sententiam tuam, et da honorem Deo vivo et vero, da honorem Iesu Christo Filio eius, et Spiritui Sancto, et recede ab hoc famulo (hac famula) Dei N, quia istum (-am) sibi Deus et Dominus noster Iesus Christus ad suam sanctam gratiam, et benedictionem, fontemque Baptismatis vocare dignatus est.

The Sign of the Cross

The priest again makes the Sign of the Cross on the candidate's forehead

Priest: And this sign of the holy Cross, which we make upon his (her) forehead, do thou, accursed devil, never dare to violate.

Priest: Et hoc signum sanctae Crucis, + quod nos fronti eius damus, tu, maledicte diabole, numquam audeas violare.

Priest: Through the same Christ our Lord.

Priest: Per eundem Christum Dominum nostrum.

Sponsor/Catechumen: Amen

Sponsor/Catechumen: Amen

The Imposition of Hands

For the final time, the priest lays his hand on the candidate's head

Priest: Let us pray: O Holy Lord, Father Almighty, Eternal God, Author of light and truth, I implore Thine everlasting and most just goodness upon this Thy servant N., that Thou wouldst vouchsafe to enlighten him (her) with the light of Thy wisdom: cleanse him (her) and sanctify him (her), give unto him (her) true knowledge; that, being made worthy of the grace of Thy Baptism, he (she) may hold firm hope, right counsel and holy doctrine.

Priest: Oremus: Aeternam, ac iustissimam pietatem tuam deprecor, Domine, sancte Pater omnipotens, aeterne Deus, auctor luminis et veritatis, super hunc famulum tuum (hanc famulam tuam) N, ut digneris eum (eam) illuminare lumine intelligentiae tuae: munda eum (eam), et sanctifica: da ei scientiam veram, ut, dignus (-a) gratia Baptismi tui effectus (-a), teneat (-ant) firmam spem, consilium rectum, doctrinam sanctam.

Priest: Through Christ our Lord.

Priest: Per Christum Dominum nostrum.

Sponsor/Catechumen: Amen.

Sponsor/Catechumen: Amen.

Admission into the Church Building

The priest lays the end of his stole on the candidate as a symbol of his priestly authority, and admits him into the church building, which is the symbol of the Church of Christ. If the catechumen is an adult and was anointed in Part I above, he may be asked to lie prostrate before the Altar in adoration of Christ before this next step.

Priest: N., enter thou into the temple of God, that thou mayest have part with Christ unto life everlasting.

Priest: N., ingredere in templum Dei, ut habeas (-ant) partem cum Christo in vitam aeternam.

Sponsor/Catechumen: Amen.

Sponsor/Catechumen: Amen.

The Credo and Pater

Sponsor/Catechumen: I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. He descended into Hell. On the third day, He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence shall He come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy Catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

Sponsor/Catechumen: 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 them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation: but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Sponsor/Catechumen: Credo in Deum, Patrem omnipotentem, Creatorem cæli et terræ. Et in Iesum Christum, Filium eius unicum, Dominum nostrum: qui conceptus est de Spiritu Sancto, natus ex Maria Virgine, passus sub Pontio Pilato, crucifixus, mortuus, et sepultus: descendit ad inferos; tertia die resurrexit a mortuis; ascendit ad cælos; sedet ad dexteram Dei Patris omnipotentis; inde venturus est iudicare vivos et mortuos. Credo in Spiritum Sanctum, sanctam Ecclesiam catholicam, Sanctorum communionem, remissionem peccatorum, carnis resurrectionem, vitam æternam. Amen.

Sponsor/Catechumen: Pater noster, qui es in cælis, sanctificetur nomen tuum. Adveniat regnum tuum. Fiat voluntas tua, sicut in cælo, et in terra. Panem nostrum cotidianum da nobis hodie. Et dimitte nobis debita nostra, sicut et nos dimittimus debitoribus nostris. Et ne nos inducas in tentationem: sed libera nos a malo. Amen.

Part III

In the Nave of the Church

The Solemn Exorcism

Priest: I exorcise thee, every unclean spirit, in the name of God the Father + Almighty, in the name of Jesus + Christ, His Son, our Lord and Judge, and in the power of the Holy + Spirit, that thou be depart from this creature of God N, which our Lord hath deigned to call unto His holy temple, that it may be made the temple of the living God, and that the Holy Spirit may dwell therein. Through the same Christ our Lord, who shall come to judge the living and the dead, and the world by fire

Priest: Exorcizo te, omnis spiritus immunde, in nomine Dei + Patris omnipotentis, et in nomine Iesu + Christi Filii eius, Domini et Iudicis nostri, et in virtute Spiritus + Sancti, ut discedas ab hoc plasmate Dei N, quod Dominus noster ad templum sanctum suum vocare dignatus est, ut fiat templum Dei vivi, et Spiritus Sanctus habitet in eo. Per eundem Christum Dominum nostrum, qui venturus est iudicare vivos et mortuos, et saeculum per ignem.

The Ephpheta

The priest takes a little spittle and touches the ears and nostrils of the candidate with it. For health reasons, the use of spittle may be omitted. This rite comes from Mark 7:33-35, when Jesus healed the deaf-mute: "And taking him from the multitude apart, he put his fingers into his ears: and spitting, he touched his tongue. And looking up to heaven, he groaned and said to him: Ephpheta, which is, Be thou opened. And immediately his ears were opened and the string of his tongue was loosed and he spoke right."

Priest: Ephpheta, that is to say, Be opened, for an odour of sweetness. Be thou, devil, begone; for the judgement of God shall draw near.

Priest: Ephpheta, quod est, Adaperire. In odorem suavitatis. Tu autem effugare, diabole; appropinquabit enim iudicium Dei.

The Renunciation of Satan

Priest: N., do you renounce Satan?

Sponsor/Catechumen: I do renounce him.

Priest: And all of his works?

Sponsor/Catechumen: I do renounce him.

Priest: And all his pomps?

Sponsor/Catechumen: I do renounce him.

Priest: N., abrenuntias Satanæ?

Sponsor/Catechumen: Abrenuntio.

Priest: Et omnibus operibus eius?

Sponsor/Catechumen: Abrenuntio.

Priest: Et omnibus pompis eius?

Sponsor/Catechumen: Abrenuntio.

The Anointing

The priest anoints the candidate with the [oil of catechumens](#) on the heart and between the shoulders in the form of a Cross, saying:

Priest: I anoint you + with the oil of salvation in Christ Jesus our Lord, that you may have everlasting life.

Priest: Ego te linio Oleo salutis in Christo Iesu Domino nostro, ut habeas vitam æternam.

Sponsor/Catechumen: Amen.

Sponsor/Catechumen: Amen.

Part IV At the Font

The priest removes his violet stole and puts on a white one.

The Profession of Faith

Priest: N., do you believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth?

Priest: N., credis in Deum Patrem omnipotentem, creatorem cæli et terram ?

Sponsor/Catechumen: I do believe.

Sponsor/Catechumen: Credo.

Priest: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son our Lord, Who was born and Who suffered?

Priest: Credis in Iesum Christum, Filium eius unicum, Dominum nostrum, natum, et passum?

Sponsor/Catechumen: I do believe.

Sponsor/Catechumen: Credo.

Priest: Do you believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting?

Priest: Credis et in Spiritum sanctum, sanctam Ecclesiam catholicam, Sanctorum communionem, remissionem peccatorum, carnis resurrectionem, et vitam æternam?

Sponsor/Catechumen: I do believe.

Sponsor/Catechumen: Credo.

Baptism (Matter and Form of the Sacrament)

If the one to be baptized is a baby, the godparents take him to the font (the godmother holds him in her arms, the godfather touches the baby's shoulder with his right hand); if he is an adult, the sponsor puts his right hand on the shoulder of the one to be baptized.

Priest: N., will you be baptized?

Priest: N., vis baptizari?

Sponsor/Catechumen: I will.

Sponsor/Catechumen: Volo.

The priest pours water over the head of the candidate three times, once after each mention of the Divine Persons. The [water](#) he uses will have been consecrated during the Easter Vigil or on the Eve of the Pentecost. As he pours the water, the priest says these words (or the words of a conditional Baptism):

Priest: I baptize you in the name of the Father + and of the Son + and of the Holy + Spirit.

Priest: N, ego te baptizo in nomine + Patris, et Filii, +, et Spiritus + Sancti.

The Anointing with Chrism

Priest: May the Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath regenerated thee by water and the Holy Spirit, and who hath given thee the remission of all thy sins, may He Himself + anoint thee with the Chrism of Salvation, in the same Christ Jesus our Lord, unto life eternal.

Priest: Deus omnipotens, Pater Domini nostri Iesu Christi, qui te regeneravit ex aqua et Spiritu Sancto, quique dedit tibi remissionem omnium peccatorum, ipse te + liniat Chrismate Salutis in eodem Christo Iesu Domino nostro in vitam æternam.

Sponsor/Catechumen: Amen.

Sponsor/Catechumen: Amen.

Priest: Peace be with you.

Priest: Pax tibi.

Sponsor/Catechumen: And with your spirit.

Sponsor/Catechumen: Et cum spiritu tuo.

The White Linen Cloth

This priest takes a white linen cloth -- symbolizing the purity of a soul cleansed from all sin, and a relic of the days when the newly baptized wore white albs for 8 days -- and places it on the head of the candidate.

Priest: Receive this white garment, which mayest thou carry without stain before the judgment seat of our Lord Jesus Christ, that thou mayest have life everlasting.

Priest: Accipe vestem candidam, quam perferas immaculatam ante tribunalem Domini nostri Iesu Christi, ut habeas vitam æternam. Amen.

The Lighted Candle

The priest gives the candidate or the sponsor a lighted [candle](#).

Priest: Receive this burning light, and keep thy Baptism so as to be without blame: keep the commandments of God, that when the Lord shall come to the nuptials, thou mayest meet Him together with all the Saints in the heavenly court, and mayest have eternal life and live for ever and ever.

Priest: Accipe lampadem ardentem, et irreprehensibilis custodi Baptismum tuum: serva Dei mandata ut cum Dominus venerit ad nuptias, possis occurrere ei una cum omnibus Sanctis in aula caelesti, habeasque vitam aeternam, et vivas in saecula saeculorum.



Last Words of Good Will

Priest: N., go in peace and the Lord be with you. Amen.

Priest: N., vade in pace et Dominus sit tecum. Amen.

Sponsor/Catechumen: Amen.

Sponsor/Catechumen: Amen.

Thus ends the Rite of Baptism. ¹ If the newly baptized one is an adult, the [Rite of Confirmation](#) typically *immediately* follows. Then, if this all takes place during a Mass, he is given his First Holy Communion after the Consecration.

One's Baptismal candle should be kept so it may be used during one's wedding and funeral. It should be stored with the [Sick Call](#) set so that it might be used, too, for one's [Unction](#) (if one's baptismal candle becomes unusable or is lost, another blessed candle may be used, such as one blessed at [Candlemas](#)).

Renewal of Baptismal Promises

During the Easter Vigil Mass each year, all the baptized renew their Baptismal promises. At this Mass, we recite the [Litany of the Saints](#), but stop halfway through (after the prayer to "All ye holy Saints of God"). At this point, the Baptismal waters are blessed, and then follows the renewal of our baptismal promises. We renew our promises by answering the questions (as a group) posed in the Renunciation of Satan and in the Profession of Faith above. The Pater is recited, and then a prayer that God keeps us in Christ. This is followed by a sprinkling of the congregation with the baptismal waters, and then finishing the Litany of All Saints.

Two Other Ways the Fruits of this Sacrament may be Received

In addition to the normative Baptism by water and Spirit that Christ commands, there are also the merciful "Baptism of Desire" and "Baptism of Blood." While Christ has given us the Sacrament as outlined above, and we are bound to obey Him, the fruits of sacramental Baptism may be had through these two other means. We must remember that while we are bound by the Sacraments, God is not, and He can pour out His graces in other ways.

Baptismus flaminis sive Spiritus Sancti -- "Baptism of Desire" (also called "Baptism of Fire") -- is the supernatural benefits of the Sacrament of Baptism granted, by the grace of Christ, to someone who explicitly or implicitly vows to receive Baptism but who, through no fault of his own, is unable to receive water Baptism as Christ desires and commanded. In order to be "baptized" in this way, one must have faith in God, be penitent, be animated by charity, and have the *will to obey* God's commands (which includes the command to be baptized in water and Spirit), even if not properly catechized. This sort of Baptism is summarized by St. Augustine (A.D. 354-430) in *City of God*:

For whatever unbaptized persons die confessing Christ, this confession is of the same efficacy for the remission of sins as if they were washed in the sacred font of baptism. For He who said, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," made also an exception in their favor, in that other sentence where He no less absolutely said, "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven;" and in another place, "Whosoever will lose his life for my sake, shall find it." And this explains the verse, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." For what is more precious than a death by which a man's sins are all forgiven, and his merits increased an hundred fold?

It is formally mentioned in Session 7, Canon 4 of the Council of Trent:

If anyone says that the sacraments of the New Law are not necessary for salvation, but that they are superfluous; and that men can, without the sacraments *or the desire of them*, obtain the grace of justification by faith alone, although it is true that not all the sacraments are necessary for each individual, let him be anathema.

Baptismus sanguinis -- "Baptism of Blood" -- is the supernatural benefits of the Sacrament of Baptism granted, by the grace of Christ, to someone who is martyred in defense of the Faith. This sort of Baptism is explained by St. John Chrysostom (A.D. 347-407):

Do not wonder that I called martyrdom a baptism: indeed there too the Spirit comes with much abundance, and words there the remission of sins and a wonderful and astonishing purification of the soul; and as those who are baptized by waters are washed, so those who suffer martyrdom are washed in their own blood.

"Baptism of Desire" is a much-abused concept in the Novus Ordo world, twisted beyond recognition such that it leads to the false idea of universal salvation, to a denial of the need to be a part of the Church to be saved, and to disobedience to Christ's command to preach the Gospel and to baptize. ² Its meaning must be kept crystal-clear: the Church's teaching is that Baptism -- which includes "Baptism of Desire" and Baptism of Blood" -- is necessary for salvation, as it is how one enters the Church, outside of which there is no salvation. Those who are *able* to be baptized by water and Spirit *must* be baptized by water and Spirit. Those who are *unable* to receive the Sacrament in the normal way, but *would* receive the Sacrament if he were able, *might* receive sanctifying grace, under the conditions above, and be united to the soul of the Church. Meanwhile, we are to preach the Gospel and bring all to the Church -- the source of the Sacraments which are media of grace. This is *what we were told to do by Christ*, and *what we must do!* Those we can't reach are left to the mercy of God, and we can only pray -- but never presume -- that their souls are illuminated before death so they are contrite for their sins and filled with a love for God that can save them per the sanctifying grace of "Baptism of Desire," thereby uniting them with the soul of the Church *outside of which there is no salvation*.

Trivia

In many old churches you might find a door on the "North" side of the Church -- to your left as you face the sanctuary -- known as the "Devil's Door." Due to popular custom, this door would have been kept open during Baptisms so that the devils driven out during the Exorcism would have a portal through which to depart.

Also, see the infamous Baptism scene from "The Godfather" (1972) off the [Fun Stuff](#) page.

Footnotes:

¹ In the revised version of Baptism, there are two separate Rites of Baptism, one for children under the age of 7, and one for adults. The primary focus of the new rite is initiation into the Church community rather than the remission of sins. The two exorcisms and the imposition of blessed salt are omitted. 🙏

² Because of the abuse of the notion of "Baptism of Desire," a good and holy priest, Father Leonard Feeney (d. 1978), came to deny this teaching altogether. His position, which became known as "Feeneyism," was formally condemned under the pontificate of Pope Pius XII in 1949; he was excommunicated in 1953, and then the excommunication was lifted in 1972. His spiritual children, known perjoratively as "Feeneyites," tend to be, other than regarding this one issue, wonderful traditional Catholics who act out of a misunderstanding and a noble desire to fight the watering down of Catholic teaching by those who abuse the idea of "Baptism of Desire" and deny the dogma of *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* ("outside the Church there is no salvation"). Their extreme wariness of the denial of *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* was prescient, especially in light of the harm caused by the post-conciliar Church's false ecumenism.

Ref.: <http://www.fisheaters.com/baptism2.html>