

SACRAMENTS AND RITES

BAPTISM

126

ALL STANDING, a hymn may be sung.

Having entered, the Priest opens the Word.

The Priest reads a sentence of Scripture.

The CONGREGATION SITTING, the Candidate(s) for baptism comes forward or the Parents or Guardians bring forward the child to be baptized.

PRIEST: Since a person is born of his parents into natural life and not into spiritual life, and by inheritance inclines to evils of every kind, he must be born again that he may enter into the kingdom of God; and since this new birth or regeneration is represented in the waters of baptism, you have come forward that (you/this child) may be baptized, and thus enter according to order into the Church of the Lord on earth. Hear now the Word of the Lord as it is written in the Sacred Scripture and in the Heavenly Doctrine of the New Jerusalem.

The Priest then reads one or more of the following or other selections from the Word.

Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord.

Psalm 127: 3 **127**

Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." *Matthew 16: 24* **128**

Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in heaven their angels always see the face of My Father who is in heaven. Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish. *Matthew 18: 10, 14* **129**

Then Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All power has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." *Matthew 28: 18-20* **130**

John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. And all the land of Judea, and those from Jerusalem, went out to him and were all baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins. *Mark 1: 4, 5* **131**

132 It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens opened and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove. Then a voice came from heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."
Mark 1: 9–11

133 Then they brought young children to Him that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked those who brought them. But when Jesus saw it, He was greatly displeased and said to them, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it."
Mark 10: 13–15

134 And He took them up in His arms, put His hands on them, and blessed them.
Mark 10: 16

135 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned."
Mark 16: 15, 16

136 John answered, saying to them all, "I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire."
Luke 3: 16

137 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit."
John 3: 5–8

138 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it.
Revelation 2: 17

139 They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads.
Revelation 22: 4

140 Baptism was instituted for a sign that a person is of the Church, and for a memorial that he is to be regenerated; for the washing of baptism is a spiritual washing, which is regeneration. Since everyone who is regenerated also

undergoes temptations, which are spiritual combats against evils and falsities, these also are signified by the waters of baptism. Since baptism is for a sign and memorial of these things, a person may be baptized as an infant, and if not in his infancy, he may be baptized as an adult. Let those, therefore, who are baptized know that baptism confers neither faith nor salvation, but that it testifies that they may receive faith and be saved if they are regenerated. *NJHD 202–207*

The uses of baptism cannot be brought to light except through the spiritual sense of the Word, which is at this day disclosed for the New Church, for use in the worship of the Lord. **141**
TCR 669

The first use of baptism is introduction into the Christian Church, and at the same time insertion among Christians in the spiritual world, where everyone is inserted among societies and congregations according to the quality of the Christianity in him or about him. The second use of baptism is that the Christian may know and acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ, our Redeemer and Savior, and follow Him. The third use of baptism, which is the final use, is that one may be regenerated. **142**
TCR 677–684 portions

[Angelic spirits] said concerning infants on earth that directly after birth, angels from the heaven of innocence are with them; in the succeeding age, angels from the heaven of the tranquillity of peace; and afterwards those who are from the societies of charity; and then, as the innocence and charity with the young children decrease, other angels are with them; and at length, when they become older and enter into a life foreign to charity, angels are indeed present, but more remotely, and this in accordance with the ends of life, which the angels especially regulate by continually insinuating good ones and turning aside evil ones; and they flow in more nearly or more remotely in proportion as they can or cannot do this. **143**
AC 2303

Infants are introduced by baptism into the Christian heaven, and angels are there assigned to them to take care of them, by whom they are kept in a state of receiving faith in the Lord; and as they grow up, and come into their own right and their own reason, the guardian angels leave them, and they associate to themselves such spirits as make one with their life and faith. **144**
TCR 677: 5

Not only infants but all people who are baptized are then counted among Christians in the spiritual world, because in that world peoples and nations are grouped according to their religions. **145**
TCR 678

146 The two sacraments, baptism and the holy supper, act as two gates to eternal life. Baptism, which is the first gate, admits and introduces every Christian into what the church teaches from the Word about the other life. All such teachings are the means for preparing them and leading them to heaven. The second gate is the holy supper. It admits and introduces into heaven all who have allowed themselves to be prepared and led by the Lord. No other universal gates exist. *TCR 721*

147 There are duties of charity: some public, some domestic, and some private. The domestic duties of charity are the duties of a husband toward his wife and of a wife toward her husband; also the duties of a father and mother toward their children, and of the children toward their father and mother. As for the duties of parents toward their children in particular, these duties are inwardly different with those who are in charity and those who are not, although outwardly they look the same. With those in charity, their love for their children goes along with their love for the neighbor and for God; for such people love their children for their morals, their virtues, the things they devote their energy to, and their qualifications for serving the public. *TCR 429, 431*

148 [An atmosphere of innocence] also flows into the souls of the parents, and joins itself with the same atmosphere in the little children, being insinuated principally through the instrumentality of touch. The innocence of the Lord flows into angels of the third heaven, where all are in an innocence of wisdom; passes on through the lower heavens, but only through the innocent affections of angels there; and so descends directly and indirectly into little children. *CL 396: 1*

149 The things which someone as a little child in its first age learns eagerly or believes, and which he afterward either confirms, or doubts about, or denies, are especially these: that there is a God and that He is one; that He has created all things; that He rewards those who do good, and punishes those who do evil; that there is a life after death, in which the evil go to hell and the good to heaven, thus that there is a hell and a heaven, and that the life after death is eternal; also that he ought to pray daily, and this with humility; that the Sabbath day is to be kept holy; that parents are to be honored; and that no one must commit adultery, murder, or theft; with other like things. *AC 5135: 3*

PRIEST: From these and other teachings in the Word it may be seen that all who are baptized are to be initiated into the knowledge and belief that the Lord Jesus Christ is the one God of heaven and earth; that He has come again in the Heavenly Doctrine of the New Jerusalem; and that we are to be conjoined with Him by a life according to the truths of His Word.

Baptism of a Child

150

The Priest, addressing the parents by name,

PRIEST: You have brought this child into the presence of the Lord, that (he/she) may be baptized with water and the Holy Spirit. By this act you do enter into a solemn covenant with the Lord. Now, therefore, let me ask:

Do you, for yourselves and for this child, acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ to be the one God of heaven and earth?

ANSWER: I do.

PRIEST: Do you, for yourselves and for this child, acknowledge that the Lord reveals Himself in the Sacred Scriptures and in the Heavenly Doctrine of the New Jerusalem?

ANSWER: I do.

PRIEST: Do you, for yourselves and for this child, acknowledge that evils are to be shunned as sins against Him, and that a life of good is to be learned and lived?

ANSWER: I do.

PRIEST: Do you desire that this child be baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus Christ?

ANSWER: I do.

PRIEST: Let us pray.

ALL KNEELING, the Priest offers one of the following or other prayers:

A

O most merciful Lord, help this child to grow in the knowledge and strength of Your Word. Send Your angels to protect (him/her), that (he/she) may remember that You are always near, and that (he/she) may be kept from the evil way and learn to do what is good. Lead the parents of this child in the way of wisdom and love, so that in their government of (him/her) they may prepare (him/her) for a life of use here on earth and forever in Your kingdom. Amen.

B

Bless, O Lord, this administration of the sacrament of baptism, and graciously receive this child now to be baptized. Enlighten (him/her) by Your Word, defend (him/her) in temptation, and lead (him/her) by Your Holy Spirit into everlasting life. Amen.

ALL: Our Father, who art in the heavens, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven so upon the earth. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we also forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Matthew 6: 9–13

ALL STANDING, the Priest receives the child into his arms.

PRIEST: Will you now name this child?

The Parents or Guardians state the child's given name(s).

The Priest repeats the name of the child, and applies the water to his/her forehead.

PRIEST: I baptize you into the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Priest makes the sign of the cross on the forehead and breast of the child, and then lays his hand on the head of the child.

PRIEST: The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.

Numbers 6: 24–26

The CONGREGATION SITTING, the Priest returns the child to the Parents or Guardians.

PRIEST: This child, by baptism, is now enrolled and numbered in heaven among those who in heart receive the Lord in His second coming. In the Divine providence of the Lord (he/she) was born into the world, and (he/she) is committed to your care, that by life in the world (he/she) may be prepared for life in heaven; and it is given you to cooperate with the Lord to this end. Seek, therefore, for the light and knowledge to guide you in the performance of your part in this work. Lead this child to acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ as (his/her) God and Father. Teach (him/her) the Lord's Prayer that (he/she) may be introduced into the worship of the Lord. Teach (him/her) the Ten Commandments that (he/she) may learn to shun evils as sins. Instruct (him/her) in the Holy Scripture and in the Heavenly Doctrine of the New Jerusalem that (he/she) may be prepared for regeneration. In this way you will promote (his/her) happiness in this life and (his/her) eternal welfare in the world to come. And now may the Lord be with you and lead you in the way of peace.

The CONGREGATION STANDING, a musical selection may be sung.

The Priest pronounces the Benediction, closes the Word and retires.

Baptism of an Adult**151**

The Priest, addressing the Candidate by name,

PRIEST: You have come into the presence of the Lord that you may be baptized with water and the Holy Spirit; and by this act you enter into a solemn covenant with the Lord. Now, therefore, let me ask:

Do you acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ to be the one God of heaven and earth?

ANSWER: I do.

PRIEST: Do you acknowledge that the Lord reveals Himself in the Sacred Scriptures and in the Heavenly Doctrine of the New Jerusalem?

ANSWER: I do.

PRIEST: Do you acknowledge that evils are to be shunned as sins against Him, and that a life of good is to be learned and lived?

ANSWER: I do.

PRIEST: Will you therefore be baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus Christ?

ANSWER: I will.

PRIEST: Let us pray.

ALL KNEELING, the Priest offers one of the following or other prayers:

A

O most merciful Lord, we ask Your blessing upon this Your servant now to be baptized. Grant (him/her) the knowledge and understanding of Your Word, and give (him/her) strength to overcome the evils of (his/her) heredity, that (he/she) may turn aside from the way of death and receive new life from You. Enlighten (him/her) by Your Holy Spirit, that (he/she) may grow in intelligence and wisdom, and endow (him/her) with heavenly virtues that (he/she) may walk in the way of faith and charity toward a life of use in Your everlasting kingdom. Amen.

B

Bless, O Lord, this administration of Your holy sacrament, and graciously receive this Your servant now to be baptized. Enlighten (him/her) by Your Word, defend (him/her) in temptation, and lead (him/her) by Your Holy Spirit into everlasting life. Amen.

ALL: Our Father, who art in the heavens, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven so upon the earth. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we also forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Matthew 6: 9–13

The PEOPLE STANDING and the CANDIDATE STILL KNEELING, the Priest, naming (him/her), applies the water to (his/her) forehead.

PRIEST: I baptize you into the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Cf. Matthew 28: 19; Acts 2: 38; 8: 16; 19: 5

The Priest makes the sign of the cross on the forehead and breast, and lays his hands on the head.

PRIEST: The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.

Numbers 6: 24–26

The PEOPLE SIT and the PERSON BAPTIZED STANDS.

PRIEST: You have now been introduced by baptism into the Lord's New Church, and before angels and people on earth you have taken upon yourself the new Christian name. You are therefore numbered among those who acknowledge the Lord in His second coming. Cultivate a knowledge of the Word of the Lord in the Holy Scripture and in the Heavenly Doctrine of the New Jerusalem. Shun evils as sins against God. Renounce the love of self and the world that you may love the Lord above all things and your neighbor as yourself. In this way you will come into communion with the new Christian heaven and into conjunction with the Lord, and thus enter into everlasting life. And now may the Lord be with you and lead you in the way of peace.

ALL STANDING, a musical selection may be sung.

The Priest then pronounces the Benediction, closes the Word and retires.