



MOYRAVERTY
PARISH

Good Beginnings



The Sacrament of Baptism

Through Baptism our children become Children of God, members of the Church, and heirs to the Kingdom of Heaven.

Your decision to have your child baptised is a declaration that you will bring your child up in the faith.

Preparation

Your baby's baptism is a time for celebration and joy. Naturally you want the best for your child, and we want to help you to plan and prepare for your child's baptism in the best possible way.

Your most important preparation is to look at your own faith. The very fact that you have asked for your child to be baptised shows that you recognise the importance of God in your life. As your child gets older he/she will grow up with the faith you have taught by your example.

As you help your baby grow up in the love of God, you too will experience growth in your own faith life. Your baby's baptism is only the beginning of a new life which will grow closer to one another in the family and closer to God.



The Family of God, the Church, welcomes your child into its community in Moyraverty Parish with love and prayers for the future peace and happiness of your family.

Baptism is God's smile upon you child



What is Baptism?

One of the meanings of the word blessing is **'to say good things'**. In baptism God says the following about your child: he/she is precious, is a child of God, is an heir to His Kingdom, is freed from Original Sin. In baptism your child is truly blessed. Baptism is a sacrament, one of the special signs we have in the Church that make visible God's love for us. By asking for baptism we show our belief in God, and by giving us baptism God has shown his faith in us. Like good parents who sacrifice themselves for their children, God's Son sacrificed Himself on the cross for our salvation. God's continual

commitment to us demonstrates how precious and valued we are to Him.

We invite you to take a moment to think about **why you want your child baptised**. There are many reasons why parents want their child baptised, and all of them are good. As a church we especially hope that you will help your child experience and understand the love that God has for him/her. Indeed, at the ceremony, after you have requested baptism the priest will ask: **"Are you willing to accept the responsibility of training your child in the practice of the faith and to bring up your child to keep God's commandments as Christ taught us, by loving God and our neighbour?"**

Whatever your motivation for presenting your child for baptism, we invite you to think about this question to which you will answer 'we are' at the baptismal ceremony. Committing yourself to 'training your child in the practice of the faith' is committing yourself to living your own Christian faith, perhaps

committing yourself to a new faith journey where you learn to experience God's love and commitment for you. If you think about it, every parent needs the help and support of God as they strive to be the best mother and father they can be, and every parent needs the support of the faith community, the church.

Symbols of Baptism

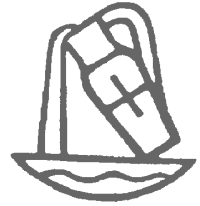
Sign of the Cross

At the church door the priest, followed by the parents and godparents make the sign of the cross on the forehead of the child to be baptised. This is a sign of our faith, and a blessing. We pray that all that this child will do in life will be in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.



Water

We use water for so many things: to clean and purify, to make things grow, to quench our thirst. Water is vital for life. Baptism is about a new beginning, about freshness, freedom and creative potential. Jesus was baptised himself with water in the River Jordan. Those who are baptised with water have the life of the risen Christ within them.



Holy Oils

As well as water, oil is essential in life. We use it every day in many ways. Think of how special is the smell of a baby that has been bathed, sprinkled with baby powder, and rubbed with lotions and oils to protect the skin.

The first oil used us called the **Oil of Catechumens**. It is rubbed on the breast of the baby. Just as athletes used to rub themselves with oil to strengthen and prepare for the struggle ahead so this oil is used to remind parents and godparents that God will give the person baptised all the strength and courage he/she needs to be a good Christian.

The second oil used is **Chrism**.

This is a mixture of olive oil and sweet smelling balsam, and is used to anoint kings and queens. The anointing is accompanied by the following words said by the priest: **“As Christ was anointed prophet and King, so may you live always as a member of his body, sharing everlasting life”**.

The use of this oil reminds us that all who are baptised are royalty: princes and princesses of God’s Kingdom. In Confirmation we are anointed again with Chrism: this blessing seals us with the gifts of the Holy Spirit and makes us full members of God’s family, able to speak God’s word and be responsible for carrying on Christ’s work in our world.

The White Garment

Besides being useful for protection and warmth, clothes often express who we are and what we aspire to be. The colour white symbolises resurrection; in dressing the newly baptised in a white garment we are acknowledging that the life of the Resurrected Jesus and that His Spirit is within them.

The Baptismal Candle

The baptismal candle symbolises



the fact that Jesus is the light of the world and that we are the light of the world. The candle reminds us that the light of Christ has been lit in the child’s life; it is the responsibility of parents and godparents to keep this flame burning.

Think of the love that the Father has lavished on us, by letting us be called God’s children; and that is what we are. My dear people, we are already the children of God, but what we are to be in the future has not yet been revealed; all we know is, that when it is revealed we shall be like him because we shall see him as he really is. (John 3:1-25)

The Ceremony

The parish clergy and Baptism Team invite you to participate fully in the service by joining in the responses and prayers. If one of your guests would like to read the scripture reading or the intercessions, please contact a member of the Baptism Team.

Contact the parish office if you would like a copy of the ceremony prior to the service.

Welcome



The baptism ceremony begins at the church door. When visitors come to our home we welcome them at the door. Likewise the priest welcomes your child who is to be baptised at the church

door; your child is welcomed into God's house. Our hope is that those to be baptised will be frequent visitors.

The priest reminds you, the parents and godparents about your responsibility to bring your child up to practice the faith and to keep God's commandments.

After the Sign of the Cross all parents and godparents process to the front of the Church with their children.

The Word of God

When we celebrate the sacraments in the church we always listen to the Word of God. Scriptural readings, which remind us of the meaning of Baptism, are now read followed by a short homily when the priest talks about the importance of Baptism. The Liturgy of the Word ends with Intercessory Prayer when we pray for those who are to be baptised and you their families and godparents. Since we are all called to live saintly lives, we also invoke the saints to pray for us.

The Baptism



After praying that those to be baptised will be 'set free from original sin' the priest anoints the children with the Oil of Catechumens. The parents and godparents are then asked to renew their baptismal vows. The priest blesses and pours water which he has blessed over your child's head signifying new life and freedom from sin that Christ has won for us all by his death and resurrection.

Worshipping



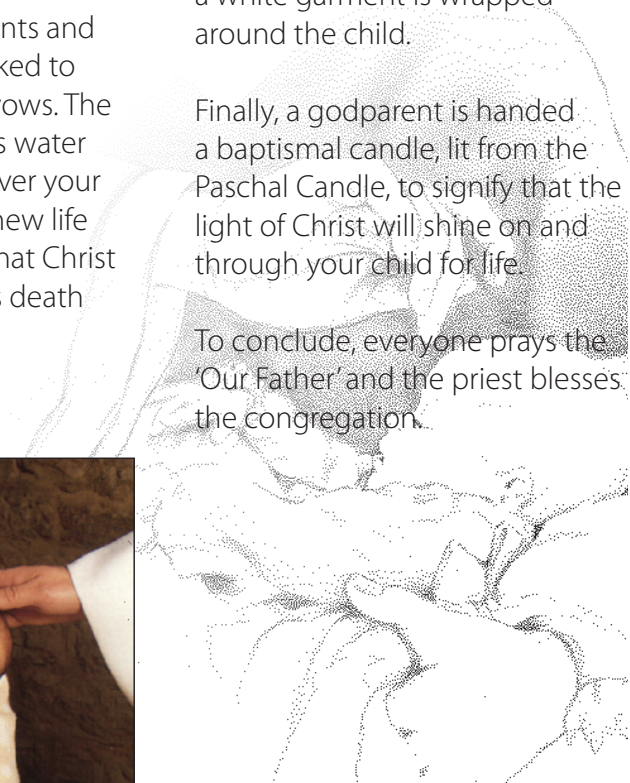
Now that he/she has become a child of God, your child is anointed with the Oil of Chrism, the oil of Kings. Just as Jesus was anointed for his special mission in the world, so your child is anointed for the special mission to live fully as a member of Christ's family.

Witnessing

The Spirit of the resurrected Jesus now dwells within your child. As a sign of this presence and the fact that eternal life begins at baptism, a white garment is wrapped around the child.

Finally, a godparent is handed a baptismal candle, lit from the Paschal Candle, to signify that the light of Christ will shine on and through your child for life.

To conclude, everyone prays the 'Our Father' and the priest blesses the congregation.



For many Christians the birth of a baby and the question of baptism provide a focus for a new beginning. The seed of faith sown and watered in baptism needs your love and care if it is to flourish. The way you live and love, your relationship as a couple and your beliefs, will all contribute to your child's experience of what it means to be a Christian.

Creating Traditions

One tradition you may wish to establish is to make the sign of the cross on the forehead of your children and to teach them to make the sign of the cross themselves. This is a prayer that articulates our desire to place our children in the care and guidance of Jesus. At the ceremony you will be given a small bottle of holy water used at the baptism. You can bless your child 'in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit' with this water.

At birthday parties we often light candles. Perhaps on the anniversary of your child's baptism the baptismal candle could be lit for a short time to remind your child about his or her calling to be Christ's light in the world. If you are worried or anxious about your child you might light the baptismal candle

to remind you that the light of Christ is present in his or her life and that God cares for your child just as you do.

Other candles can be useful within the home when you pray, during family celebrations, or when you want to reflect or spend some quiet time.



Practical Issues

When and where?

After reading this booklet and completing the form on the back page, parents register their child for baptism by making contact with the parish office. Four weeks notice is recommended.

At present baptisms are celebrated in St Anthony's Church on the first and third Sunday's of every month at 12.30pm.

In this ceremony we welcome the newly baptised into our Christian family, and so it is appropriate that the Sacrament is celebrated as a community.

Taking time to reflect about the importance of faith

The baptism ceremony provides an opportunity for you to reflect on the importance of faith in your own life, as well as your responsibility to hand on the faith to your child.

Members of the Parish Baptismal Team or the priests of the parish will be happy to meet and talk to you about your faith and/or the implications of having your child baptised. To make an appointment, telephone 3834 3013.

Older children

If you have older children who wish to be baptised you will need to allow time for their preparation. They will need instruction. Again the Parish Baptismal Team will be willing to offer help and support.

Sponsors/Godparents

Sponsors or godparents have an important role in that they support the parents in bringing up their children in the faith. The Church therefore insists that at least one of the Sponsors is Catholic. Godparents should be over sixteen years of age, and Catholic sponsors should be individuals who practice their faith. Where two Godparents are chosen one must be male and the other female.

Name

The name a person is given at baptism is a sign of identity; it is how he or she will be known for the rest of their life. Think for a moment how many times you will hear that name during the course of your child's life. How often you will call that name in exasperation or tenderness! How often you will hear others call your child by their name! In all the ways that name will be used in the future it will have a very special significance for you. You chose the name! It is interesting that we use the term 'Christian name' to describe a person's first name. Traditionally parents often chose the name of a saint for their child. Perhaps you might think about giving your child the name of a saint who has inspired or influenced you. Giving your child at least one saint's name could be your way of asking this saint to pray for your child.

The cost

A minimal donation of £20 is usual for each baptism. An envelope is enclosed with this booklet which can be given to a member of the baptism team at the ceremony



And Finally

We congratulate you on your decision to have your child baptised. While the baptism ceremony is short, it takes a lifetime to understand and appreciate its meaning. We hope this preparation booklet has given you a better insight into the meaning of this beautiful and fulfilling sacrament.

If you have any further questions on this sacrament please do not hesitate to contact a member of the Baptismal Team through the Parish Office.

Telephone 3834 3013.

Please complete the form on the back of this booklet and send it or bring it to the Parish Office, 11 Tullygally Road, Craigavon preferably four weeks before the intended Baptism date. **In Moyraverty Parish baptisms occur at 12.30pm on the first and third Sundays of every month.**



MOYRAVERTY
PARISH

REQUEST FOR BAPTISM

Please complete in block capitals and return to the Parish Office

INFANTS DETAILS

Surname of child:

Christian names of child:

Date of Birth: Date of Baptism:

PARENTS DETAILS

Mother's maiden name:

Father's name:

Date of marriage:

Address:
Postcode:

Telephone:

Godfather:

Godmother:

Godparents should be practising Catholics, and over the age of 16. Only one godparent is required. When there are two godparents, one must be male, and the other female.

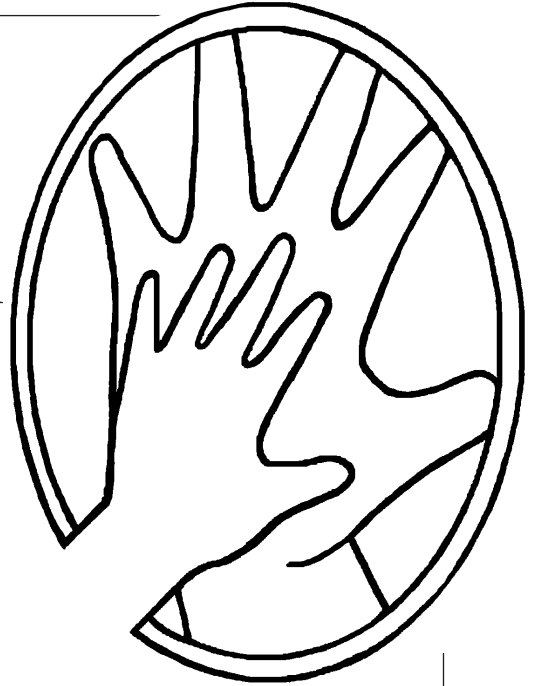
I have read the Parish Baptism booklet and understand the responsibilities incumbent upon me as the parent of above named child for whom I request Baptism.

Parent's Signature: Date:

For Parish Use Only

Celebrant:

Your Child



A child who lives with criticism
learns to condemn.

A child who lives with hostility
learns to fight.

A child who lives with ridicule
learns to be shy.

A child who lives with shame
learns to feel guilty.

A child who lives with tolerance
learns to be patient.

A child who lives with encouragement
learns confidence.

A child who lives with praise
learns to appreciate.

A child who lives with fairness
learns justice.

A child who lives with security
learns to have faith.

A child who lives with approval
learns to like himself or herself.

A child who lives with acceptance and friendship
learns to find love in the world.