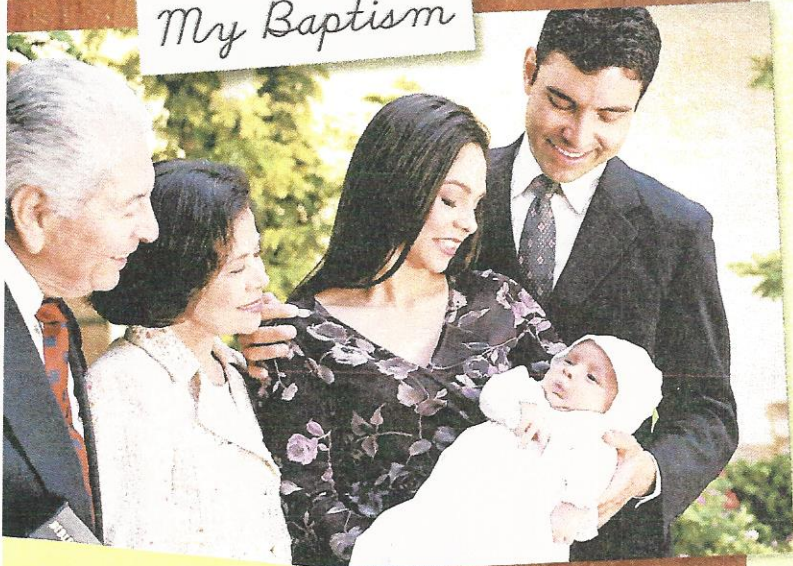


# 7

## The Church Offers Us New Life in Christ

# Welcome Michael!

*My Baptism*



Hello. My name is Margaret. Yesterday I asked Dad questions about my Baptism: Who was there? Where was I baptized? What did everyone do after the Baptism? To help answer my questions, Dad found our family's treasure box. In the box we found many things from the day I was baptized: photographs, my baptismal certificate, a banner, and many other baptismal keepsakes.

I wanted to know about my Baptism because my Aunt Melissa and Uncle Kyle just adopted a baby. The baby's name is Michael, and he is going to be baptized. My parents and I, my grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins are going to my Aunt Melissa's parish church to celebrate Michael's Baptism. After the Baptism we are invited to my grandparents' house for a party.



*My cousins making my banner*



I asked Mom what I could do for Michael. Mom handed me the banner that was in our box and said, "Margaret, your twin cousins made this and gave it to you on the day of your Baptism." When I opened the banner, it was brightly decorated and had "Welcome, Margaret" printed in large letters. After seeing my banner, I decided to make a banner for Michael.

In the space above, help Margaret decorate her banner.

Who was at the celebration of your Baptism?

Have you ever been to a baptismal celebration of a family member or friend?

What do you remember about the celebration?

## We Will Learn...

- 1 Baptism is the foundation of the Christian life.
- 2 We celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism.
- 3 We celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation.

## 1 Baptism is the foundation of the Christian life.

Baptism is the first sacrament that we celebrate. In fact, we are unable to receive any other sacrament until we have first been baptized. Through Baptism we receive a share in God's own life, the life of grace. The grace of Baptism makes us children of God, members of Christ, and Temples of the Holy Spirit. It gives us the power to live and act as disciples of Jesus Christ.

Baptism leads us to the other two Sacraments of Christian Initiation, Confirmation and Eucharist. **Baptism** is the sacrament in which we:

- *Are freed from sin:* Jesus' victory over sin and death offers us Salvation. Salvation is the forgiveness of sins and the restoring of friendship with God. Baptism is necessary for Salvation. Baptism frees us from Original Sin and all our personal sins are forgiven.
- *Become children of God:* We become sisters and brothers with everyone else who has been baptized. Baptism makes us members of one family. God sees all of us as his children. He loves each one of us.
- *Are welcomed into the Church:* At Baptism we are welcomed into a community of believers led by the Holy Spirit. We become a part of the Body of Christ, the People of God. We are united with all those who have been baptized in Christ.

**What are three things that happen when we are baptized?**

### Do You Know?

**A**t Baptism we are sealed, or marked forever, as belonging to Jesus Christ. This spiritual mark, called a character, can never be erased. Once we have received Baptism, no matter what may happen, we belong to Christ and the Church. Thus, Baptism is a sacrament that is never repeated. Once we have been baptized, we are marked forever with the sign of faith and have the hope of eternal life, living in happiness with God forever.





## 2 We celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism.

Many people are baptized as infants or young children. Others are baptized as older children, adolescents, or adults. No one is ever too young or too old to begin a new life in Christ through Baptism.

In many parishes infants or young children receive the Sacrament of Baptism on Sunday, the day of Jesus Christ's Resurrection. The celebration of the sacrament on Sunday highlights the fact that through Baptism we rise to new life in Christ. The Sunday celebration allows parish members to participate in the celebration. The **celebrant** of Baptism is a bishop, priest, or deacon. He celebrates the sacrament for and with the community. Because Baptism is necessary for Salvation, when there is a serious need, anyone can baptize.

The actual Baptism can take place in two ways. The celebrant can immerse, or plunge, the child in water three times. Or the celebrant can pour water over the child's head three times.

While immersing or pouring, the celebrant says,

"N.[name], I baptize you in the name  
of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit."

**Chrism** is perfumed oil blessed by the bishop. The celebrant anoints the newly-baptized child on the crown of the head with Chrism. This anointing is a sign of the Gift of the Holy Spirit. It shows that the newly-baptized child shares in the mission of Jesus Christ. This anointing also connects Baptism to the Sacrament of Confirmation during which another anointing with Chrism takes place.

**When were you baptized?**

**Who took part in the celebration?**

### **3** We celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation.

**Confirmation** is the sacrament in which we receive the Gift of the Holy Spirit in a special way. Confirmation is a Sacrament of Christian Initiation. Confirmation strengthens our bond with Christ and the Church. All baptized members of the Church are called to receive this sacrament.



Those who are baptized as adults or older children often receive Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist at one celebration, usually at the Easter Vigil. Those who are baptized as infants or young children usually receive Confirmation between the ages of seven and sixteen.

The parish community helps young people prepare for Confirmation through prayer, instruction in the faith, and opportunities for service. The people who are to be confirmed are called candidates. Candidates must profess their faith, be without serious sin, desire Confirmation, and be ready to live their faith.

A bishop from the diocese comes to the parish to confirm the candidates, often during a special Mass. When necessary, a bishop may designate a priest to confirm the candidates.

The bishop confirms each candidate by laying his right hand on the candidate's head and tracing the Sign of the Cross on the candidate's forehead with Chrism.

As the bishop does this he calls the candidate by name, saying, "Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit."

The person confirmed responds, "Amen."

At Confirmation, the anointing with Chrism confirms and completes the baptismal anointing. Like the character or mark of Baptism, the seal of Confirmation is with a person always. Because of this, a person receives Confirmation only once.

When we are baptized, the Holy Spirit shares seven spiritual gifts with us to help us to live as faithful followers of Jesus Christ. At Confirmation the Holy Spirit strengthens these gifts within us so that throughout our lives we can be witnesses to our faith in our words and actions. The Gifts of the Holy Spirit are: wisdom, understanding, counsel (right judgment), fortitude (courage), knowledge, piety (reverence), and fear of the Lord (wonder and awe).

**How does a person prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation?**

## Review

Write *True* or *False* next to the following sentences. On a separate piece of paper, change the false sentences to make them true.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ At Baptism we are freed from Original Sin.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ We may receive the Sacrament of Confirmation more than once.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ We celebrate the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation in private.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ At Baptism and Confirmation a person is anointed with Chrism.

Discuss the following.

5. Why is it appropriate for parish communities to celebrate Baptism on Sunday?
6. What do we become at Baptism?
7. What do the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit help us to do?

## Faith Words

**Baptism** (page 50)

**celebrant** (page 51)

**Chrism** (page 51)

**Confirmation** (page 52)

## With My Family

### Sharing Our Faith

- 1 **Baptism is the foundation of the Christian life.**
- 2 **We celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism.**
- 3 **We celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation.**

### PRAYING TOGETHER



As you pray, reflect on how wonderful it is to share in God's life, the life of grace.

Lord,  
fulfill your promise.  
Send your Holy Spirit  
to make us witnesses before the world  
to the good news proclaimed by Jesus  
Christ, our Lord. (Rite of Confirmation)

### Living Our Faith

At Baptism you receive seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit. Read a brief description of each of these gifts found on page 115 of this book. Then choose two of these gifts and write how each can help you live as a child of God and member of the Church.

---

---

---

---

---

---