

APPENDIX III

Note: This appendix is the handout for parents and godparents which is contained in the Blue Booklet. It can also find it on the diocesan website: <http://www.lcdiocese.org/resources/diocesan-forms>

Preparing for My Child's Baptism

"The thought of You stirs him so deeply that he cannot be content unless he praises You, because You made us for Yourself and our hearts find no peace until they rest in You."

Saint Augustine of Hippo, *Confessions*, Book I, Chapter 1

*"Lord, what is man that you regard him,
the son of man that you keep him in mind..."* Psalm 144: 3

Introduction

Lex orandi, lex credendi – "The law of praying is the law of believing."

How we celebrate the sacraments tells us what we believe as Christians.

Beginning the Rites

Reception of the Child - The Rite of Baptism begins with the **Child and its Parents and Godparents standing at the Door of the Church**. During this part of the Rite, parents state the **Name of the Child** and **State their Intention for the Baptism of the Child**. Godparents promise to assist the parents in this duty. Finally, the minister, parents, and godparents **Trace a Cross** on the forehead of the child claiming the child for Christ.

To fulfill the true meaning of the sacrament, *children must later be formed in the faith* in which they have been baptized. *The foundation of this formation will be the sacrament itself that they have already received...* Christian formation, which is their due, seeks to lead them gradually to learn God's plan in Christ, so that *they may ultimately accept for themselves the faith in which they have been baptized.*¹

Baptism is God's most beautiful and magnificent gift... We call it gift, grace, anointing, enlightenment, bath of rebirth, seal, and most precious gift. It is called gift because it is conferred on those who bring nothing of their own; grace since it is given even to the guilty; Baptism because sin is buried in the water; anointing for it is priestly and royal as those who are anointed; enlightenment because it radiates light; clothing since it veils our shame; bath because it washes; and seal as it is our guard and the sign of God's Lordship.²

Reflection Questions:

- 1) Do I live out the gift given me through Baptism?
- 2) Do I see the gift of faith as a gift or as a burden?
- 3) What are some concrete ways in which I can enhance my faith for the celebration of my child's/my godchild's baptism?

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Hearing the Word of the Lord

*“Will You not give us life,
and shall not Your people rejoice in You?
Show us, O Lord, Your kindness,
and grant us Your salvation.
I will hear what God proclaims;
the Lord-for he proclaims peace to his people.”*
Psalm 85: 7, 8, 9ab, as found in *The Rite of Baptism for Children*

Liturgy of the Word – The faithful hearing of the Revealed Word of God proclaimed in the Sacred Scriptures. In the Liturgy of the Word, the Church hears the Holy Spirit recall for the faithful all that God has done so as to remember the promise of God’s faithfulness.³ The **Hearing of God’s Word** demands a **Response** from the hearer.

Response to the Word of God:

- 1) To Hear the Revelation of Christ and his Disciples through the moral imperatives (commands), the acceptance of the pardon of Christ and the desire to give pardon as shown through the healing ministry, and a distinction between right and wrong
- 2) To Give Instruction on How to Pray
- 3) To See a Rhythm of Life as shown through the Life of Christ and his Disciples
- 4) To prepare the hearer to enter into a more-meaningful Worship of God⁴

“...And how are they to believe in him whom they have never heard?...So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ.” (Romans 10: 14b, 17)

In Baptism, the Heavenly Father also repeats these words for each one of these infants. He says: "You are my child". Baptism is adoption and admission into God's family, into communion with the Most Holy Trinity, into communion with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. For this very reason, Baptism should be administered in the Name of the Most Holy Trinity. These words are not merely a formula; they are reality. They mark the moment when your children are reborn as children of God. From being the children of human parents, they also become the children of God in the Son of the living God.⁵

Reflection Questions:

- 1) What is the role of the Word of God in my daily life? Do I read Scripture each day? Do I practice the tradition of the Church (praying as a family/couple, fasting and abstaining on the required days, etc.)?
- 2) Is there some part of the Word of God, either from Scripture or Tradition (the Law of the Church) that I do not agree with? How will I teach it to the child about to be baptized?

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The Prayer of the Faithful and the Anointing Before Baptism

“Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.”

I Thessalonians 5: 11

Intercessions/Prayers of the Faithful – A Form of Prayer that is for Others, which leads the faithful closer to Christ the Intercessor of humanity. (Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, “Glossary”)

Communion of Saints – Doctrine of the Church, which expresses the **Unity of Believers in Christ Jesus**, expressed in those who are “**pilgrims on earth, the dead who are being purified, and the blessed in heaven.**”⁶ In the Liturgy and Prayer of the Church, this belief is expressed in the **Litany of the Saints**.

Original Sin – The sin by which the first human beings disobeyed the commandment of God, choosing to follow their own will rather than God’s will. As a consequence they lost the grace of original holiness, and became subject to the law of death; sin became universally present in the world. Besides the personal sin of Adam and Eve, original sin describes the fallen state of human nature which affects every person born into the world, and from which Christ, the “new Adam,” came to redeem us (Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, “Glossary”)⁷

Exorcism – A public act of the Church to free, protect, and help someone from the clutches of Satan and evil, and in Baptism is a Rite which precedes the Act of Baptism.⁸

Reflection Questions:

- 1) Who is the saint that I have dedicated my child to? What do I know about him/her? How can the aspects of my parenting be influenced by the life of this saint?
- 2) What are some concrete ways in which I can reject Satan in my life? Does my life show a tendency toward sin, or a turning toward God?
- 3) What are some practices that can strengthen my turning toward God?

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The Blessing of the Water used for Baptism and the Renunciation of Sin and the Profession of Faith

“Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.” Acts 16: 31

Sacrament

The sacraments are efficacious signs of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, by which divine life is dispensed to us. The visible rites by which the sacraments are celebrated signify and make present the graces proper to each sacrament. They bear fruit in those who receive them with the required dispositions.⁹

Reflection Questions:

- 1) How determined am I to reject sin? Do I make room for God?
- 2) Have I allowed God’s natural gifts (from Creation) and his supernatural gifts (of the Sacraments) to change my life?

Baptism and the Explanatory Rites

“For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” Galatians 3: 27

“For once you were darkness, now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true).” Ephesians 5: 8-9

Sacrament of Baptism – From the Greek meaning immersion, cleansing, washing or bathing; the Sacrament of Baptism is the doorway which leads to the other sacraments, forgives personal sin and Original Sin, incorporates a person into the Body of Christ, and gives a person the privilege of calling God “Father” through the Sonship of Jesus Christ.¹⁰

Sacred Chrism – Oil that is consecrated by a bishop for the use at baptisms, confirmations, ordinations, and the dedications of a church building and an altar.

Clothing with the White Garment – A rite that signifies that the newly baptized is a new creation in Christ.

Easter/Paschal Candle – Candle that is blessed once a year at the Easter Vigil.

Ephphetha Rite/Prayer over the Ears and Mouth – An optional rite from the Baptismal Rite that is a prayer that the newly baptized may hear and respond to the Word of God.

Reflection Questions:

- 1) Have I in some way concealed or covered up the mark of my Baptism? Do I need to renew my Baptism? Do I need to wash the garment of my life in Sacrament of Reconciliation?
- 2) Do I hide the light of my faith, or do others see the faith that I possess not in the words that I say, but in the way that I live my life?

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Praying the Prayer that the Lord taught us and the final Blessing

“What then shall we say to this? If God is for us, who is against us?” Romans 8: 31

For this reason make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. For if these things are yours and abound, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For whoever lacks these things is blind and shortsighted and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins. Therefore, brethren, be the more zealous to confirm your call and election, for if you do this you will never fall; so there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (II Peter 1: 5-11)

Reflection Questions:

- 1) Am I part of the Church? Do I seek to follow all the ways of the Church into eternal life?
- 2) In what way can I be a better Christian belonging to the Church so as to reveal the mystery of the Mystical Body to my child or godchild?