

ST MARY MAGDALENE CHURCH, YARM

HOLY BAPTISM



Baptism marks the beginning of a journey of belonging to Jesus Christ, the first step in response to God's love.

God wants us to know his love and he invites each person to turn away from evil, sin and darkness and to turn to him.

In Baptism (sometimes called a Christening) Parents, Godparents and the Church recall their faith in Jesus Christ and promise to help your child on his or her journey of faith so that he or she may grow in knowledge of the love of God.

Baptism marks the beginning of membership of the local and worldwide Christian family. Christians describe Baptism as a sacrament a visible sign, reminding us of God's love.

When did Baptism start?

The Bible records some of the events in Jesus' life and his teaching. In the Gospel, Jesus' own baptism is described and he tells others to be baptised The Bible also tells of individuals and their families who chose to be followers of Jesus and be baptised.

The Holy Spirit

When Jesus was Baptised a dove appeared to show that the Holy Spirit came down to enable him to follow God's way. In Baptism the Holy Spirit enters us to enable us to choose good and follow God.



Why do we use water?



Baptism has always involved water. When Jesus was immersed in the River Jordan. When your child is baptized, the Minister will pour water over his or her head.

Baptism involves a decision to turn away from evil and to turn to Jesus Christ this is symbolised in the water of baptism, as we symbolically drown and die to our old life, before being raised with Christ to new life.

Just as we use water to wash away the dirt on our bodies, so in baptism the water is a sign of being washed free from sin and beginning a new life with God. Water is also life giving - without it we would physically die. In baptism water reminds us that just as we need water to live, so we need God's Spirit living in us. God himself is the water of life.

Holy Oils

During the service the minister will mark your child's forehead with the sign of the cross, which is the sign of Jesus Christ, with pure olive oil known as the "*Oil of Catechumens*". After the Baptism the minister will again mark your child with oil, this time with the "*Oil of Chrism*" which is pure olive oil mixed with balsam to seal the Baptism. The Oil of Chrism is used at baptisms, Confirmation, the ordination of priests and at the coronation of kings and queens. These oils are blessed by the Archbishop of York on Maundy Thursday each year.



The Baptismal Candle



During the ceremony you will be given a lighted candle to show that your child has passed from darkness into light and now has the light of Christ in their lives. You will be asked to keep the candle and not light it again until your child comes to Confirmation and then light it and burn completely as a sign that your child has taken the promises for themselves.

What promises will you be asked to make at a Baptism?

The Church, Parents and Godparents are asked to promise to help your child in his or her journey of faith. Parents and Godparents promise to

- ✕ Pray for the child.
- ✕ Draw him or her by their example into the community of faith (the church).
- ✕ walk with him or her in the way of Christ

In making these promises we ask God to help us to do our very best to fulfill them.

What will you be asked to say about what you believe?

If Parents and Godparents are to help a child on this journey, they too need to be walking in the same direction!

In the Baptism Service Parents & Godparents declare that they have decided to walk in the way of Christ and that now they want to choose this way for the child. They will be asked three questions:

Question

Do you turn to Christ?

Do you repent of your sins?

Do you renounce evil?

Reply

I turn to Christ.

I repent of my sins.

I renounce evil.

Later in the Baptism Service, everybody joins together to say they believe and trust in God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, which is the Christian understanding of God.

Beyond Baptism to Confirmation

As a Church we want to continue the partnership we have begun at Baptism and so support you in bringing up your child in the Christian faith. We hope that we will see you and your family in church and that we grow to be friends as we welcome you and your child into the family of God.

We hope too that as your child grows up he or she will decide to follow Jesus and will want to confirm the promises made on his or her behalf at Baptism. This happens in a Confirmation Service, which is conducted by the Bishop this is a special day for Parents and Godparents as they celebrate the fulfilment of the promises made at Baptism

Godparents

The Baptism of a child is a wonderful occasion and Godparents play an important role in the Christian life of the child. It is not just about taking part in the service and celebration, but is about having an active ongoing involvement in the child's Christian journey.

Godparents will be asked to re-affirm their Baptismal promises and that they intend to follow Jesus Christ. Therefore, **ALL** Godparents must have been Baptised themselves.

During the Service Godparents will be asked to say what they believe and will be asked the same questions as the Parents and to declare that they have decided to walk in the way of Christ and that *now* they want to choose this way for the child.

It is important that both the Parents and Godparents answer the questions asked truthfully. If a Parent or Godparent feels unsure about any of the questions and wants to talk them through – just get in touch with one of the clergy.



Holy Baptism is a time for great joy and we are delighted that you have decided to celebrate your child's Baptism in Stainton and Hilton and hope that it will be a happy and memorable occasion We shall do our best to see that everything runs smoothly both before the day and on the day itself These notes have been prepared to help you in planning the day however if there is anything you are unsure of or which has not been covered in either the notes or our conversations please do not hesitate to contact one of the clergy

As you prepare for this important day in your lives be assured of our prayers.



Parish Clergy

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