



A Short Guide to the

Baptism of Children

at the Priory Church of

St Bartholomew the Great

West Smithfield in the City of London

2009

What is baptism?

- Holy Baptism (also called Christening) is a sacrament by which God adopts us as his children and makes us members of Christ's Body, the church, and inheritors of the kingdom of God.
- Infants are baptised so that they can share in the Covenant made with us by God.
- As they cannot speak for themselves, the promises are made by their parents and godparents, who guarantee that the children will be brought up within the Church, to know Christ and to follow him.

Who can be baptised at St Bartholomew's?

- The children of those who live in the Parish, bounded by Carthusian Street on the north and Aldersgate Street on the east and extending almost to the St Paul's Underground Station to the south, together with all who live in Charterhouse Square and Glasshouse Yard.
- The children of those who worship here regularly and have their names entered on the membership list, called the Church Electoral Roll.
- Those from other parishes who are not on our Electoral Roll — but we then need to seek the good-will of their parish priest before proceeding with the baptism.

When are baptisms celebrated?

- On Sundays at any of three times — during the Solemn Eucharist at 11.00 a.m., after the Solemn Eucharist at around 12.30 p.m., or in the afternoon, normally at 4.00 p.m. It may be possible to have a baptism on a day other than Sunday if it is a major feast day (of the Lord, the Blessed Virgin Mary or an apostle or evangelist).
- We do not normally baptise during the Solemn Eucharist on the Sundays of Lent and there are no baptisms during Passiontide (the two weeks before Easter).

How many godparents must my child have?

- A child must have at least three godparents. Godparents must be Christians; they cannot be Jews, Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, or Muslims — or atheists.

- Two of the godparents are to be of the same sex as the child. All godparents must be themselves baptised as Christians. It is preferable that they should also be confirmed.
- Godparents should normally be members of the Church of England or of another Anglican (Episcopal) Church. Otherwise they may belong to another Christian denomination that baptises children, e.g. Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Methodist. Please consult the Priest-in-Charge if you are thinking of selecting godparents who are not Anglicans.

What promises do we have to make?

Parents and godparents promise that they will pray for the child, draw him or her, by their example, into the community of faith and walk with him or her in the way of Christ. They also promise to care for the child and help him or her to participate in the life and worship of the Church. Parents, as well as godparents, should themselves be baptised Christians, though it is possible to baptise a child when only one parent is Christian.

Parents and godparents must affirm their allegiance to Christ and their rejection of all that is evil by giving the answers to the following questions:

Do you reject the devil and all rebellion against God?

Reply I reject them.

Do you renounce the deceit and corruption of evil?

Reply I renounce them.

Do you repent of the sins that separate us from God and neighbour?

Reply I repent of them.

Do you turn to Christ as Saviour?

Reply I turn to Christ.

Do you submit to Christ as Lord?

Reply I submit to Christ.

Do you come to Christ, the way, the truth and the life?

Reply I come to Christ.

Parents and godparents also make the profession of Christian faith in the words of the Apostles' Creed: *I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth: And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead, and buried: He descended into hell; The third day he rose again from the dead; He ascended in heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost;*

the holy Catholic Church; The Communion of Saints; The forgiveness of sins; The Resurrection of the body, And the life everlasting.

Is there a fee?

- There is no fee for baptism but we ask you to make a contribution to church funds.
- If you wish to have an organist and/or a choir at a baptism (other than one during the Solemn Eucharist) a fee is payable to the musicians involved.

How should I proceed?

- You should contact the Priest-in-charge by calling the church office on 020 7600 0440 or by sending an e-mail to: rector@greatstbarts.com.
- Once a date and time has been agreed, you will be sent an application form, which needs to be returned to the Parish Office prior to the baptism (to enable us to complete the register).
- If you come from another parish and are not on our Electoral Roll, we will send our letter to the parish priest seeking his or her goodwill. We will need to know the name of the parish in which you live.
- You will need to attend a baptism preparation class. These are held as and when required. We will try to make the times convenient for everyone who needs to come to these.

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Priest-in-Charge: Ven. Peter Delaney

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