

REBORN

YOU, YOUR CHILD, AND THE HEART OF BAPTISM

PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

Parish Edition



AUGUSTINE INSTITUTE™



Nihil Obstat: Dr. Joseph E. Burns, Ed.D. M.T.S., *Censor Deputatus*
Imprimatur: Most Reverend Samuel J. Aquila, S.T.L., Archbishop of Denver
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Our Sunday Visitor

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PRAYER FOR BAPTISM

We have been called by the Lord to be a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people he has acquired for himself. Let us ask him to show his mercy to these children, who are to receive the graces of Baptism, to their parents and godparents, and to all the baptized everywhere.

Through Baptism may these children become God's own beloved sons and daughters.

—Rite of Baptism for Children, 47

NOTES

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REBORN: AN INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the *REBORN* program. These sessions have been carefully designed to help you prepare for your child or godchild's entrance into the sacramental life of the Church. They will explore the profound effects and mission of the Sacrament of Baptism.

In this program you will examine the essential role of baptism in God's plan for salvation, prefigured from the very beginning of creation and fulfilled in Jesus' own Baptism by John in the Jordan. You will discover the real, life-changing effects of Baptism, the beauty of the Rite of Baptism, and your own baptismal calling to share in the mission of Christ to which all the baptized are called.

HOW THE *REBORN* PROGRAM WORKS

The *REBORN* program is divided into three sessions: *A New Creation*; *Entering the Mystery: The Rite Explained*; and *Nurturing the Life of Grace*.

- *A New Creation* traces the theme of Baptism through the Scriptures and demonstrates how Baptism is an essential part of God's plan for salvation.
- *Entering the Mystery: The Rite Explained* answers the question, "Why does the Church baptize infants?" and explores the prayers and symbolism of the Rite of Baptism.
- *Nurturing the Life of Grace* examines the call of the baptized to participate in Christ's mission as Priest, Prophet, and King and the responsibilities of the parents and godparents in helping the baptized to answer that call.

WHAT YOU'LL FIND IN EACH *REBORN* SESSION:

1. **Opening Prayer:** You'll begin each session by sharing together a prayer from the Rite of Baptism and asking God to bless your time together.
2. **Introduction of the Lesson:** The introduction clearly and concisely covers the main points of the session, giving you a sense of what you will be hearing about and discussing.
3. **Video:** The video episode teaches the subject using Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition of the Catholic Church as well as by sharing stories and testimonials from parents. There is also a brief outline that follows the key points in the teaching to assist you in following along.
4. **Small Group Discussion:** These questions help you reflect on the topics of the session together.
5. **Flying Higher:** Each session includes quotations or excerpts from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, writings of the saints, and other Catholic works to help further your understanding of a particular topic.
6. **Parent/Godparent Promise:** You'll be guided through a brief reflection on the Rite of Baptism to help you better understand your own role as parent or godparent.
7. **Closing Prayer:** With your leader and fellow parents and godparents, you will close the session in prayer.
8. **For Further Study:** Each session includes suggested resources that may be of interest to you for continued study and reflection.



SESSION 1

A NEW
CREATION

REBORN YOU, YOUR CHILD, AND THE HEART OF BAPTISM

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A NEW CREATION

▶ OPENING PRAYER

O God, whose Son, baptized by John in the waters of the Jordan, was anointed with the Holy Spirit, and, as he hung upon the Cross, gave forth water from his side along with blood, and after his Resurrection, commanded his disciples: 'Go forth, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,' look now, we pray, upon the face of your Church and graciously unseal for her the fountain of Baptism. May this water receive by the Holy Spirit the grace of your Only Begotten Son, so that human nature, created in your image and washed clean through the Sacrament of Baptism from all the squalor of the life of old, may be found worthy to rise to the life of newborn children through water and the Holy Spirit.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the cleansing waters of Baptism. In this sacrament we are initiated into the story of salvation and we are sealed as your children. May we always cherish the precious gift of your grace and our place in your plan of salvation. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



The Baptism of Christ / Digital Image © 2015 Museum Associates / LACMA. Licensed by Art Resource, NY

—From the *Blessing and Invocation of God over Baptismal Water, Rite of Baptism*, new translation of the Roman Missal

▶ INTRODUCTION OF THE SESSION

If you made a list of the most important moments and experiences in your life so far, what would you include? Maybe key events like graduations, places you've been, people you've met, new jobs, getting married, the birth of a child, etc. Few of us would think to include our birth—though obviously without that crucial moment, nothing else could follow.

FLYING HIGHER

"Baptism is birth into the new life in Christ. In accordance with the Lord's will, it is necessary for salvation, as is the Church herself, which we enter by Baptism." —CCC 1277



But what about your *spiritual* birth? In the Gospel of John, Jesus tells Nicodemus, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3). Your spiritual birth happens in the Sacrament of Baptism, which is the first sacrament a Christian receives. It is the access point for the other sacraments and for the very kingdom of God.

“Holy Baptism is the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit (vitae spiritualis ianua), and the door which gives access to the other sacraments. Through Baptism we are freed from sin and reborn as sons of God; we become members of Christ, are incorporated into the Church and made sharers in her mission: ‘Baptism is the sacrament of regeneration through water in the word.’”

—CCC 1213

In this first session we will explore the significance of Baptism, the first of the seven sacraments of the Catholic Church. The Catechism tells us that “the sacraments confer the grace that they signify” (CCC 1127). This means that Baptism is not just a symbol of cleansing and rebirth; it actually bestows those graces on the one being baptized. This session will walk us through the story of salvation history to show how Baptism was foreshadowed in the Old Testament. New creation, cleansing from sin, a fresh start, freedom from slavery—each of these facets of Baptism are prefigured in events in the Old Testament.

▶ VIDEO

THE FOLLOWING IS A BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE TOPICS COVERED AS YOU WATCH THE VIDEO TEACHING.

A NEW CREATION

I. To understand Baptism we have to start at the beginning of Scripture

- A. Creation starts with the Holy Spirit moving over the water—connection between life-giving water and the Holy Spirit, the giver of life
- B. Adam and Eve’s sin brings death into the story—original sin means we are born without supernatural life
- C. The story of salvation is the story of everything God has done to bring his people back into union with him
- D. God again uses water to give humanity a fresh start with Noah and his family
- E. Moses is drawn from the waters of the Nile as an infant, and he draws Israel out of slavery in Egypt through the waters of the Red Sea—this is a type of Baptism (CCC 1221)
- F. Ezekiel 36: 25-26: “I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you.”
- G. John the Baptist’s Baptism of repentance, Jesus makes the waters holy
- H. Jesus sees his crucifixion as a kind of baptism; Paul sees our baptism as a participation in Christ’s death

II. Baptism is an essential part of God’s plan to save us

- A. Baptism is a visible action with invisible power, meaning, and grace
- B. Not just an ancient symbol but frees us from sin and brings about a new creation in Christ

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Have you ever attended a Baptism? What details do you remember about it?

2. Which type of baptism in the Old Testament caught your attention the most? Why? Did any of those types of baptism come as a surprise to you? Explain?

3. Ezekiel 36:25–26 says, “I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you.” What do you think it means to have a new heart and a new spirit through Baptism?

4. Why do you desire Baptism for your child or godchild? What is your deepest desire for your child or godchild in Baptism?

FLYING HIGHER

“Baptism is God’s most beautiful and magnificent gift... We call it gift, grace, anointing, enlightenment, garment of immortality, 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 are 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.”

—St Gregory of Nazianzus



▶ PARENT/GODPARENT PROMISE

TO THE PARENT

Just as God saved his people Israel from slavery in Egypt by the waters of the Red Sea, God wants to give your child a life of freedom in him through the waters of Baptism. By seeking Baptism for your child, you are God's instrument leading him or her to freedom and new life, as Moses led the Israelites. It is God who saves, but as a parent choosing Baptism for your child you have a unique and precious role to play, both now and after the Baptism.

Consider the following prayer from the Rite of Baptism:

Almighty God
 you sent your only Son to rescue us from slavery of sin,
 and to give us the freedom only your sons and daughters enjoy.
 We now pray for this child
 who will have to face the world with its temptations,
 and fight the devil in all his cunning.
 Your Son died and rose again to save us.
 By his victory over sin and death,
 cleanse this child from the stain of original sin.
 Strengthen him (her) with the grace of Christ,
 and watch over him (her) at every step in life's journey.
 We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The prayer uses the imagery of the Exodus to describe the spiritual reality of Baptism: freedom from slavery followed by a challenging journey. The prayer asks God to strengthen the child and watch over him or her throughout the journey of life. You are the first answer to that prayer. You are the first means by which God will protect and guide your child.



Saint Augustine being baptized by Saint Ambrose of Milan / Scala / Art Resource, NY

What will you do to help your child walk in the freedom of his or her identity as God's child? How will you help him or her resist the temptations of the world and the devil's cunning? How can you start fulfilling this mission even now?

TO THE GODPARENT

In the Exodus, God saved his people Israel from slavery in Egypt and brought them to the Promised Land with many signs and wonders. He also used many human leaders to teach and guide his people. Moses led the people and gave them God's law. Moses' brother Aaron led the people in worship as High Priest. Moses' sister Miriam led the people in praising God as a prophetess. At God's command, Moses appointed 70 elders to help him govern the people in the wilderness.

By agreeing to be a godparent, you are answering the call to guide and protect the newly baptized as God's chosen leaders guided the Israelites during the Exodus.

Consider the following prayer from the Rite of Baptism:

Almighty God

you sent your only Son to rescue us from slavery of sin,
and to give us the freedom only your sons and daughters enjoy.

We now pray for this child

who will have to face the world with its temptations,
and fight the devil in all his cunning.

Your Son died and rose again to save us.

By his victory over sin and death,
cleanse this child from the stain of original sin.

Strengthen him (her) with the grace of Christ,
and watch over him (her) at every step in life's journey.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The prayer makes it clear that although the newly baptized child will immediately enter into the freedom of the sons and daughters of God that freedom is not without challenges and temptations. It is your mission as godparent to be an instrument of God in strengthening and supporting your godchild, watching over him or her "at every step in life's journey."

What will you do to help your godchild walk in the freedom of his or her identity as God's child? How will you help him or her resist the temptations of the world and the devil's cunning? How can you start fulfilling this mission even now?

FLYING HIGHER

"Baptism not only purifies from all sins, but also makes the neophyte 'a new creature,' an adopted son of God, who has become a 'partaker of the divine nature,' member of Christ and co-heir with him, and a temple of the Holy Spirit."

—CCC 1265



▶ CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ,
 we thank you for the gift of our own Baptism.
 Thank you for the gift of your grace,
 for the forgiveness of our sins,
 and for making us sons and daughters of the Father.
 May we always strive to live fully in the freedom
 you have given us in Baptism,
 to reject sin and evil,
 and to keep our eyes fixed on the hope of eternal life.
 Strengthen us against the temptations
 and difficulties of this journey,
 and help us support and encourage those around us.
Amen.

FOR FURTHER STUDY

- Benedict XVI. "Chapter One: The Baptism of Jesus" in *Jesus of Nazareth*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2007.
- *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 1217–1228

St. Ambrose baptizes St. Augustine / Scala /
 Art Resource, NY



NOTES

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SESSION 2

ENTERING THE MYSTERY: THE RITE EXPLAINED



REBORN

YOU, YOUR CHILD, AND THE HEART OF BAPTISM

ENTERING THE MYSTERY: THE RITE EXPLAINED

▶ OPENING PRAYER

Parents and godparents,
this light is entrusted to you to be kept burning brightly.
This child of yours has been enlightened by Christ.
He (she) is to walk always as a child of the light.
May he (she) keep the flame of faith alive in his (her) heart.
When the Lord comes, may he (she) go out to meet him
with all the saints in the heavenly kingdom.

Lord God, you are light, and in you there is no darkness at all.
In Baptism you have given us your light and called us to be light for
the world. Help us to nurture the flame of faith we have received,
to walk in your light, and to guide and encourage our children and
godchildren to grow in your light.
May we always live our lives to give glory to you.
We ask this in Jesus' holy name. Amen.

*—From the Blessing and Invocation of God
over Baptismal Water, Rite of Baptism,
new translation of the Roman Missal*

▶ INTRODUCTION OF THE SESSION

As we discussed in the last session, the Sacrament of Baptism is an essential part of God's plan for salvation, actually conferring the grace it represents. In a society that highly celebrates personal choice, it may come as a surprise that something as important and life-changing as Baptism can be chosen on behalf of an infant; the sacrament is not reserved for consenting adults or children. What is the Church's rationale for baptizing infants?

We'll also explore the significant signs and symbols in the Rite of Baptism in order to understand the vital change effected by this sacrament. It's much more than just pouring water and pronouncing the name of the Trinity.

FLYING HIGHER

"The custom of Mother Church in baptizing infants is certainly not to be scorned, nor is it to be regarded in any way as superfluous, nor is it to be believed that its tradition is anything except apostolic."

—St Augustine



“The meaning and grace of the sacrament of Baptism are clearly seen in the rites of its celebration. By following the gestures and words of this celebration with attentive participation, the faithful are initiated into the riches this sacrament signifies and actually brings about in each newly baptized person.”

—CCC 1234

How do the different prayers and actions in the rite reveal a different part of the deep and beautiful truth of Baptism? That’s what we’ll discover today.

VIDEO

THE FOLLOWING IS A BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE TOPICS COVERED IN THE VIDEO TEACHING.

ENTERING THE MYSTERY: THE RITE EXPLAINED

I. Baptism is a necessary part of salvation

- A. New life came by way of water in both creation and the Exodus
- B. Jesus included baptism in his last instructions to his disciples

II. Just as parents take care of their child's physical well-being without the child's consent, Baptism is an important piece of the child's spiritual well-being, even if the baby can't choose it or consent to it

- A. Baptism should bring relief because it cleanses us from the guilt of original sin and frees us from slavery to the power of darkness
- B. Infant Baptism follows the precedent of the Jewish tradition of infant circumcision
- C. Baptism brings us into the family of God

III. Rite of Baptism

- A. Introductory Rites
 - 1. Sign of the Cross—victory of Christ
 - 2. Reception of the child
- B. Liturgy of the Word—evokes a response of faith
 - 1. Readings and Homily
 - 2. Intercessions
 - 3. Invocation of the Saints—the child is welcomed into the whole Church, across time and cultures

4. Renouncing of Satan/exorcism

5. Anointing with oil of catechumens—cleansing

C. Celebration of the Sacrament

- 1. Blessing of the Baptismal Water
- 2. Renunciation of Sin and Profession of faith—the parents and godparents renew their vows and take on the responsibility of raising the child in the faith
- 3. Baptism—pouring of water in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit

D. Explanatory Rites

- 1. Anointing with chrism of salvation—consecration/dedication and gift of the Holy Spirit; sealed=indelibly marked for God
- 2. Clothing with the White Garment—symbolizes pure and unstained souls after Baptism
- 3. Lighted Candle—the baptized is now a child of the light
- 4. Prayer over ears and mouth, to receive God's word and proclaim his praise

E. Conclusion of the Rite

- 1. Our Father—shows the newly baptized are now children of God
- 2. Blessings for the mother and the father



SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What are some choices you have already made for your child (or that you have observed parents making for their children)? What would be the potential consequences of delaying these decisions until the child is old enough to make those decisions for him/herself? Why do you think it is important for you to choose Baptism for your child (or to support the parents in choosing for their child)? What are some of the reasons you are choosing Baptism for your child or godchild?

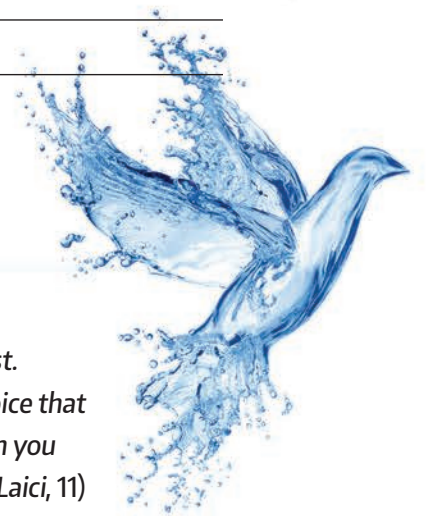
2. Baptism brings us into the family of God, the Church. This means so much more than just being welcomed into the local parish. The family of God stretches across time and culture. What does it mean to you to be a part of the family of God? How will you help your child or godchild understand and live out his or her identity as part of the family of God?

3. The *Catechism* states, "Incorporated into Christ by Baptism, the person baptized is configured to Christ. Baptism seals the Christian with the indelible spiritual mark (character) of his belonging to Christ" (CCC 1272). This indelible seal marks us as belonging to God, and nothing can change or erase the seal of Baptism. What does it mean to you to be marked as belonging to Christ? Why is it important to you that your child or godchild be marked by this seal now?

FLYING HIGHER

"With Baptism we become children of God in his only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Rising from the waters of the baptismal font, every Christian hears again the voice that was once heard on the banks of the Jordan River: 'You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.'"

—St. John Paul II (*Christifideles Laici*, 11)



▶ PARENT/GODPARENT PROMISE

TO THE PARENT

The Baptism of your child will be a once-for-all, life-changing event. Studying and prayerfully preparing for this significant occasion is an opportunity to look not only to your child's future as a member of the family of God, but also to reflect on the meaning and effects of your own Baptism.

As a parent choosing Baptism for your child, you will be asked to renew your own baptismal vows. Reflect on the questions from the Renunciation of Sin (form A) in the Rite of Baptism:

*Do you reject Satan?
And all his works?
And all his empty promises?*

After rejecting sin, you will be asked to make a profession of faith for yourself and your child. Afterwards the priest or deacon says:

*This is our faith.
This is the faith of the Church.
We are proud to profess it, in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Faith is both communal and individual. As your child grows, he or she will need to develop a unique, individual relationship with Christ and make your faith, the faith of the Church, his or her own personal faith as well. All of that begins with this decision you make for the spiritual well-being of your child. Your faith and commitment now and in the years to come have a very real impact on the fruits that baptismal grace will bear in the life of your child.

Consider the effects of your Baptism and your own life of faith, the faith you will profess at your child's Baptism. What is going well in your spiritual life? Where could you use some improvement to be the best model and guide for your child?



Baptism of St. Ursula / Scala / Art Resource, NY

TO THE GODPARENT

As a godparent, you are participating in a life-changing event for your godchild. Preparing for this momentous event should include a deepening of your own understanding of Baptism, the impact you will have on your godchild's future as a member of the family of God, and the meaning Baptism holds for you personally.

One way to make your godchild's Baptism real for you is to reflect upon your own baptismal vows as you are asked to renew them in the rite itself:

*Do you reject Satan?
And all his works?
And all his empty promises?*

After rejecting sin, you will be asked to make a profession of faith along with the parents and the rest of the congregation gathered for the Baptism. Afterward, the priest or deacon says:

*This is our faith.
This is the faith of the Church.
We are proud to profess it, in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

The growth of your godchild will involve both a unique, individual relationship with Christ and a communal relationship with his Church. As a godparent, you are in a special position to nurture those relationships— now and in the years to come. You will have a very real impact on the fruits that the baptismal grace will bear in the life of your godchild. Your prayers and example will play an important part in your godchild's spiritual development.

Consider the effects of your Baptism and your own life of faith, the faith you will profess at your godchild's Baptism. What is going well in your spiritual life? Where could you use some improvement to be the best possible model and guide for your godchild?

FLYING HIGHER

"As we were baptized, so we profess our belief. As we profess our belief, so also we offer praise. As then Baptism has been given us by the Savior, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, so, in accordance with our Baptism, we make the confession of the creed, and our doxology in accordance with our creed."

—St. Basil



▶ CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father,

in Baptism you have made us your own
and marked us with an indelible seal.
May we have the strength and courage
to truly live our lives conformed to Christ,
and to guide those entrusted to us
in the faith of the Church.

We ask this in the name of your Son,
our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

FOR FURTHER STUDY

- *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 1235–1245
- *Instruction on Infant Baptism*, Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 1980
(http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19801020_pastoralis_actio_en.html)

Sacramentals for infant Baptism in the Church ©
Martin Slanec / shutterstock.com



NOTES

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SESSION 3

NURTURING THE LIFE OF GRACE



REBORN

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NURTURING THE LIFE OF GRACE

▶ OPENING PRAYER

The God of power and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has freed you from sin, given you a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, and welcomed you into his holy people. He now anoints you with the chrism of salvation. As Christ was anointed Priest, Prophet, and King, so may you live always as a member of his body, sharing everlasting life.

Heavenly Father, in Baptism you have anointed us with the Holy Spirit to participate in Jesus' mission as Priest, Prophet, and King. Grant us the strength and courage to strive to be ever more fully conformed to Christ and his mission, that we may better guide and guard the children you have entrusted to our care and teaching. We ask this in the name of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

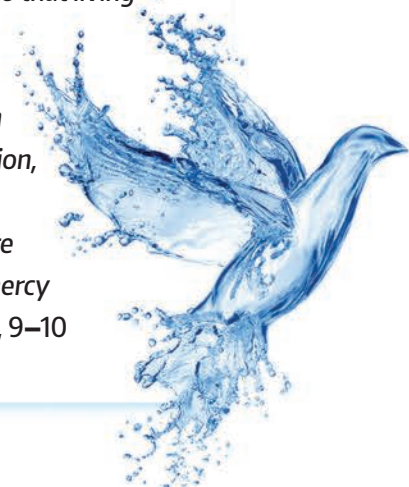


The Baptism of Pocahontas at Jamestown, Virginia, 1613 / HIP / Art Resource, NY

FLYING HIGHER

"Like newborn babes, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up to salvation; for you have tasted the kindness of the Lord. Come to him, to that living stone, rejected by men but in God's sight chosen and precious; and like living stones be yourselves built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ... But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were no people but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy but now you have received mercy."

—1 Peter 2:2–5, 9–10



▶ INTRODUCTION OF THE SESSION

Most organizations have a mission statement of some sort. It helps ensure that everyone is on the same page about the purpose, goals, and identity of the group. The Church, as the Body of Christ, has as her purpose and identity Christ's own mission—and each baptized Christian shares in that mission.

The last session explored the reasons why the Church baptizes infants and walked through the various parts and symbols of the Rite of Baptism to better understand the grace that this sacrament confers. In this session we will focus on the mission for which that grace prepares us: to share in the work of Jesus Christ as Priest, Prophet, and King. The parents and godparents will play the primary roles in helping the newly baptized learn and live out this mission, but the whole family of the Church shares the responsibility of helping the new Christian along the way.

▶ VIDEO

THE FOLLOWING IS A BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE TOPICS COVERED IN THE VIDEO TEACHING.

NURTURING THE LIFE OF GRACE

I. Baptism brings us into the community of faith

- A. Belonging to Christ means belonging to his Body, the Church
- B. The whole community of faith has a role to play in nurturing the newly baptized

II. Baptism: Grace and Mission

- A. Mission of the baptized is to continue the work of Christ as Priest, Prophet, and King
- B. Laity are to bring the Gospel to the ordinary places of life and secular culture
- C. We are empowered and commissioned through Baptism, strengthened in Confirmation, sustained by the sacraments

III. Priest

- A. Christ is our eternal high priest; he offered himself as the perfect sacrifice to the Father
- B. Through Baptism we share in the priesthood of all the believers
 - 1. We are called to offer ourselves daily as a spiritual sacrifice to God
 - 2. We also offer our worship to God through the Mass and Sacraments and through daily prayer
- C. Parents are responsible for the spiritual growth of their children—to help them share in the Priestly mission of Jesus
 - 1. Prayer
 - 2. Reading Scripture
 - 3. Priority of faith in the family and household

IV. Prophet

- A. A prophet reveals God's Word and plan for salvation; Jesus is the full revelation of God
- B. All the baptized are called to evangelize and teach
- C. The power of the Gospel should shine out in family life

- D. Parents are the first proclaimers of the Gospel to their children

V. King

- A. We are meant to reign with Jesus over the power of sin in our lives
- B. The kingly mission of the baptized is a universal call to holiness
- C. Christians are meant to govern themselves and reign with Christ over sin in their lives through ongoing conversion
- D. Christians are also to exercise their kingly mission by following the example of Jesus as the servant-King who came to serve others
- E. Parents model a life of holiness and service to their children

VI. Godparents

- A. Being a godparent is a commitment to active participation in the spiritual growth of the baptized
- B. Requirements
 - 1. 16 years old or older
 - 2. A Catholic who has been confirmed and received the Eucharist
 - 3. Lives a life of faith, in good standing with the Catholic Church
 - 4. Intends to fulfill the duties of a godparent
- C. Duties
 - 1. Support the parents
 - 2. Represent the Church in the life of the child
 - 3. Nurture the child in the faith

VII. The entire Church community is responsible for being part of and nurturing the spiritual life of the newly baptized



SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Why is the Christian life meant to be lived out in community? What effect has the community of faith had on you?

2. Which aspect of the threefold mission of Priest, Prophet, and King do you think is easiest to live out? Which do you think is hardest? Why?

3. Who are your godparents? How have they impacted your faith? How do you see them impacting the faith of your child?

FLYING HIGHER

"The whole Church is a priestly people. Through Baptism all the faithful share in the priesthood of Christ."

—CCC 1591



▶ PARENT/GODPARENT PROMISE

TO THE PARENT

At his or her Baptism, your child will be anointed with the Holy Spirit and receive the same calling and mission that Christ received: to be Priest, Prophet, and King. As parent, you will be the primary teacher and example for your child in his or her life of faith. It's a daunting task, but you are perfectly equipped for it; you have already received the anointing of the same Holy Spirit and been called into this same mission.

Consider the following words from St. John Paul II in his Apostolic Exhortation to the Lay Members of Christ's Faithful People (*Christifideles Laici*):

"A new aspect to the grace and dignity coming from Baptism is here introduced: the lay faithful participate, for their part, in the threefold mission of Christ as Priest, Prophet and King.... Clearly we are the Body of Christ because we are all 'anointed' and in him are 'christs,' that is, 'anointed ones,' as well as Christ himself, 'The Anointed One.' In a certain way, then, it thus happens that with head and body the whole Christ is formed."

By virtue of your own Baptism, you are a little "christ," anointed with the same Holy Spirit in whom Jesus accomplished his mission. What your child needs from you is for you to let the Holy Spirit do his work that you may faithfully live out your part of the mission of Christ as Priest, Prophet, and King. It is simple, though not easy. What can you start doing now to live your baptismal mission more faithfully? What can you begin doing as a family now and in the years to come to teach your child about his or her priestly, prophetic, and kingly calling?

The christening of the Princess Royal / HIP /
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TO THE GODPARENT

At his or her Baptism, your godchild will be anointed with the Holy Spirit and receive the same calling and mission that Christ received: to be Priest, Prophet, and King. As a godparent, your responsibility to set an example of faith and teach your godchild about the Christian life comes second only to that of the parents. It's a daunting task, but you are perfectly equipped for it; you have already received the anointing of the same Holy Spirit and been called into this same mission.

Consider the following words from St. John Paul II in his Apostolic Exhortation to the Lay Members of Christ's Faithful People (*Christifideles Laici*):

"A new aspect to the grace and dignity coming from Baptism is here introduced: the lay faithful participate, for their part, in the threefold mission of Christ as Priest, Prophet and King.... Clearly we are the Body of Christ because we are all 'anointed' and in him are 'christs,' that is, 'anointed ones,' as well as Christ himself, 'The Anointed One.' In a certain way, then, it thus happens that with head and body the whole Christ is formed."

By virtue of your own Baptism, you are a little "christ," anointed with the same Holy Spirit in whom Jesus accomplished his mission. What your godchild needs from you is for you to let the Holy Spirit do his work that you may faithfully live out your part of the mission of Christ as Priest, Prophet, and King. It is simple, though not easy. What can you start doing now to live your baptismal mission more faithfully? What can you begin doing now and in the years to come to support and encourage the parents of your godchild? What can you do to help teach your godchild about his or her priestly, prophetic, and kingly calling?

FLYING HIGHER

"The Second Vatican Council confirmed this tradition in its description of the missionary character of the entire People of God and of the apostolate of the laity in particular, emphasizing the specific contribution to missionary activity which they are called to make.... It is a right and duty based on their baptismal dignity, whereby 'the faithful participate, for their part, in the threefold mission of Christ as Priest, Prophet and King.'" —St. John Paul II, *Redemptoris Missio*



▶ CLOSING PRAYER

Almighty God, in Baptism you have poured out your grace upon us to cleanse us of our sins and make us your children.
 Filled with the Holy Spirit, you call us to share in the mission of your Son and live faithfully as members of his Body, the Church.
 Help us to encourage one another as we each offer you our sacrifice of worship, share your Word and your love with those around us, and work to conquer sin in our own lives. Amen.

FOR FURTHER STUDY

- *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 1253–1255, 1267–1274
- Father Robert Barron, *Priest, Prophet, King* (DVD or CD), available from Word on Fire Ministries
- Scott Hahn & Mike Aquilina, “Week 2 with St. Cyril of Jerusalem: On Baptism and Confirmation” in *Living the Mysteries: A Guide for Unfinished Christians*. Our Sunday Visitor: Huntington, IN. 2003.



The Baptism of St. Cornelius the Centurion
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NOTES

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