



## HOLY BAPTISM

The Order of Service  
from the Anglican Church of Canada's  
Book of Alternative Services  
With Comments and Questions

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HOLY BAPTISM – The Book of Alternative Services – Pages 146-165	
HOLY BAPTISM	COMMENTS & QUESTIONS
<p><b>The Gathering of the Community</b></p> <p><i>All stand. The presiding celebrant greets the community.</i></p> <p>Celebrant The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.</p> <p>People <b>And also with you.</b></p> <p><i>Or from Easter Day through the Day of Pentecost,</i></p> <p>Celebrant Alleluia! Christ is risen.</p> <p>People <b>The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia!</b></p> <p>Celebrant May his grace and peace be with you.</p> <p>People <b>May he fill our hearts with joy.</b></p> <p><i>The celebrant then continues,</i></p> <p>There is one body and one Spirit, People <b>There is one hope in God's call to us;</b></p> <p>Celebrant One Lord, one faith, one baptism,</p> <p>People <b>One God and Father of all.</b></p> <p><b>The Collect of the Day</b></p> <p>Celebrant Let us pray.</p> <p><i>The community may pray silently. The presiding celebrant then sings or says the collect, after which all respond, Amen.</i></p> <p><b>The Proclamation of the Word</b></p> <p>The Readings</p> <p><i>The first reading as appointed.</i></p> <p>Reader A reading from . . .</p> <p><i>At the conclusion of the passage, the reader says,</i></p> <p>The word of the Lord.</p> <p>People <b>Thanks be to God.</b></p> <p><i>Silence may be kept. Then shall follow a psalm as appointed.</i></p>	<p>The Baptism is usually part of a regular service.</p> <p><b>The Gathering of the Community</b> is the first part of every service. It sets the theme for the rest of the service and includes the opening greeting, the collect prayer for the day (see below), the readings and the Sermon.</p> <p>This declaration sets the tone for Baptism and is taken directly from Ephesians 4:4-6 in the Bible.</p> <p><b>Collect</b> comes from the Latin, meaning <i>to gather</i>. It is a prayer that generally focuses on the theme of the day in the liturgical calendar (Christmas, Pentecost, etc.) or on the particular service (Baptism, Confirmation etc.).</p> <p>There are four parts to a collect.</p> <p>First is an <u>address to God</u>, usually to God the Father, often preceded by a descriptor such as "almighty" or "merciful". Then the <u>petition</u> - asking for forgiveness, protection, guidance, comfort, holiness, love, etc.</p> <p>Next, the "<u>aspiration</u>" or the reason for the petition ("so that we ..."). For example, the collect for All Saints' Day: "Grant us grace so to follow thy blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living, <i>that we may come to those ineffable joys ...</i>"</p> <p>Finally, the <u>doxology</u> "... In the Name of Jesus Christ", since it is through Jesus that we can draw near the Father.</p>

*A second reading as appointed is read.*

*Reader* A reading from . . .

*At the conclusion of the passage, the reader says,*  
The word of the Lord.

*People* **Thanks be to God.**

*Silence may be kept. A psalm, canticle, hymn, or anthem may follow.*

*All stand for the Gospel.*

*Reader* The Lord be with you.

*People* **And also with you.**

*Reader* The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to . . .

*People* **Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

*At the conclusion of the Gospel, the reader says,*

The Gospel of Christ.

*People* **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

## Sermon

*A silence for reflection may follow.*

## Presentation and Examination of the Candidates

*The celebrant says,*

The candidate(s) for Holy Baptism will now be presented.

### Adults and Older Children

*Candidates able to answer for themselves are presented by their parents and sponsors as follows:*

*Sponsor* **I/we present N to receive the sacrament of baptism.**

*The celebrant asks each candidate when presented,*

Do you desire to be baptized?

*Candidate* **I do.**

### Infants and Younger Children

*Then the candidates unable to answer for themselves are presented individually by their parents and sponsors as follows:*

*Parents and sponsors,*

**I present N to receive the sacrament of baptism.**

*When all have been presented the celebrant asks the parents and sponsors,*

Will you be responsible for see that the child you present is nurtured in the faith and life of the Christian community?

*Parents and sponsors,*

**I will, with God's help.**

## THE PRESENTATION OF THE CANDIDATES

The simple act of presentation is an extremely important moment and should not be down-played, for it is at this point that the candidate (whether adult or infant) stands at the threshold of a new way of life.

**For an adult,** the significance of the moment may be felt much more if the presenter has had some part in bringing the person to this point in his or her life. If the sponsor has been faithful in prayer, teaching by word and example, emotional support, etc, the words of presentation may be a high-point in the celebration.

**Infants and younger children** are presented by at least one parent and two sponsors.

The reason we continue to baptize infants in an age of secularism is that we are acting in the firm belief that the child will be taught the faith and be brought into a living, personal relationship with God, through Jesus, in the power of the Holy Spirit. Home is the natural place for that to happen. St. Paul's has a superb Sunday School and Youth program to teach the faith and equip children to confidently, and (naturally) stand up for themselves with their non-Christian friends.

For the parents and sponsors of an infant or young child the process of sponsorship will be at it's earliest stages. Therefore quite specific questions are asked of the parents and sponsors, questions that require them to re-examine their own faith and commitment over and above making certain promises on behalf of the child.

This is not meant to be an inquisition or test. Faith in Jesus Christ does *not* mean having all the answers, or even being "religious" in a conventional sense. But it does mean making a commitment to the Christian Life in the company of other members of their local church.

## THE EXAMINATION

The Examination is a series of six questions divided into three renunciations and three affirmations.

### For Discussion:

1. Why do you think our modern baptism service (1985) still refers to Satan, the evil powers of the world, and sin? Aren't these outmoded concepts?

2. Have you turned to Jesus as your own Saviour? Do you follow Him as Lord in your daily living? How can our congregation help you to grow in your faith? How?

Baptism is sometimes combined with other forms of commitment:

- Those being confirmed.
- Those who have been confirmed (or the equivalent) in another Christian denomination but now wish to become Anglican.
- Those who wish to reaffirm their baptismal vows.

The latter group is increasingly popular. Often a young person or adult has had a life-changing encounter with Jesus and they

<p><i>Celebrant</i> Will you by your prayers and witness help this child to grow into the full stature of Christ?</p> <p><i>Parents and sponsors,</i> <b>I will, with God's help.</b></p> <p><i>Then the celebrant asks the following questions of the candidates who can speak for themselves, and of the parents and sponsors who speak on behalf of the infants and younger children.</i></p> <p><i>Question</i> Do you renounce Satan and all the spiritual forces of wickedness that rebel against God?</p> <p><i>Answer</i> <b>I renounce them.</b></p> <p><i>Question</i> Do you renounce the evil powers of this world which corrupt and destroy the creatures of God?</p> <p><i>Answer</i> <b>I renounce them.</b></p> <p><i>Question</i> Do you renounce all sinful desires that draw you from the love of God?</p> <p><i>Answer</i> <b>I renounce them.</b></p> <p><i>Question</i> Do you turn to Jesus Christ and accept him as your Saviour?</p> <p><i>Answer</i> <b>I do.</b></p> <p><i>Question</i> Do you put your whole trust in his grace and love?</p> <p><i>Answer</i> <b>I do.</b></p> <p><i>Question</i> Do you promise to obey him as your Lord?</p> <p><i>Answer</i> <b>I do.</b></p> <p><i>When there are others to be presented, the bishop says,</i></p> <p>The other candidate(s) will now be presented</p> <p><i>Presenters</i> I present these persons for Confirmation.</p> <p><i>Or</i> I present these persons to be received into this Communion.</p> <p><i>Or</i> I present these persons who desire to reaffirm their baptismal vows.</p> <p><i>The bishop asks the candidates,</i></p> <p>Do you reaffirm your renunciation of evil?</p> <p><i>Candidate</i> <b>I do.</b></p> <p><i>Celebrant</i> Do you renew your commitment to Jesus Christ?</p> <p><i>Candidate</i> <b>I do.</b></p> <p><i>Celebrant</i> Do you put your whole trust in his grace and love?</p> <p><i>Candidate</i> <b>I do, and with God's grace I will follow him as my Saviour and Lord.</b></p>	<p>wish to reaffirm the baptismal promises they were too young to understand in the light of their new experience of God's love.</p> <p>SEE THE END OF THE SERVICE FOR PRAYERS RELATED TO THESE COMMITMENTS.</p> <p><b>The Fellowship of the Congregation promises their support.</b> This is why baptisms are always celebrated at a public service.</p> <p><b>For Discussion</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How can the local congregation support parents and sponsors, and of course children, in their life in Christ?</li> <li>2. Often families bring their children back to the church where they have an historic connection for baptism, although they no longer live within an easy commute of the church. The obvious solution is for the family to join a local church. That is not always easy. How can we help?</li> </ol> <p><b>Something to consider</b> A person is baptized into Christ. Therefore, <u>baptism is non-denominational</u>! One only takes on a denomination at Confirmation. Exceptions to this are denominations that do not acknowledge infant baptism, and where baptism is linked to membership in that church.</p> <p><b>PRAYERS FOR THE CANDIDATES</b> One of the most important things parents and sponsors can do for their children is to pray for them, and with them, every day. The object of a Christian home is to bring our children into a vital living relationship with God. To say that it is a relationship means that God is knowable, and interested in our personal lives. When we pray, we are asking for God to fill, guide, and guard our family. What a great privilege and gift God has given us in prayer.</p> <p><b>THANKSGIVING OVER THE WATER</b></p> <p>Water is the principal element of baptism. It symbolizes life and cleansing. Water is poured visibly and audibly into the baptismal font and one of the two Prayers of Thanksgiving are said. Each prayer recalls how God has used water throughout the history of the people of God – the waters of Jesus' baptism, the waters of liberation from slavery, water at creation. Jesus referred to himself as the "living water" (John 4:4-14). Water symbolizes both death and life. Originally, all baptisms were by immersion where the candidate was dunked under the water – in effect dying to the old self – and pulled up again representing being re-born in Christ.</p> <p><b>For Discussion</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read Exodus 13:17 – 15:21. How is Baptism like the Exodus?</li> <li>2. In Baptism we are "born again" and "cleansed from sin". If this is true, why aren't Christians perfect?</li> </ol>
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*After all have been presented, the celebrant addresses the congregation, saying,*

Will you who witness these vows do all in your power to support these persons in their life in Christ?

*People*     **We will.**

## **Prayers for the Candidates**

*The celebrant then says to the congregation,*

Let us now pray for these persons who are to receive the sacrament of new birth.

*A person appointed leads the following litany.*

*Leader*     Deliver *them*, O Lord, from the way of sin and death.

*People*     **Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Leader*     Open *their hearts* to your grace and truth.

*People*     **Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Leader*     Fill *them* with your holy and life-giving Spirit.

*People*     **Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Leader*     Teach *them* to love others in the power of the Spirit.

*People*     **Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Leader*     Send them into the world in witness to your love.

*People*     **Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Leader*     Bring *them* to the fullness of your peace and glory.

*People*     **Lord, hear our prayer.**

*The leader concludes,*

Grant, O Lord,  
that all who are baptized  
into the death of Jesus Christ your Son  
may live in the power of his resurrection  
and look for him to come again in glory;  
who lives and reigns now and for ever. **Amen.**

## **The Celebration of Baptism**

### **Thanksgiving over the Water**

*The celebrant blesses the water, using one of the following forms.*

The Lord be with you.

*People*     **And also with you.**

*Celebrant*   Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

*People*     **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

*Celebrant*   We give you thanks, almighty God and Father,  
for

### **The Baptismal Covenant**

The word *covenant* itself gives us a clue to what is being asked when we commit ourselves to the Apostles Creed. Covenant implies a relationship between God and humankind. Therefore when we recite the Creed, we are affirming the basic doctrines of God which call Christians hold in common. The historic creeds were formulated at a time when the church was struggling with the question, Who is Jesus? There were many divergent views. The Creeds we've developed as a concise summary of orthodox belief.

When the candidates or their sponsors are asked the first three questions, they are being asked to affirm their belief and trust in God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

<p>by the gift of water you nourish and sustain all living things.</p> <p><i>All</i> <b>Blessed be God for ever.</b></p> <p><i>Celebrant</i> We give you thanks that through the waters of the Red Sea, you led your people out of slavery to freedom in the promised land.</p> <p><i>All</i> <b>Blessed be God for ever.</b></p> <p><i>Celebrant</i> We give you thanks for sending your Son Jesus. For us he was baptized by John in the river Jordan.</p> <p><i>For</i> us he was anointed as Christ by your Holy Spirit. For us he suffered the baptism of his own death and resurrection, setting us free from the bondage of sin and death, and opening to us the joy and freedom of everlasting life.</p> <p><i>All</i> <b>Blessed be God for ever.</b></p> <p><i>Celebrant</i> We give you thanks for your Holy Spirit who teaches us and leads us into all truth, filling us with his gifts so that we might proclaim the gospel to all nations and serve you as a royal priesthood.</p> <p><i>All</i> <b>Blessed be God for ever.</b></p> <p><i>Celebrant</i> We give you thanks for you have called <b>N</b> to new life through the waters of baptism.</p> <p>Now sanctify this water, that your servants who are washed in it may be made one with Christ in his death and resurrection, to be cleansed and delivered from all sin. Anoint them with your Holy Spirit and bring them to new birth in the family of your Church, that they may become inheritors of your glorious kingdom. We give you praise and honour and worship through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and for ever.</p> <p><i>All</i> <b>Blessed are you, our strength and song, and our salvation.</b></p> <p><i>Or the following:</i></p> <p>The Lord be with you.</p> <p><i>People</i> <b>And also with you.</b></p> <p><i>Celebrant</i> Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.</p> <p><i>People</i> <b>It is right to give our thanks and praise.</b></p> <p><i>Celebrant</i> We thank you, Almighty God, for the gift of water</p> <p>Over water the Holy Spirit moved at the beginning of creation. Through water you led the children of Israel out of their bondage in Egypt into the land of promise. In water your Son Jesus received the</p>	<p>- The next question is based on Acts 2:42 and is a commitment to being an active member of your local church.</p> <p>- This question is really asking the candidate not to cut themselves off from God because they may have fallen into sin. God loves us and welcomes the penitent home.</p> <p>- Here we are invited to be a witness for our faith in word and deed.</p> <p>- Christians are not to be "holier than thou", but to see all people as made in the image of God. Therefore to love our neighbour is to love God.</p> <p>Social justice is an important part of our commitment to the Gospel. We must be willing to take a stand for what is true, honest, and fair</p> <p>This is a new commitment calling us to be good stewards of the environment.</p> <p><b>THE BAPTISM</b></p> <p>Christians are baptized in the name of the Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This is an important distinction because some have been baptized only in the name of Christ.</p> <p><b>Water</b> - the priest pours water on the candidate's head as a sign of washing and cleansing. It's a sign of being washed free from sin and beginning a new life with God. Water is a sign of life, but also a symbol of death. When we are baptized, it is as though our old life is buried in the waters (like drowning) and we are raised to new life with Christ.</p> <p><b>Anointing</b> - after baptism in water, the priest will anoint the person by making the sign of the cross on his/her forehead with pure olive oil specially prepared, lightly scented with incense, and blessed by the Bishop during Holy Week.</p> <p>As he does so, the priest says: <i>I sign you with the Cross, and mark you as Christ's own forever.</i></p> <p><b>Candles</b> - Jesus is the Light of the World. The tall Paschal Candle blessed each year on Easter Evening is lit. From it a Baptismal Candle for each candidate is lit and presented to him or her, or the parents as a reminder of the light which has come into their life. Many families light the candle on the anniversary of the baptism as a reminder to them and their child of the Journey in Christ they have embarked on.</p> <p>This becomes particularly significant when a child is prepared for First Communion when they are in Grade 2 and later, in their teen years at their Confirmation.</p> <p><b>The welcome</b> - the church congregation welcomes the candidate into the fellowship of the local Church and the worldwide Body of Christ. The congregation will often applaud at this point.</p>
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<p>baptism of John and was anointed by the Holy Spirit as the Messiah, the Christ, to lead us, through his death and resurrection, from the bondage of sin into everlasting life. We thank you, Father, for the water of baptism.</p> <p>In reborn to of Holy</p> <p>it we are buried with Christ in his death. By it we share in his resurrection. Through it we are by the Holy Spirit. Therefore in joyful obedience your Son, we bring into his fellowship those who come to him in faith, baptizing them in the name the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Now sanctify this water by the power of your Spirit, that those who are here cleansed from sin and born again, may continue for ever in the risen life of Jesus Christ our Saviour. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory, now and for ever. <b>Amen.</b></p> <p><i>The celebrant then says these or similar words.</i></p> <p>Let us join with those who are committing themselves to Christ and renew our own baptismal covenant.</p> <p><b>The Baptismal Covenant</b></p> <p><i>Celebrant</i> Do you believe in God the Father? <i>People</i> <b>I believe in God, The Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.</b></p> <p><i>Celebrant</i> Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God? <i>People</i> <b>I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.</b></p> <p><i>Celebrant</i> Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit? <i>People</i> <b>I believe in God the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.</b></p>	<p><b>Confirmation, Reception and Reaffirmation.</b></p> <p>Except for confirmation, these prayers may also be said by a priest as we welcome those who are joining the Anglican Church from other denominations and those who wish to reaffirm their faith. Please see the comments on page 3.</p>
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*Celebrant* Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?

*People* **I will, with God's help.**

*Celebrant* Will you persevere in resisting evil and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

*People* **I will, with God's help.**

*Celebrant* Will you proclaim by word and example the good news of God in Christ?

*People* **I will, with God's help.**

*Celebrant* Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving  
your neighbour as yourself?

*People* **I will, with God's help.**

*Celebrant* Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?

*People* **I will, with God's help.**

*Celebrant* Will you strive to safeguard the integrity of God's creation, and respect, sustain and renew the life of  
the Earth?

*People* **I will, with God's help.**

## **The Baptism**

*Each candidate is presented by name to the celebrant, or to an assisting priest or deacon, who then immerses, or pours water upon, the candidates, saying,*

N, I baptize you in the name of the Father,  
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*The celebrant makes the sign of the cross on the forehead of each one (using chrism if desired) saying to each,*

I sign you with the cross,  
and mark you as Christ's own for ever.

*The celebrant, at a place in the full sight of the congregation, prays over the newly baptized, saying,*

Heavenly Father, we thank you that by water and the Holy Spirit you have bestowed upon these your servants the forgiveness of sin, and have raised them to the new life of grace.  
Sustain them, O Lord, in your Holy Spirit.  
Give them an inquiring and discerning heart,  
the courage to will and to persevere, a spirit to know and to love you, and the gift of joy and wonder  
in all your works. **Amen.**

## **The Giving of the Light**



*One of the ministers may then give to each of the newly baptized a lighted candle, saying,*

Receive the light of Christ, to show that you have passed from darkness to light.

*When all of the newly baptized have received candles, the people say,*

**Let your light so shine before others  
that they may see your good works  
and glorify your Father in heaven.**

*Celebrant* Let us welcome the newly baptized.

*People* **We receive you into the household of God.  
Confess the faith of Christ crucified,  
proclaim his resurrection,  
and share with us in his eternal priesthood.**

### **At Confirmation, Reception, or Reaffirmation**

*The bishop says to the congregation,*

Let us now pray for these persons who have renewed their commitment to Christ.

*Silence may be kept.*

*Then the bishop says,*

Almighty God, we thank you that by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ you have overcome sin and brought us to yourself, and that by the sealing of your Holy Spirit you have bound us to your service. Renew in these your servants the covenant you made with them at their baptism.  
Send them forth in the power of that Spirit to perform the service you set before them; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

*The bishop lays his hand upon each one and says,*

#### **For Confirmation**

Strengthen, O Lord, your servant N with your Holy Spirit; empower him/her for your service; and sustain him/her all the days of his/her life. Amen.

*Or this:*

Defend, O Lord, your servant N with your heavenly grace, that he/she may continue yours for ever, and daily increase in your Holy Spirit more and more, until he/she comes to your everlasting kingdom. **Amen.**

#### **For Reception**

N, we recognize you as a member of the one holy catholic and apostolic Church, and we receive you into the fellowship of this Communion. God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless, preserve, and keep you. **Amen.**

**For Reaffirmation**

N, may the Holy Spirit, who has begun a good work in you, direct and uphold you in the service of Christ and his kingdom. **Amen.**

*Then the bishop says,*

Almighty and everliving God, let your fatherly hand ever be over these your servants; let your Holy Spirit ever be with them; and so lead them in the knowledge and obedience of your word, that they may serve you in this life, and dwell with you in the life to come; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**The Peace**

*All stand, and the celebrant addresses the people.*

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

*People*      **And also with you.**

*The members of the community, ministers and people, may greet one another in the name of the Lord.*

*The service continues  
with the preparation of the gifts for the eucharist.*