

# Your Child's Christening



*BAPTIZED*

*IN THE NAME  
OF THE*

*FATHER*

*AND OF THE  
OF THE*

*SON*

*AND*

*HOLY*

*PIRIT*

## What exactly is a Christening?

Being Christened marks the beginning of a journey with God which continues for the rest of our lives. This first step is a response to God's love. It is also a celebration, a time to come together with family and friends; remembering that your child is loved by God, is part of a wider community and has a place with God's people.



## What about Godparents?

Godparents are some of the most important people at the Christening. Godparents are not the people who will care for your child should anything happen to you. Arrangements for this would normally be made by a Will. Rather, they should be people who will be there for your child and help them think about the bigger questions in life - questions of love, hope and faith.



Every child should have at least three godparents, two of the same sex and at least one of the opposite sex. Parents may be Godparents for their own children, providing they have at least one other Godparent. Godparents must be Christened themselves and old enough to make some serious promises on behalf of the child.

## Making decisions and promises

When you bring your child to be Christened, you will be asked to declare publicly on behalf of your child that you believe in God and that you will bring your child up to follow Jesus. You will be asked to answer, on your child's behalf, that you have decided to turn away from everything which is evil or sinful and instead to turn towards Christ.



The declarations made by you and the child's godparents may be made in front of the church congregation; the local Christian community will promise to support you and pray for you and your child.

## Symbols and actions used during the service

A number of important symbols and actions will be used during the service itself:

The sign of the cross - the vicar will make the sign of the cross on your child's forehead. This is like an invisible badge to show that Christians are united with Christ and must not be ashamed to stand up for their faith in him. You and your Godparents will be asked to put a sign on your child's forehead too as a sign of unified love.

The vicar says:

Christ claims you for his own.

Receive the sign of his cross.

Do not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified.



Water - the vicar will pour water on your child's head. Water is a sign of washing and cleansing. In a Christening it is 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 baptised, it is as though our old life is buried in the waters and we are raised to new life with Christ.



The vicar says:

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

The welcome - the church congregation will say some formal words of welcome to acknowledge that your child has joined the Church and to show how pleased they are to have you among them.

Candles - Jesus is the Light of the World. A large candle is lit in the church and you will also be given a lighted candle at the end of the service as a reminder of the light which has come into your child's life.

