



"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."
Matt 28:19-20



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BAPTISM



THE PROMISES OF BAPTISM

In bringing their child for Baptism, parents are joining with God in the responsibility of developing the full potential of their child. The parents will nominate Godparents who are also prepared to nurture and care for their child in this way as well. Part of that responsibility, for parents and Godparents, is carrying the Baptismal Promises on behalf of the infant/child until they are of an age to confirm their own baptismal promises.

The parents and Godparents of the child will first be asked three questions:

Will you accept the responsibilities placed upon you in bringing this child for baptism? I will.

Are you willing to answer on behalf of this child? I am.

By your own prayers and example, by your friendship and love, will you encourage this child in the life and faith of the Christian community? I will, with God's help.

The parents and Godparents will then be asked to make a statement of faith. You will need to think carefully about your life, your own need for God, and your desire to explore and follow Christ's way. You will need to accept your failures and to ask God for forgiveness and strength.

Do you turn to Christ? I turn to Christ.

Do you repent of your sins? I repent of my sins.

Do you reject selfish living, and all that is false and unjust? I reject them all.

Do you renounce Satan and all evil? I renounce all that is evil.

And so the journey continues, in a new way! It is a joyful, exciting time, to join the huge family of the baptised of God.



WHAT IS BAPTISM?

On the surface, baptism is a simple ceremony of washing in water. Christians have practised baptism since the earliest times, using water from varied sources, from rivers to cups.

The answer to what Baptism really is, is what we believe - that the baptised become part of the Christian family, the church. It is therefore the most important thing we do; it continues to create God's family on earth. And it is a most joyful occasion; we celebrate God's love for your child, expressed through the faith of God's family. What we believe is also expressed through the symbols used in baptism.

Water

Water, the symbol and reality of all life, is used in Baptism to indicate new life in Christ and cleansing from sin, our 'old life.'

The sign of the cross in oil

Oil of Chrim (Christ) is used to anoint the just-Baptised with the sign of the cross. This sets us apart for God's call on our life in the world.

Candles and light

The newly baptised receive the light of Christ through the symbolism of their baptismal candle being lit from the Easter candle. The baptised then carry Christ's light into all the world.

GODPARENTS

We always advise parents to choose Godparents who you know will be part of your child's life regularly, and who are willing to undertake this special responsibility. There are no 'rules' for how many or what gender; usually three are chosen. It is a great privilege to be a Godparent, and a great joy to undertake this special spiritual nurturing of your Godchild.

We encourage Godparents, and parents, to take seriously their responsibility of being with their Godchild in exploring faith through and in a Christian community. At Holy Spirit Algester, we understand Baptism to be the most significant rite of the church. God's people as a community will travel with families through the process of baptism, including preparation.