



Cottesloe & Mosman Park Parish

Excerpts on Baptism

Baptism, the door to life and to the kingdom of God, is the first sacrament which Christ offered to all, that they might have eternal life. He later entrusted this sacrament and the Gospel to his Church, when he told his apostles: “Go, make disciples of all nations, and baptise them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” (Matthew 28:19). All persons who receive baptism are incorporated into the Church and are built up together in the Spirit into a house where God lives, into a holy nation and a royal priesthood. **(Rite of Baptism for Children: General Introduction)**

Baptism is the sacrament of faith. But faith needs the community of believers. It is only within the faith of the Church that each of the faithful can believe. The faith required for baptism is not a perfect and mature faith, but a beginning that is called to develop. The catechumen or the godparent is asked: “what do you ask of God’s Church?” The response is: “Faith!” **(CCC 1253)**

Since the beginning of the Church, adult Baptism is the common practice where the proclamation of the Gospel is still new. The catechumenate, or formation of the catechumens, aims at bringing their conversion and faith to maturity, in response to the divine initiative and in union with an ecclesial community. The catechumenate is to be “a formation in the whole Christian life ... during which the disciples will be joined to Christ their teacher. Today, the Christian initiation of adults begins with their entry into the catechumenate and reaches its culmination in a single celebration of the three sacraments of initiation. **(CCC 1247-1248, 1233)**

Infant Baptism is the form in which the sacrament is usually celebrated. It has become a single act encapsulating the preparatory stages of Christian initiation in a very shortened way. By its very nature infant Baptism requires a post-baptismal catechumenate. Not only is there a need for instruction after Baptism, but also for the necessary flowering of baptismal grace in personal growth. **(CCC 1231)**



The Church has always taught that the overwhelming misery which oppresses men and their inclination toward evil and death cannot be understood apart from their connection with Adam's sin and the fact that he has transmitted to us a sin with which we are born afflicted, a sin which is the death of the soul. Because of this certainty of faith, the Church baptises for the remission of sins even tiny infants who have not committed personal sin. (CCC 403)

In the case of an infant Baptism, the role of the god-parent is together with the parents to present the child for Baptism, and to help it to live a Christian life befitting the baptised and faithfully to fulfil the duties inherent in Baptism. (CCL 872)

One god-parent, male or female, is sufficient; but there may be two, one of each sex. The god-parent is to be a Catholic who has been confirmed and has received the blessed Eucharist, and who lives a life of faith which befits the role to be undertaken. A baptised person who belongs to a non-Catholic ecclesial community may be admitted only in company with a Catholic sponsor, and then simply as a witness to the baptism. (CCL 873-4)