

BACKGROUND NOTES FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

About the Theme

Baptism is a sacrament. A sacrament is something that uses signs – usually a combination of words and actions. The signs are not just words and actions that have a message for those who are celebrating it; they give those who receive them a gift. This gift (which Catholics call ‘grace’), is given by Jesus whom they meet in the Sacrament, to deepen and develop their relationship with him. Through the sacraments God helps Catholics grow in friendship with him. The Catholic Church has declared that there are 7 sacraments which celebrate special events in the lives of Catholics: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick, Marriage and Holy orders.

Baptism is an invitation to join the Church family. When a baby or younger child is baptised, the parents accept the invitation on behalf of their child. Older children and adults accept the invitation themselves. Often adults are baptised at Easter. Baptism is a special time for the person who is to be baptised, for their family and friends and the parish community.

Sometimes the sacrament of Baptism is celebrated when the parish family is gathered together for Mass. At other times family and friends come together in church at another time.

YEAR 2 SIGNS AND SYMBOLS

Throughout this topic, your child will progressively learn about the actions and symbols used in the Sacrament of Baptism. They begin with the welcome and then move on to baptism with water, anointing with the oil of Chrism, the white garment and the Baptismal candle.

This is a simplified outline of the rite of Baptism:

The welcome and signing with the sign of the cross.

Listening to Gods Word

Anointing with the oil of catechumens

Blessing of or thanksgiving over the baptismal water

Baptismal Promises

Baptism

Anointing with chrism

Presentation of the white garment

Presentation of the lighted candle

Overview

Key Vocabulary	<u>YEAR 2</u> Signs and Symbols BAPTISM/CONFIRMATION
Easter candle Font Oil of Chrism Good news Signs Symbols “I baptise you in the name..” ‘Receive the light of Christ’ White garment Oil Anointing Water Our Father Promises Blessing Scripture	<p>For Christians, signs and symbols speak of God’s mysterious presence in the world and in our lives. Special symbols are called ‘sacraments’ because they put us in touch in a powerful way with the life, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus and they point to his continued presence among us today Baptism is the first sacrament a Christian receives.</p> <p>Children know and understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Signs and symbols used in Baptism <p>See the Background Notes for Parents and Carers</p> <p>Week 1: Read the story (see below). Discuss the questions with your child to ensure their understanding. Help your child to complete the worksheet listing the signs and symbols from the story.</p> <p>Week 2: Use the picture and text (see below). Have your child draw a picture of the signs and symbols and label them and their meaning</p> <p>Week 3: Use the text (see below) to explain the symbol of the white garment and the Baptismal candle. Have your child draw a picture of the signs and symbols and label them and their meaning</p> <p>Week 4: Look at the key vocabulary for this topic and use it to help your child remember all that he/she has learnt about the sacrament of Baptism.</p> <p>Celebrate with a simple Act of Worship</p>

Year 2

In **Year 2** the children focus very much on what happens during the Sacrament of Baptism and all the different religious signs and symbols that take place and they are introduced to what those signs and symbols mean.

Week 1: Talk about signs and symbols, how a sign tells us something we need to know, and a symbol means something really important. Read the story (see below). Discuss the questions with your child to ensure their understanding. Help your child to complete the worksheet listing the signs and symbols from the story.

Week 2: Talk about about some special symbols and their importance in the celebration of Baptism. When someone opens the door for you it means welcome. The open door of the church is a symbol of welcome for the baby. The priest says some words of welcome and makes the Sign of the Cross on the baby. He asks the parents what name they give their child, and makes the Sign of the Cross on the baby's head and invites the parents and godparents to do the same. Godparents support the parents, as they bring up their child, in the ways of Jesus. Explain how the priest reads some part of the Bible which tells of the Good News of God's love and care. The parents carry the baby to the font where the priest pours holy water on the baby's head three times as he says the words; 'I baptise you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.' The baby is now a member of the Church, a Christian, and is now alive with the life of Christ. Explain how water brings life to living things and that in Baptism Christ gives new life. Then explain how athletes often use oil to massage their muscles and make them strong. Oil has healing properties. When someone becomes a king or a queen they are anointed with oil to show they are royal and that they promise to serve God and the people they rule. After the Baptism in water the priest anoints the baby with the oil of Chrism. The oil is a symbol that the baby has the gift of the Holy Spirit and has been made holy, a special friend of Jesus who is king. Using the picture (see below) ask your child to draw pictures of the signs and symbols and label them and their meaning.

Week 3: After the oil and water the parents wrap a white garment around the baby. The priest/deacon explains that the white garment is a symbol that the baby is now a Christian and that with the help of family and friends they will grow up to be like Jesus.

Towards the end of the ceremony of Baptism the parent of the child then lights a candle from the Easter Candle. The priest says, "Receive the light of Christ." The priest tells the parents that they have been entrusted with this light of Christ so they will help their child follow the light of Christ, so they will always have the flame of faith alive in their hearts. Finally, everyone prays the Our Father; the family prayer of the Church. This is a sign that the baby is a new member of the family of Jesus. Use the text (see below) to explain the symbol of the white garment and the Baptismal candle. Ask your child to draw pictures of the signs and symbols and label them and their meanings.

Week 4: Look at the key vocabulary for this topic and use it to help your child remember all that he/she has learnt about the sacrament of Baptism. Celebrate with a simple Act of Worship.

Week 1

Cousin Liz's engagement party

"Liz told us to look out for McDonald's along this road," said Dad.

"Then we've got to turn into Princess Road, opposite the park gates," added Mum who was holding a piece of paper with directions and a map.

"There's McDonald's," shouted Jason. They drove along and there was Princess Road. "Right, Dad!" said Jason.

"Now look out for No. 36," said Mum. "I bet Liz is feeling like a princess."

"Will I have to kiss everyone?" asked Jason. "I'll hate it."

Dad grinned, and Mum said, "Just remember to behave yourself and don't get too excited with your cousins, like you did last time."

"There's 36," shouted Jason, glad to change the subject. "There's the yellow burglar alarm they told us to watch out for."

Dad tooted the horn and Liz came out to welcome them. Jason was glad to see that David was there as well. "I think that must be Liz's fiancée, Derek," said Mum, "Isn't he tall!"

There were hugs and kisses at the front door. Jason tried to escape before Auntie Terry could kiss him, but he failed! David took Jason into the dining room. "Come and see all this food. I can't wait to get started," said David.

"Amazing!" said Jason, at the sight of the sandwiches, salads, trifles and gateaux, crisps, sausages on sticks and pieces of cheese and pineapple. In the middle was a cake with 'Liz and Derek' iced on it.

- What signs did Jason's family have to look for on their way to the party?
- What symbols did they experience during the party?
- What do you think the signs and symbols meant?
- Which symbol did Jason dislike and why?
- What was your favourite symbol in the story and why? What are some of the symbols you experience in everyday life and what do they mean to you?

Week 1

Signs	Symbols	Meaning

Make a list of the all the signs and symbols present in the story.

Week 2



Baptism is the first sacrament.

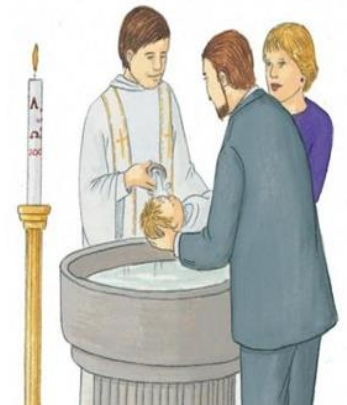
What name do you give your child?

Joseph

I baptise you in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

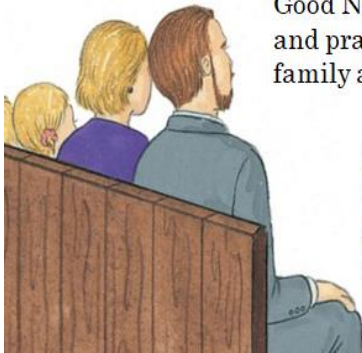
This special oil called 'chrism' shows that the baby is a special friend of Jesus.

This white garment is a symbol that the baby is now a Christian and with the help of family and friends will grow up to be like Jesus.



Everyone listens to the Good News of God's love and prays for the baby's family and friends.

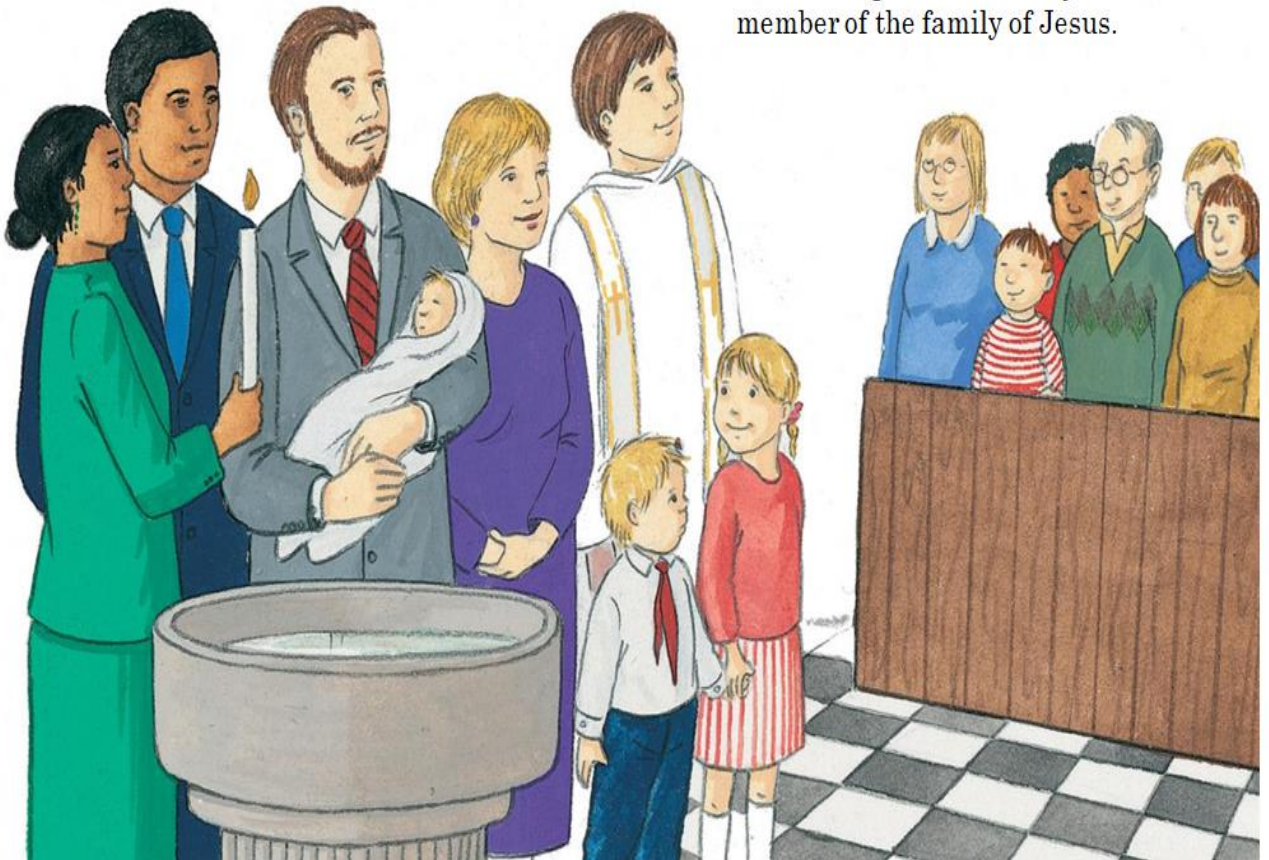
The priest prays that the baby will be strong and love as Jesus did.



Week 3

The candle is a sign that the baby will live in the light and love of Jesus.

Everyone prays, 'Our Father', the prayer that Jesus taught his friends. This is a sign that the baby is a new member of the family of Jesus.

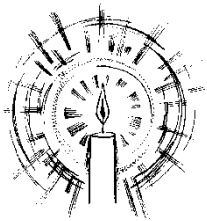


Week 4

**Act of Worship
"SIGNS AND SYMBOLS"
Year 2**

Signs and symbols used in Baptism

**Gathering
Together**



You may like to set up a prayer space and have some or all of the following:

Bible opened at St. Matthew 5:14 –15

White cloth to cover the table

Bowl (and jug) of water

White candle or Baptismal candle if your child has one

White shawl (or cloth)

Container of oil

Baby doll

All around us are many signs and symbols, some of which are written in words, and some in pictures. Let's just remind ourselves of some of those which we see and hear most often.

**The Word
of God**

Let's listen to what Jesus has to say about how Christians should be recognised by the good things they do. In Baptism they receive special blessings and strength through the signs and symbols we have talked about to help them live good lives.

Let us sing 'Alleluia' to welcome the Gospel

A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew

Glory to you, O Lord

Jesus said, "You are like a light for the whole world. Everyone can see a city, which is built on top of a hill. You cannot hide it.

No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a bucket. The lamp is put where it can shine all around for everyone in the house. Your light must shine brightly for everyone. When people see the good things you do, they will give praise to God.

The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

**Response
to the
Word**

Jesus is telling us that Christians can show who they are by always being a good example to others; by standing out from the crowd by the way that we always choose to do the right thing. Believers in other faiths are also asked to do this. Think about ways in which you can do this at home and at school.....

**Going
Forth**

For our final prayer, let us join together to say the prayer given to us by Jesus himself. It is a prayer that reminds us we are all God's children "**Our Father.....**"