

The Baptismal Service

The Pre-Baptismal Rite

The Prayer of Reception

The priest lays his hand upon the head of the candidate as a sign of their reception into the Christian life; a life filled with Divine Grace.

The Exorcisms

We are born into a sinful reality. Even before we learn to cooperate with Satan, we are his victims. Through a series of prayers the priest calls upon Almighty God to free and protect the candidate from the powers of darkness and deceit, so that the candidate might be able to join Christ in holiness and purity.

The Rejection of Satan

The candidate and/or sponsor is asked to face away from the Holy Altar and to "renounce Satan, and all his works, and all his worship, and all his angels, and all his pomp".

The Acceptance of Christ

The candidate and/or sponsor is asked to face towards the Holy *Altar* and affirm their belief in Christ "as King and God".

The Declaration of Faith

The candidate and/or sponsor is asked to declare their faith in the true God by reciting The Creed (as declared by the 1st & 2nd Ecumenical Councils in the 4th century A.D.). It is this affirmation of faith by the sponsor, the parents' promise to raise the child faithfully, and the Grace of God that form the basis of the Orthodox Christian Church's acceptance of infant baptism.

The Creed

I believe in one God, the Father the Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ the only begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages. Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten, not created, of one essence with the Father, through whom all things were made.

For us and for our salvation, He came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became man.

He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and He suffered and was buried. On the third day He rose according to the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead. His kingdom will have no end.

And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life, who proceeds from the Father, who together with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who spoke through the Prophets.

In One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.

I acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. I expect for the resurrection of the dead. And the life of the age to come. Amen.

The Naming

A name is given to the candidate. From the moment the candidate is received into the Church, emphasis is placed on their individuality. It is a pious custom that the candidate be given the name of a Saint of the Church. This saint will then serve as a protector, intercessor, and role model for Christian living.

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The Initial Benediction

"Blessed is the kingdom of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit". This Initial Benediction declares the real presence of God's Kingdom and that Jesus Christ is truly in our midst. It is Christ Himself who will celebrate the Holy Sacrament, through the prayers of the faithful and the hands of the priest.

The Blessing of the Water

Immersion in water is the visible expression of the invisible cleansing from sin which takes place at baptism. Before the water can be used for the Sacrament of Baptism it must be declared as blessed. This is expressed through a series of prayers and symbolic actions.

The Anointing with Oil

This anointing has its origins in the ancient practice of applying olive oil to insulate a person from the coldness of outdoor waters. Its continued use is as a final exorcism before baptism; that as the oil insulates the candidate from the cold, so may it insulate them from evil.

The Sacrament of Holy Baptism

In accordance with the commandment of the Lord, the candidate is then baptized "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19), traditionally expressed by triple immersion in water. We believe that Christ died for our sins. The immersion in water symbolizes the death of our old nature which is "compatible by deceitful desires". However, Christ conquered death and rose on the third day. After the third immersion the candidate, likewise, rises into the everlasting life of Christ. They are born again, and "put on a new nature that is renewed in the image of God the Creator".

The Sacrament of Holy Chrismation

Through this Sacrament the candidate is confirmed in the Orthodox Christian Church. They are given the "Seal of the Gift of the Holy Spirit". As the candidate participates in the death and resurrection of Christ through Holy Baptism, they then participate in Holy Pentecost through Holy Chrismation. This is expressed by the anointing with Holy Chrism, which is blessed on Holy Thursday by the Patriarch of Constantinople. This symbolic action, reminiscent of the anointing of the Old Testamental priesthood, reminds us that each member of the Church is a member of "a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people" (1 Peter 2:9).

The Tonsure

In ancient times, the master tonsured the hair of his servants to express his rights over them. By this tonsuring the candidate accepts that their life belongs to God, and that they will be a faithful servant of the Lord.

The Garment of Righteousness

The candidate is presented with a new white garment symbolizing their newly restored purity and life in Christ.

The Procession

In the ancient Church, and in other parts of the world today, baptism is conducted outdoors in natural waters. It is then necessary to proceed to the Church to complete the service. The procession around the baptismal font is reminiscent of this. The beautiful hymn "As many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. Alleluia" (Gal. 3:27) is chanted during this procession.

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The Epistle Reading (The Saint Paul's Letter to the Romans 6:3-11)

"Brethren, all of us who have been baptized into Christ, were baptized into his death, Therefore we were buried with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with Him in a death like His, we shall certainly be united with Him in a resurrection like His. We know that our old self was crucified with Him so that the sinful body might be destroyed and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For He who has died is freed from sin. But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him. For we know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over Him. The death He died He died to sin, once and for all, but the life He lives He lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus."

The Gospel Reading (Matthew 28: 16-20)

"At that time the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. And when they saw Him they worshipped Him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age."

Holy Communion

The new baptized person's membership in the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Christ is fully realized through their partaking of the Precious and Holy Body and Blood of our Lord, God, and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The Gift of the Cross

The Cross is the symbol of the Christian faith. It serves as a reminder of the commitment made to Christ at Holy Baptism, and as a witness of faith to the world. The Lord, Himself said, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." (Matt. 16:24)

Your Presence

We ask that you join your prayers with those of the Church, to call upon Almighty God to accept the candidate as one of His own. As well, attending this service should serve as an occasion for you to reaffirm your own baptism.