



PC · COMMON PASTORAL VISITS

Holy Baptism preparation visit

PREPARING FOR A HOLY BAPTISM VISIT

The purpose of a Holy Baptism visit is to pastorally prepare a person or the parents (guardians) of a child to receive Holy Baptism with understanding, reverence, and faith. This visit is not merely an informational conversation, nor is it an examination of knowledge. It is a guided encounter in which you help those involved recognize God's act of grace, the meaning of baptism, and the responsibility and promise that follow.

This guide provides the intended structure and content for the baptismal visit. The sections that follow outline the essential themes that should be addressed, the questions that should be discussed, and the spiritual progression the visit should take.

You should understand this guide as both a framework and a safeguard:

- A **framework**, ensuring that all essential doctrinal and pastoral elements of Holy Baptism are communicated clearly and consistently.
- A **safeguard**, ensuring that the visit remains focused on God's work in baptism rather than on your personal understanding of baptism.

While you may adapt language to the situation and pastoral needs of those present, the content outlined in this guide should form the substance of the visit. Each section builds upon the previous one and leads naturally to the concluding reflection on readiness and God's enduring promise.

The visit should begin and end in prayer, move to teaching and guided reflection, progress through dialogue and personal application, and conclude with reassurance, opportunity for questions, and spiritual clarity.

When the visit follows this procedure, the baptized person or family should leave with a clear understanding that Holy Baptism is:

- God's gracious act
- A permanent change in relationship with Him
- A beginning of new life in Christ

- A public confession and change of allegiance
- An incorporation into the fellowship of the church of Christ

UNDERSTANDING HOLY BAPTISM

Holy Baptism with water is the first and fundamental act of grace of the triune God upon a person. Through this irrevocable act of God, He draws a person out of remoteness from Him and into a close and lasting relationship.

Possible questions for introspection and discussion with the believer:

- What do you understand Holy Baptism to be?
- What does it mean to you that God is the One who acts in baptism?
- How does it make you feel to know that God's grace comes first?

Foundational readings for your review:

Matthew 28:19 & Titus 3:5; Catechism 8.1 & 8.1.1

Consider that baptism is not a symbol of human readiness, but a declaration of God's grace. It is not something we earn; it is something God gives.

GOD'S GRACE AND FORGIVENESS

Through Holy Baptism, original sin is washed away. Although the inclination to sin remains, God promises His help in overcoming sin as we grow in faith.

Possible questions for introspection and discussion with the believer:

- What does forgiveness mean to you personally?
- How do you understand God's grace working in your life?
- How does knowing God remains with you, give you comfort, even in weakness?

Foundational readings for your review:

Acts 2:38, Romans 6:3-4; Catechism 8.1.4

**God accepts us not because we are perfect,
but because we believe in Jesus Christ.**

DEATH OF THE OLD LIFE AND BEGINNING OF A NEW CREATION

Baptism is both a death and a beginning. The old life is left behind, and a new life in Christ begins. We are made into a new creation.

Possible questions for introspection and discussion with the believer:

- What do you hope God will renew in your life?
- What does it mean to you to be a “new creation” in Christ?
- How do you imagine your life (or your child’s) growing through this new beginning?

Foundational readings for your review:

Romans 6:4, 2 Corinthians 5:17 & Colossians 2:11-12; Catechism 8.1.6

**In baptism, God does not only forgive the past;
He shapes the future.**

CHANGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND CONFESSION OF FAITH

In Holy Baptism, we renounce Satan and surrender ourselves to God. Baptism is confession of faith in the life, death, resurrection, and return of Jesus Christ.

Possible questions for introspection and discussion with the believer:

- What does surrendering your life (or your child’s) to God mean to you?
- Why is faith important for baptism?

- How do you understand the “change of allegiance” that will take place?

Foundational readings for your review:

Romans 10:9 & Galatians 2:20; Catechism 8.1.7

Baptism marks a turning point: we declare to whom we belong.

BELONGING TO THE CHURCH

Through baptism, we are incorporated into the church of Christ; the fellowship of those who believe in Jesus Christ and confess Him as Lord. Faith is lived in community.

Possible questions for introspection and discussion with the believer:

- What does belonging to the church of Christ mean to you?
- How can fellowship with other believers strengthen your faith?
- Why do you think God calls us to live our faith together?

Foundational readings for your review:

1 Corinthians 12:12-14, Ephesians 4:4–6 & Acts 2:41–42; Catechism 8.1.3

God calls us into faith, and into fellowship with one another.

FOR ADULT BAPTISMS

Holy Baptism begins a lifelong journey of discipleship. God’s act of grace continues to unfold as you grow in faith and follow Christ.

Possible questions for introspection and discussion with the believer:

- Do you believe in Jesus Christ as your Savior?
- Are you ready to renounce Satan and surrender your life to God?

- Are you willing to grow as a disciple of Christ and align your life to His gospel?
- Are you prepared to live your faith publicly and within the church?

Foundational readings for your review:

Matthew 16:24-26 & John 8:31; Catechism 8.1.8

Baptism is the beginning of a life shaped by God's grace.

FOR PARENTS OF A CHILD BEING BAPTIZED

In baptizing your child, you recognize them as a gift from God and accept responsibility for their spiritual upbringing.

Possible questions for introspection and discussion with the believer:

- How do you see your child as a gift from God?
- Are you willing to raise your child in the Christian faith?
- How can you model a growing relationship with Jesus Christ for your child?
- How will you support your child on the path toward confirmation?

Foundational readings for your review:

Psalms 127:3, Proverbs 22:6, Mark 10:13-16 & Deuteronomy 6:4-7; Catechism 8.1.9

**God entrusts children to parents not only for care,
but also for spiritual guidance.**

READINESS AND FINAL REFLECTION

Holy Baptism is a joyful yet serious moment in which God speaks His promise over a life.

Possible questions for introspection and discussion with the believer

- Do you feel prepared to take this step?
- Are there any questions or concerns you would like to discuss?
- How can the church support you after baptism?

Foundational readings for your review:

Isaiah 43:1 & 2 Timothy 1:9; Catechism 8.1

Holy Baptism is God's enduring promise.

CLOSING THOUGHTS:

Invite remaining questions and briefly walk through the order of the divine service:

- Holy Baptism takes place after the absolution and the Eucharistic prayer.
- The priest addresses those to become baptized in front of the altar.
- The vow professes their belief in Jesus Christ. Read the relevant vow to them from page 59 of the Liturgy Book, so they know what to expect.
- Following the vow, there is a prayer.
- The act of baptism begins with the trinitarian baptismal formula. Then the priest makes the sign of the cross three times on the forehead of the person with water.
- The act of baptism is followed by the dispensation of the baptismal blessing.
- After the priest has conveyed congratulations to those who have been baptized, they can return to their seats.

This ensures peace, clarity, and joyful anticipation of receiving the sacrament of baptism.