

CATHOLICISM UNPACKED



DIOCESE OF WESTMINSTER

EDUCATION SERVICE

SACRAMENTS:
Baptism

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Section 1: Sacraments of Initiation

Aims

The main purpose of this resource is to help you as an educator to appreciate more fully what the Catholic Church teaches about the **Sacraments of Baptism**, the first of the seven sacraments in the Catholic Church and one of the three Sacraments of Initiation. It is hoped that the information and resources can help you develop the theology, religious literacy and spirituality of pupils.

Structure

There are two main sections in this document:

1. Sacraments of Initiation – an overview
2. Sacrament of Baptism



The Sacrament of Confirmation is very closely linked to this sacrament so it is strongly recommended that you engage with the **Catholicism Unpacked: Confirmation** document also so that you have a deeper understanding of Baptism. The Eucharist is the third Sacrament of Initiation and this will be explored in **Catholicism Unpacked: Eucharist**.

Sacraments - an overview

Sacraments



The seven sacraments are meeting points where God himself is present, waits for you, blesses you and leads you into deeper community of the Church.

The word 'sacrament' means '*an effective sign of something hidden which comes from God*'. Catholics believe that that they are outward signs of an inward grace through which we share in God's love. In other words, they are visible ways in which the invisible gifts of God's love and mercy are given to us through the Holy Spirit.



The sacraments were entrusted to the Church by Jesus so they are all deeply rooted in Scripture and Tradition. They are administered through prayer services known as liturgical rites which usually take place inside a church but which may be celebrated elsewhere.

The seven sacraments can be divided into three kinds: Sacraments of Initiation, Sacraments of Healing and Sacraments of Service.

Sacraments of Initiation
Sacraments of Healing
Sacraments of Service

Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist
Reconciliation and the Sacrament of the Sick
Marriage and Ordination

In this document, information about Baptism is provided in the form of videos and artwork as well as the written word which is based on the teaching from the Catechism of the Catholic Church. We hope that you find them useful for your own personal and professional development.

Useful videos on Sacraments of Initiation

For the videos included below, simply click on the links.



[The Seven Sacraments \(OBD Films\)](#)

This short film offers a brief overview of the seven Sacraments of the Catholic Church and the purpose each serves. It uses images of sacred art and references to Scripture. Suitable for teachers and pupils in KS2.



[The Sacraments \(Sketchy Catholicism\)](#)

Using sketches, this video explains what a sacrament is and then explains each of the sacraments of initiation, healing and service and how they link together. Suitable for teachers and some pupils in KS2.



[The Sacraments of Initiation \(Brother Francis Online\)](#)

This animated video explains the meaning of initiation and the sacraments linked with this in a very simple way. It is from the "Brother Francis" series, a Catholic animation for children. For other videos suitable for pupils in similar style see [here](#).



[7 Sacraments - Catechism Songs](#)

Jesus instituted the 7 Sacraments and these are explained in the Catechism which can be found [here](#). This song will help to memorise them in a fun way! Suitable for teachers and pupils in KS2.



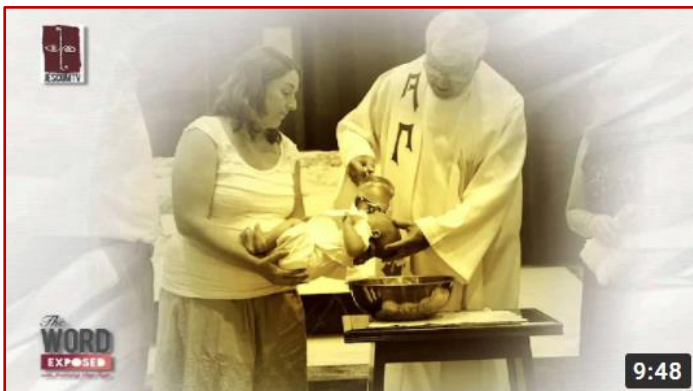
[The Sacraments of Initiation \(Little George\)](#)

Using various images and artwork, this video explains the Church's need for the physical signs of God's grace and how the sacraments have evolved over the centuries since the beginning of Christianity. It uses the phrases from the Catechism of the Catholic Church and explains them briefly. This is suitable for teachers.



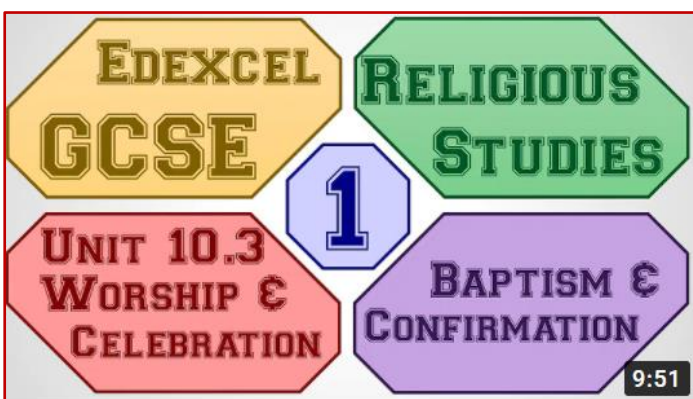
[The Sacraments \(Theo Matters\)](#)

This video explains the sacraments as a whole. It uses simple images to explain each of the sacraments using the words from the Catechism. It is suitable for teachers and may be used for some pupils in KS2.



[The Faith Exposed - Catechism - Sacraments of Christian Initiation \(JesCom TV\)](#)

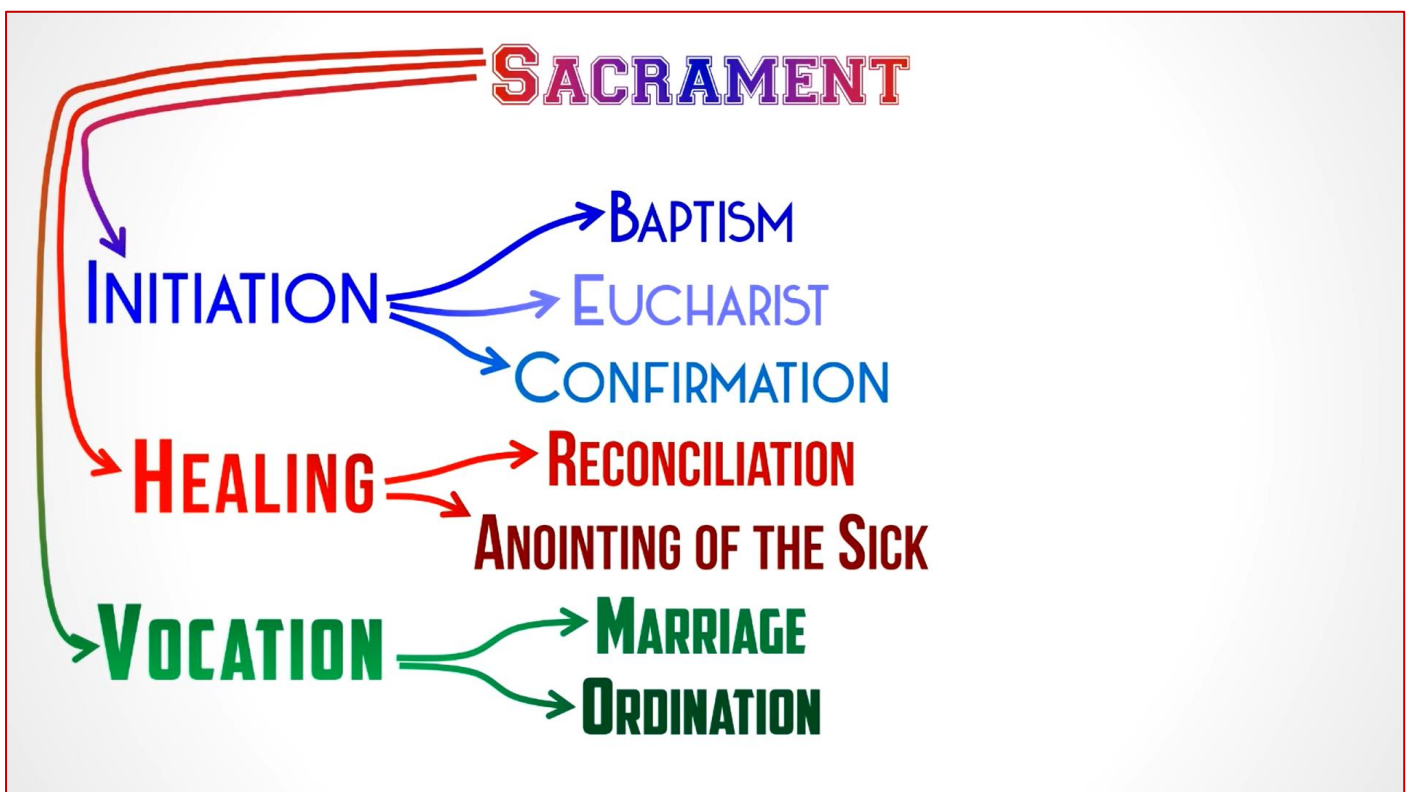
This video explains clearly and comprehensively the meaning of the Sacraments of Initiation in light of the Catechism and teachings of the Church. It explains the meaning of the vocabulary associated with the sacraments and links the teaching to Scripture. It is suitable for teachers only.



[Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation \(Mr McMillan REvises\)](#)

This video focuses on the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation as well as explaining what a Sacrament is. It was designed for GCSE students but is suitable for teachers and parts of this may be suitable for some pupils in KS2. Screenshots from this video may be very useful for memory aids for pupils aged 7-11 and are included in this document.

(Sacramentum = *Mystery*) **SACRAMENT** [needs to be revealed]
 instituted by Christ revealing the Grace of God through ordinary things



These images were screenshots from Mr Millan REvises Baptism and Confirmation. Click [HERE](#) to see the YouTube video.

SECTION 2 BAPTISM

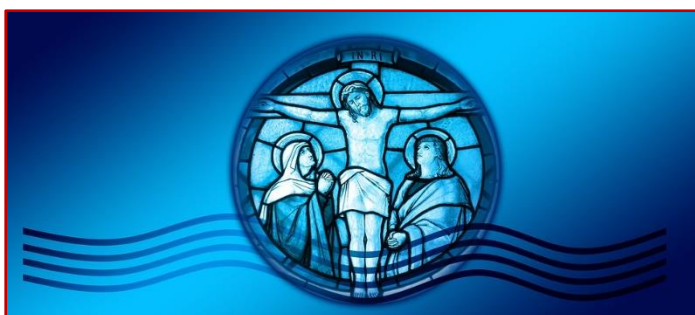
What is Baptism?

Baptism is the first and foundational sacrament and the prerequisite for the other sacraments. It unites us to Jesus Christ so that we share in his death on the cross and his resurrection. We share, too, in the redemption that Christ has won for us. Baptism frees us from the power of Original Sin and all personal sins so that we can rise with Jesus to a new and eternal life. Through the gift of Baptism, the candidate becomes a living member of the Body of Christ and a member of the family of God.

‘Through Baptism each child is inserted into a gathering of friends who never abandon him in life or in death... This group of friends, this family of God, into which the child is now admitted, will always accompany him, even on days of suffering and in life’s dark nights; it will give him consolation, comfort and light.’ (Pope Benedict XVI)

What is Original Sin? What does the Fall mean for us?

Sin in the strict sense implies guilt for which one is personally responsible. Therefore, the term ‘Original Sin’ refers, not to a personal sin, but rather to the disastrous, fallen state of mankind into which the individual is born, even before he himself sins by a free decision. [CCC 388-389, 402-404]



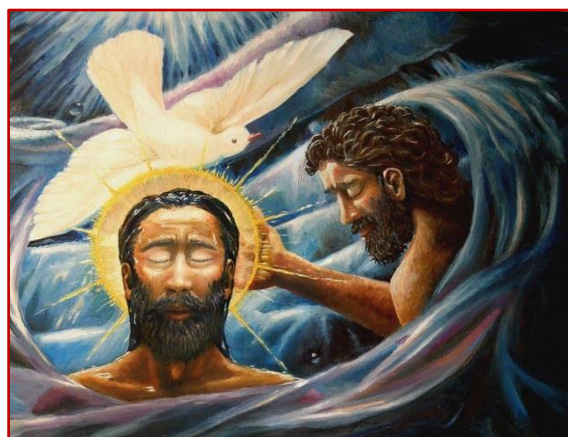
God made the world good, but the first humans used their freedom to choose wrong and harmful things. This disobedience of God is known as ‘The Fall’ and is conveyed by the story in Genesis of banishment from Eden. This left all people afterwards marked with the effects of this sin, except for Mary as she was the Immaculate Conception, and Jesus, who was perfect and without any sin.

Through his death on the Cross, Jesus saved humanity from sin and death.

What does ‘baptise’ actually mean and where does this practice come from?

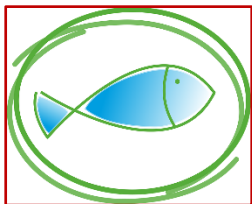
The verb ‘to baptise’ means: to immerse in water, to sprinkle or pour water on in the Christian rite of Baptism; to ‘christen’, to cleanse spiritually; to initiate or dedicate by purifying.

John the Baptist began baptising people in the time of Jesus as part of his messianic mission. Jesus went to John for Baptism, even though he did not need saving, to set an example for us to follow. Baptism has been part of the Christian tradition since the early Church.



Who can be baptised and what is required of a candidate?

'Any person who is not yet baptised can be baptised. The only pre-requisite for Baptism is faith, which must be professed publicly at Baptism.' [CCC1246-1254]



A person can be baptised at any age. As adults, the person will travel through a path of learning (called Catechumenate) in which they become a new person through personal conversion. This programme for adults is called the RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults) and it includes Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist together.

When the person is very young, the parents will present them for Baptism and the godparents will make promises on their behalf.

What is Infant Baptism and why does the Church adhere to this practice?

'From antiquity the Church has practised Infant Baptism. There is one reason for this: before we decide on God, God has decided on us. Baptism is therefore a grace, an undeserved gift of God, who accepts us unconditionally. Believing parents who want what is best for their child want Baptism also, in which the child is freed from the influence of Original Sin and the power of death'. [CCC 1250, 1282]

Parents can decide to raise their child in the faith and so a child can be baptised from a very early age. As the child is too young, the godparents make the Baptismal promises on their behalf and the parents agree to bring the child up in the Christian faith.

The gift received by infants can be accepted freely and responsibly by the person once they have reached adulthood or an age in which they can make a meaningful 'yes' and make their own Baptismal promises. This is done during the Sacrament of Confirmation.



Can a person be baptised more than once?



When baptised, the person becomes a member of the Christian Church. There is only a need for ONE Baptism and it cannot be repeated, although vows can be renewed in a personal act of affirmation.

Why is water used in Baptism?

Water is the most important symbol of Baptism and it symbolises new life and resurrection in Christ. The water may be poured over the head or the person may be completely immersed. This may take place at the Baptismal font.

What do the cross and white garment symbolise?



The cross represents Christ and being a Christian. The white garment symbolises 'putting on Christ' and the pure new life of grace. It signifies that the baptised person has become new creation and symbolises the cleansing from sin.

The white garment also symbolises the white garments that Jesus wore when he was placed in the tomb after his death on Good Friday. When the women and disciples returned on Easter day, they found the tomb empty except for the white robes. It represents the promise of the Resurrection, made at Baptism.

The promise is that the baptised body will one day die, like Christ's did, but it will be raised from the dead by Christ. White also symbolises purity of faith and cleansing.

Which oils are used in Baptism?

There are two types of oil used: Oil of Catechumens (representing salvation as well as strength and power that comes from Christ) and Oil of Chrism (representing participation in the priesthood of Jesus and membership in the body of Christ). Oil represents being set apart for a particular mission. When baptised, we are anointed as priest, prophet and king and share in the mission of Christ.

What does the candle represent?

The candle is lit from the Easter (Paschal) candle and represents Jesus, the light of the world. It also represents the flame of faith.

Why is the name significant?

Through the name that we receive in Baptism God tells us: **'I have called you by name, you are mine.'** (Is43:1; CCC 2156-2159, 2165]

To be baptised by a name signifies that God knows each one of us individually and he calls everyone into a special relationship with him. Christians often choose the names of saints at Baptism.



There are no better examples than the saints and no better helpers. If my namesake is a saint, I have a friend in God. [CCC 2156-2159, 2165-2167]

Who performs a Baptism?

Normally a bishop, a priest or a deacon administers the sacrament of Baptism but in an emergency, indeed any Christian, indeed anyone, can baptise by pouring water over the head of the recipient and pronouncing the Baptismal formula, "I baptise you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." [CCC 1256-1284]

What happens at Baptism?

The priest or deacon is usually the minister of Baptism, but anyone can baptise in an emergency, such as in a hospital or whenever someone's life is in danger. However, 'they have to ensure that they have the intentions of the Church does when she baptises' (YouCat 198). Here are the steps that occur during Baptism for infants and adults:

1. **During Infant Baptism, the celebrant (priest or deacon) asks the parents, "What name do you give your child?"**

This is not because they have forgotten the child's name but because that person becomes a child of God by name and Jesus becomes their brother by name as soon as the person is baptised. The parents respond aloud, potentially with a Christian name, such as one of the saints or heroes of the Bible. In adult Baptism, this step is skipped.

2. **The celebrant asks, "What do you ask of God's Church for your child?"**

The parents respond, "Baptism." If an adult is being baptised, they answer the same.

3. **In Infant Baptism, the celebrant asks the parents and the godparents whether they are willing and able to fulfil their duties to bring up this child in the Christian faith.**

4. **As a symbolic gesture, the celebrant makes the sign of the cross with his thumb gently on the forehead of the child or adult.**

This sign is made to show that the cross of Christ has saved her. The parents and godparents do the same.

5. **A particular passage from the Bible is read, usually from the New Testament, where Baptism is mentioned or alluded to.**

6. **After some other prayers, the first anointing takes place.**

The celebrant anoints the infant with a little Oil of Catechumens at the top of the chest as a sign of the strength required to live the gospel. The same anointing takes place for an adult. The oil symbolises that the person, born into the world, is now being set apart from the world by the anointing. It represents salvation as well as the strength and power that come from Christ our saviour. The child is soon to be baptised and therefore belongs not to the world but to God and heaven.

7. **The priest or deacon blesses the water of Baptism.**

The prayer recalls how water has played an important role in salvation history as recorded throughout the Bible: It is a sign of new life, the washing of sin, deliverance from slavery, and a new beginning.

8. **The first part of the baptismal promises are made: renunciation of evil.**

Because infants can't speak for themselves, parents and godparents answer for them. The celebrant asks, "Do you renounce Satan? And all his works? And all his empty promises?" The response is "I do." Later, if the child chooses to be confirmed, they will answer those same

questions on their own before the bishop. Adults who are being baptised answer for themselves.

9. The second part of Baptismal promises follows, with the Apostles' Creed put in question form: "Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth?"

Again, the response is "I do." Then the other two persons of the Trinity are mentioned: "Do you believe in Jesus Christ. . . ?" and "Do you believe in the Holy Spirit. . . ?" Once again, parents and godparents answer for infants; adults answer for themselves.

10. The actual Baptism takes place.

In infant Baptism, the immediate family gathers around the Baptismal font and the child is held over the basin while the celebrant pours water three times over the child's head and says their first and middle name, and then, "I baptise you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen." Usually, the baby cries, because the water tends to be a little cool.

In adult Baptism, the catechumen holds their head over the basin, and the priest pours water over their head; or, if baptised by immersion, they enter the pool, and the celebrant immerses them by dipping them into the water, or pouring it over their body.

11. The celebrant anoints the top of the new Christian's head with chrism oil.

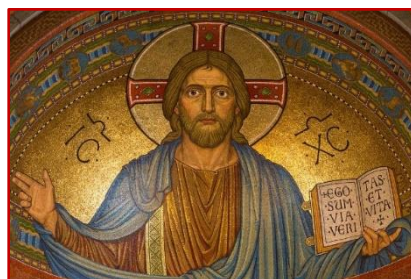
The anointing symbolises that the newly baptised Christian is now exactly that — a *Christian*.

The word *Christ* means *anointed*, and a *Christian* is someone who's anointed in Jesus Christ. This anointing also means the person is now to share in the three-fold mission of Christ — to sanctify, proclaim, and give Christian leadership and example to the world. Now, a white garment is usually presented to the newly baptised, although the infant is often already wearing a white gown.

12. A Baptismal candle is lit from the burning Easter (Paschal) candle, which is present throughout the ceremony.

Coming from the Easter candle, the light given at baptism is a sign that by faith and baptism we too will share in the resurrection of Christ, who gives us eternal life.

13. Our Father is said and a blessing is given for the parents and family, and everyone celebrates.



I wonder...

What questions might you have about the sacrament of Baptism?

If you could explain why Baptism is important to believers and how it is done differently within Christian denominations?

An A-Z of Baptism

Anoint

To anoint is to dab or rub with oil, at a religious ceremony. This takes place during the sacraments of Baptism, Holy Orders and the Sacrament of the Sick. In the Sacrament of the Sick it is for healing purposes. The words Messiah and Christ (Hebrew and Greek) mean 'anointed one'. In Baptism, the person is anointed with the oil of chrism and the oil of catechumens.

Baptism

Baptism is the Christian ceremony of sprinkling or pouring water onto the person's forehead or immersing them in water, symbolising the washing away of sin and a new life in Christ. It is the entry rite through which one becomes a member of the Christian Church/family of God. A person can only be baptised once. Another word for Baptism is christening.

Baptismal promises

These are a series of questions asked before Baptism into the Catholic Church. Typically, godparents answer the questions on behalf of the child. Baptismal promises are renewed at First Holy Communion and the Sacrament of Confirmation as well as during the Easter Vigil.

Baptismal font

The Baptismal font is a large basin, usually placed on the top of a pillar or stand. This holds the water for Baptism and is where this part of the ceremony takes place. A seashell is sometimes used as a cup to pour the water.

Candle (Baptismal)

The candle represents moving from death to life in Christ. The candle is also a symbol of Christ as the 'light of the world' and the Christian faith.

Catechumen

A person receiving instruction for RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults). It comes from the Greek word 'kat'echain' which means to instruct or to teach by word of mouth. In the early Church especially, candidates for adult Baptism (catechumens) went through a three-stage preparation, the catechumenate, in which they were instructed in the faith and were gradually allowed to participate in the Liturgy of the Word.

Catechumens (oil of)

The Oil of Catechumens (also known as the Oil of Salvation) is the oil used during Baptism. During Baptism it is placed on the top of the chest and it is believed to strengthen the one being baptised to turn away from sin. It is made of blessed olive oil.

Chrism (oil of)

The word comes from the Greek word 'chrisma', meaning 'oil of anointing', and 'christos' meaning 'anointed one'. The oil of chrism is used in Baptism, Confirmation and Ordination. It is made from olive oil and balsam (sweet smelling) and signifies joy, grace, health and strength. On the morning of Holy Thursday each year, the bishop consecrates it so that it can be used for the sacraments during the year. People anointed with chrism are supposed to spread 'the aroma of Christ.' (2 Cor: 2:15)

Christening

The religious ceremony at which a baby is baptised; a Baptism.

Dove
A symbol of the Holy Spirit. At Jesus' Baptism, the Holy Spirit appeared like a dove.
Discipleship
Learning from the example and teachings of Christ as well as living them.
Eternal life
Baptism is the beginning of the life of faith and is therefore also the gateway to eternal life.
Fish
A single fish represents a baptised person; it is also the symbol of Christianity. Three fish in a triangle or circle represent the Trinity. The first letters of the Greek for 'Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour' spell out the Greek word for fish, 'ichthus'.
Godparents
Godparents are the sponsors of the person being baptised and make promises on their behalf.
Hope
Pope Francis said 'If we are true to our Baptism, we will spread the light of the hope - Baptism is the beginning of hope, that hope - of God, and we will be able to pass on to future generations the meaning of life'.
Initiation
The ritual action admitting someone into a group. The sacraments of initiation are: Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation.
Irremovable seal
Baptism seals the Christian with the indelible spiritual mark (character) of his belonging to Christ. No sin can erase this mark, even if sin prevents Baptism from bearing the fruits of salvation.
John the Baptist
The relative of Jesus and son of Elizabeth and Zechariah. He baptised people in the river Jordan, including Jesus himself. He prepared the way for Jesus by telling them to repent. The Jordan is a river in the Middle East that flows through the Sea of Galilee on to the Dead Sea.
King
During Baptism, the candidate shares in the mission of Christ and is anointed as priest, prophet and king.
Light
In the Old Testament, fire is a symbol of God's purifying presence. In the New Testament, the flames of Pentecost are a symbol of the presence of God transforming the lives of Jesus' disciples. In Baptism, the candle is light and the new Christian is called to 'walk in the light' as a follower of Jesus. It is also a sign that the newly baptised person shares the resurrection promise.
Mission
The Baptism of Jesus is all about his commissioning by his Father. In Matthew's Gospel, after Jesus is baptised, "the heavens were opened for him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming upon him. And a voice came from the heavens, 'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased'." Jesus mission was to teach, heal and bring people to know the love of God. We are invited to share in this mission when we are baptised.

New Life

The Bible says, "All of us who were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death. We were therefore buried with him through Baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life" (Rom 6:3-4).

Oil

Oil is also a symbol of Baptism, and two kinds are used. The Oil of the Catechumens is used after the prayer of exorcism and applied to the chest. It represents salvation as well as the strength and power that come from Christ our saviour. After the water has been poured, Sacred Chrism is used to anoint the crown of the head, and it represents salvation, participation in the priesthood of Christ, membership in the body of Christ and a share in eternal life.

Paschal Candle

Also known as the Easter Candle. It is lit on Holy Saturday and placed by the altar until Pentecost. It is then used throughout the year on special occasions such as Baptisms and funerals. The Baptismal candle is lit from the Paschal Candle.

Rite of Baptism

A rite is a special service with particular words and actions. For an example of the Rite of Baptism [click here](#)

Sacrament

There are seven sacraments in the Catholic Church: Baptism, Reconciliation, Eucharist, Confirmation, Marriage, Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders. A sacrament is an inward sign of an outward grace. We need sacraments to help us to *'outgrow our petty human life and become more like Jesus through Jesus: children of God in freedom and glory'* [CCC1129].

Tempted

Jesus was tempted for 40 days in the desert and was baptised after this and so started his ministry.

Unconditional

Baptism expresses God's unconditional welcome of his people, his call to them to share his life.

Vestments

The priest's vestments are white for a Baptism. White symbolises the joy and victory that the church embraces through the life and resurrection of Jesus. In Baptism the candidate shares in the death of Christ so that they can share in his new life and resurrection.

Water

The primary symbol in Baptism. John used water as did Jesus. He is the living water. The usual method is by pouring water over the head but it may also be done by full immersion. It is a symbol of new birth and cleansing.

White garment

The newly baptised are clothed in white as a symbol of 'putting on Christ', and the pure new life of grace. White is the colour of Christian Baptism. It symbolises the cleansing of the person from all sin.

Yes

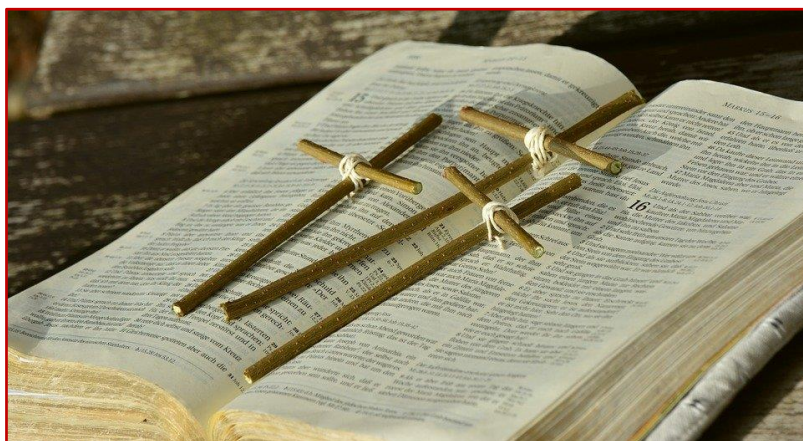
Baptism is a covenant between us and God and so the individual must say 'yes' to it. In response to the Baptismal promises, the candidate says 'I do' and then 'Amen', the latter of which means 'So be it', 'yes, I believe'.

25 Pieces of Scripture - Baptism



Water is the most important symbol in Baptism and there are several references to water in the Old Testament. It is referred to from the very beginning of the Bible when we hear about God's Spirit hovering over the water at the time of Creation (Gen 1: 1). In Genesis 6-7 God baptises the earth when he sends the flood during the time of Noah. Later in Genesis 8 and 9 we read about God freeing his people Israel from slavery in Egypt to a new life in the Promised Land as they crossed the Red Sea. It takes his people 40 years to arrive in their new land, however, and in Exodus 17 we read about God providing water from a rock in the desert. Water gives life, it also destroys life.

In the New Testament, Jesus offers us the water that gives us eternal life (Jn 4:14). On the cross water flowed from the side of Jesus (Jn 19:34) and it is through the cross that we are saved as Jesus frees us from the slavery of sin and death. He tells us that we must be baptised with water and the Spirit (Jn 3:5) and offers us an example to follow. Jesus instructs his followers to 'go and make disciples of all nations baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit' (Mt 28:19-20).



There are many references to Baptism in the New Testament and 30 of these are included below and could be used in a number of ways for reflection and learning.

Matthew

1. "I baptise you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptised by him. John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptised by you, and do you come to me?" But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfil all righteousness." Then he consented. (3:11-15)

2. And when Jesus had been baptised, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.” (3:16-17)

3. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (28:19-20)

Mark

4. John the baptiser appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptised by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. (1:4-5)

5. The one who believes and is baptised will be saved; but the one who does not believe will be condemned. (16:16)

Luke



6. John answered all of them by saying, “I baptise you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandals. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire. (3:16)

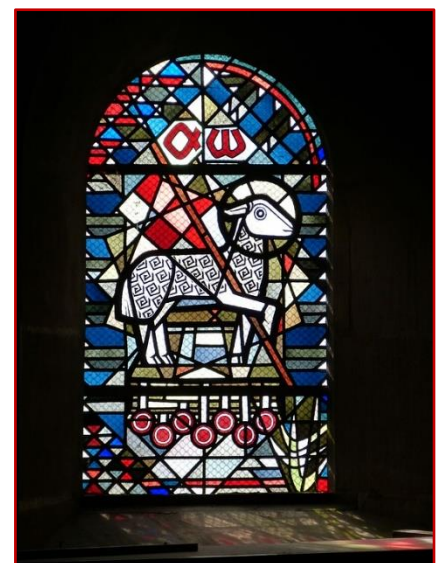
7. When all the people were being baptised, Jesus was baptised too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.” (3:21-22)

John

8. The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and declared, “Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me.’ I myself did not know him; but I came baptising with water for this reason, that he might be revealed to Israel.” (1:29-31)

9. And John testified, “I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptise with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptises with the Holy Spirit.’ (1:32-33)

10. Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. (3:5)



Acts



11. Peter said to them, “Repent, and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him.” And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” So those who welcomed his message were baptised, and that day about three thousand persons were added. (2:38-41)

12. But when they believed Philip, who was proclaiming the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptised, both men and women. (8:12)

13. Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptised?” He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptised him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea. (8:35-40)

14. So he ordered them to be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited him (Peter) to stay for several days. (10:48)

15. They answered, “Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.” They spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. At the same hour of the night he took them and washed their wounds; then he and his entire family were baptised without delay. (16:31-33)

16. Paul said, “John baptised with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus.” (19:4)

17. And now why do you delay? Get up, be baptised, and have your sins washed away, calling on his name. (22:16)



Romans

18. What then are we to say? Should we continue in sin in order that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin go on living in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death? (6:1-3)

19. Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin... (6:3-18)

Corinthians

20. For in the one Spirit we were all baptised into one body - Jews or Greeks, slaves or free - and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. (1 Cor 12:13)

Galatians

21. As many of you as were baptised into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. (3:27)

Ephesians

22. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God - not the result of works, so that no one may boast. (2:8-9)

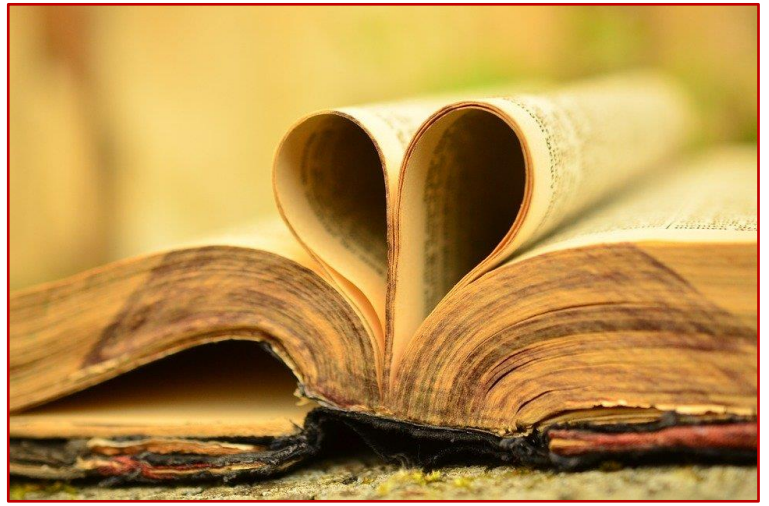
23. I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all. (4:1-6)

Colossians

24. When you were buried with him in baptism, you were also raised with him through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. And when you were dead in trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive together with him, when he forgave us all our trespasses. (2:12-13)

Peter

25. And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you—not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 3:21)



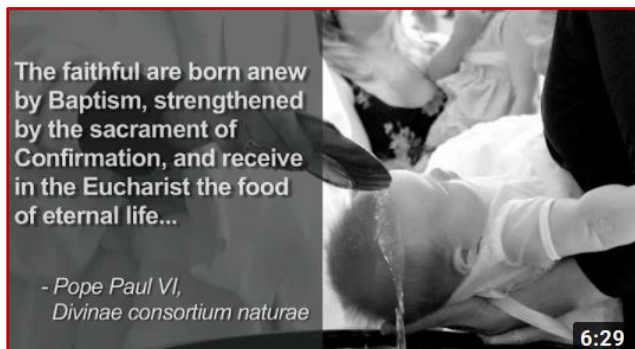
I wonder...

What piece of Scripture is most meaningful for you?

How might you design a Scripture card with your favourite verse?

Videos Baptism and Baptism of Jesus

For the videos included below, simply click on the links.



[Why do we baptise? \(Busted Halo\)](#)

Why exactly do Catholics have the practice of baptising infants? What is the purpose of Baptism? Do the godparents of the child need to be married to each other? These questions and more are answered in this edition of Sacraments 101. Suitable for teachers and may be suitable for some pupils in KS2.



[What is the Sacrament of Baptism \(Theo Matters\)](#)

Baptism is the first Sacrament: The entrance into the Catholic Church. In this Baptism, we are cleansed of original sin and made adopted children of God. But who can administer this Sacrament? Do we need it? Watch now for the answers to these questions and more. Suitable for teachers and may be suitable for some pupils in KS2.



[Baptism \(Sophia's Sketchpad\)](#)

This video uses sketches to explain the use of water in salvation history in the Old Testament and how this links to the New Testament and Baptism. It also explains how Original Sin affects us today and how we are saved through Christ's death and resurrection. Suitable for teachers and may be suitable for some pupils in KS2.



[Baptism \(Catholic Central\)](#)

What does it mean to be 'born again in the spirit'? 'Catholic Central: Baptism,' looks at the first sacrament, which is common to all Christians (Jesus was also baptised). Even outside of Christianity entering into, and emerging from, water is a universal symbol of renewed life, a way of being born again "of water and the spirit." Suitable for teachers and may be suitable for some pupils in KS2.



[Pope Francis on the meaning of Baptism](#)

Pope Francis spoke about the meaning of Baptism at his weekly general audience January 2015. As he speaks there are subtitles of his words and some visuals of him baptising a baby. Pope Francis talks about the words of Jesus and the transmission of faith through Baptism and how each one of us is a link in that chain. Suitable for teachers and may be suitable for some pupils in KS2.



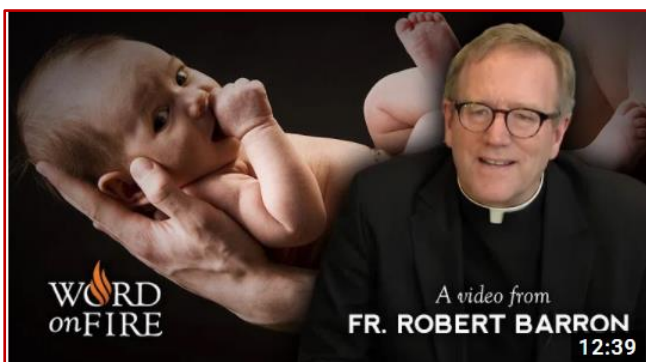
[Why was Jesus baptised? \(uCatholic\)](#)

Why was Jesus baptised if he was sinless and true God? Watch this short episode of Made for Glory as Father Michael Nixon discusses the Baptism of Christ. Suitable for teachers and may be suitable for some pupils in KS2.



[Baptism - Flame of Faith \(Archdiocese of Brisbane\)](#)

This video is an introduction to Baptism for children undertaking the sacramental program. It shows the Baptism of a baby and includes a commentary with key words and subtitles which makes it suitable for teaching. It is used for sacramental preparation in Brisbane. For more useful information see [here](#).



[Bishop Barron on being born again](#)

Another part of a video series from Wordonfire.org. Bishop Barron comments on subjects from modern day culture. Suitable for teachers only.



[Jesus Gets Baptised - Baptism of the Lord A \(Catholic Kids Media\)](#)

In this video a child reads the readings, psalm and Gospel for this feast and then gives a short homily on these. Suitable for pupils in KS2.



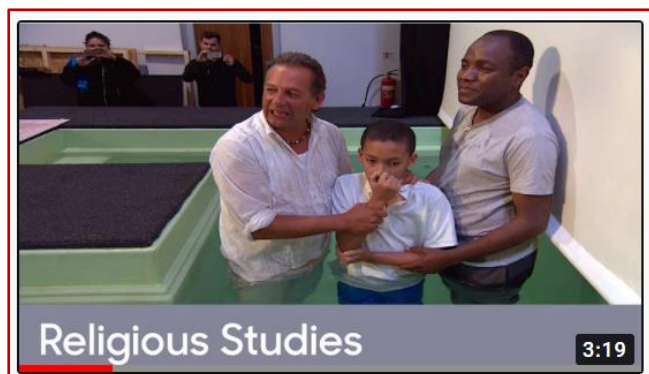
[Jesus Gets Baptised - Baptism of the Lord B \(Catholic Kids Media\)](#)

In this video a child reads the readings, psalm and Gospel for this feast and then gives a short homily on these. Suitable for pupils in KS2.



[Jesus Gets Baptised - Baptism of the Lord B \(Catholic Kids Media\)](#)

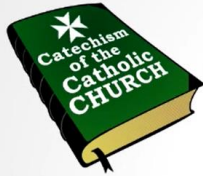
In this video a child reads the readings, psalm and Gospel for this feast and then gives a short homily on these. Suitable for pupils in KS2.



[What is a Christian Baptism? | Religious Studies - My Life, My Religion: Christianity \(BBC Teach\)](#)

Suitable for teaching 7-14s. Young Christians and church leaders explain the Baptism ceremony. It is an important celebration for Christians representing a commitment to the faith.

WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE OF BAPTISM FOR CATHOLICS?



[CCC 1213]

Baptism is the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit, & the door which gives access to the other sacraments. Through Baptism we are freed from sin & reborn as sons of God; we become members of Christ, are incorporated into the Church & made sharers in her mission.



Baptism is the 'Door' through which a person enters the Church and can share in other sacraments



Jesus said "no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the spirit"

Baptism saves a person from Sin, like the Ark saved Noah. It is a washing from Original Sin



Baptism means being in union with Christ's death & resurrection; being reborn into God's family



WHAT HAPPENS AT THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM?



Promises affirming their commitment to the Christian Faith (made by Parents on behalf of the child)

Water, poured over the head, represents washing from sin, and dying and rising again



Anointing with Oil representing spiritual strength and joining God's family



Candle: a symbol of Jesus, and the enlightenment Jesus brings



the sign of the cross as a sign of belonging to Christ

I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit

white garment as a symbol of purity from sin



These images were screenshots from Mr Millan REvises Baptism and Confirmation. Click [HERE](#) to see the YouTube video.

SHOULD BABIES BE BAPTISED?

CATHOLICS BELIEVE INFANT BAPTISM IS APPROPRIATE BECAUSE...



Some Protestants do not agree with infant baptism.

In Acts 16 households were baptised including children

a person must be old enough to make the promises themselves

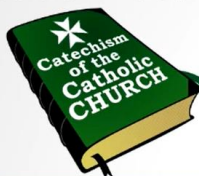
Baptism replaces circumcision, which means children are included in the new Covenant

Jesus said "believe and be baptised" in that order for a reason

Jesus made efforts to include Children in his ministry, so infant baptism makes sense

[CCC 1285]

WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE OF CONFIRMATION?



"confirmation is necessary for the completion of baptismal grace. For 'by the sacrament of Confirmation, the baptized are more perfectly bound to the Church & are enriched with a special strength of the Holy Spirit. Hence they are, as true witnesses of Christ, more strictly obliged to spread & defend the faith'"

the confirmand renews their own Baptismal Promises as a profession of their own faith



Anointing with Oil gives a person a 'seal' of the Spirit, uniting them with the Church



By the laying on of hands by a Bishop, a person receives the outpouring of the gifts of the Spirit



Confirmation is a "Personal Pentecost" receiving Power to proclaim their faith in public



The 'Seal' of the Holy Spirit marks an allegiance and "total belonging" to Christ in his service forever

These images were screenshots from the video Mr Millan REvises Baptism and Confirmation. Click [HERE](#) to see the YouTube video.



The Baptism of Jesus has inspired many artists all over the world for centuries. Below are links to a variety of artwork from early times until most recently. They have been specifically chosen to reflect different cultures, traditions and styles which have changed over time. This is to provide sufficient contrast so as to inspire discussion with pupils of different ages so that they can offer opinions and preferences linked to different sources where appropriate. Some of the links include reflections and further information while others stand alone. It is in no way an exhaustive list as there is a plethora of artwork available on the internet. A number of these images are much less well-known and more elusive. It is hoped that they will be useful for both teaching and prayer opportunities.

[Contemporary icons from Ukraine, Russia, Poland, Greece, and Romania](#)

[Baptism of Christ: China - He Qi; India - Solomon Raj](#)

[Baptism of Jesus \(mandala art from India, Brojoe Joseph\)](#)

[In the Name of the Father by Johnny-Myers - Black Art Depot](#)

[John baptises Jesus – Black/Mafa art](#)

[The Baptism of Christ-the earliest images](#)

[Baptism of Jesus - Scripture and some contemporary artwork](#)

[Ministry of Jesus - Baptism and Crucifixion](#)

Baptism of Jesus – The Liturgical Year

Although there are many different styles of artwork which reflect different cultures and changes throughout the centuries, the Scriptures, of course, do not change and the accounts of the Baptism of Jesus can be found in Matthew 3:13-17, Mark 1:9-11 and Luke 3:21-22.

The following pages contain some copyright-free images that can be used to promote discussion with pupils of all ages to develop their understanding and RE skills. Click [HERE](#) for larger images and the corresponding Scripture. In the Useful Videos section on p21 you will also find the Catholic Kids videos with the all readings associated with these. Some of these pieces are quite famous and there may be more information about them which you or your pupils could research; others will have little written about them.

[**Baptism of Jesus: Year A - p25**](#)







[**Baptism of Jesus: Year B - p26**](#)







[**Baptism of Jesus: Year C – p27**](#)

Here are some questions that could be used to promote discussion:

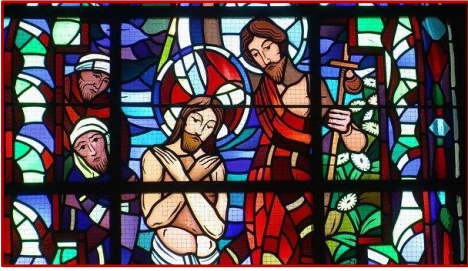
- What is happening in the picture? What do you think the artist is trying to tell us?
- Do you think it is a good representation of this Scripture piece? Why (not)?
- What colours are used? Why do you think the artist has used these?
- What symbols are used in the picture? (For example, for God and the Holy Spirit)?
- How does this image make you feel? Why?
- Does this piece of artwork remind you of any pieces of Scripture, hymns, prayers or other artwork?
- What questions would you like to have asked the artist?
- Which image is your favourite? Why?

<p>Title: Baptism of Christ Source: here Artist: Greco, 1541?-1614 Style: Classical</p>	
<p>Title: Baptism of Christ Source: here Artist: Jacopino Del Conte, 1541 Style: Classical</p>	
<p>Title: Baptism of Christ - Mosaic in Cappella Palatina di Palermo Source: here Artist: Unknown, 12th century Style: Classical</p>	
<p>Title: John Baptises Jesus Source: here Artist: Jesus MAFA Project Style: Contemporary</p>	
<p>Title: Baptism of Christ Notes: Stained-glass composition by J. Le Breton Source: here Attribution: Jacques Le Breton ; Jean Gaudin. Baptism of Christ, from Art in the Christian Tradition, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. http://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=51568 [retrieved December 28, 2016]. Original source: Collection of Anne Richardson Womack. Style: Contemporary</p>	
<p>John Baptises Jesus Source: Wikimedia Artist: English: Biblical illustrations by Jim Padgett, courtesy of Sweet Publishing, Ft. Worth, TX, and Gospel Light, Ventura, CA. Copyright 1984. Released under new license, CC-BY-SA 3.0 Style: Contemporary</p>	

<p>Title: Baptism of Christ</p> <p>Source: here</p> <p>Artist: Gérard David (ca. 1460-1523)</p> <p>License: Creative Commons Attribution Noncommercial ShareAlike 3.0</p> <p>Style: Classical</p>	
<p>The Baptism of Jesus</p> <p>Source: here</p> <p>Artist: Paolo Veronese (1528 – 1588)</p> <p>Style: Classical</p>	
<p>Title: Baptism of Christ - del Verrocchio and da Vinci</p> <p>Source: here</p> <p>Artist: Andrea del Verrocchio (1436–1488) and Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519)</p> <p>Style: Classical</p>	
<p>Title: Baptism of Jesus - Tissot</p> <p>Source: here</p> <p>Artist: James Tissot (1836–1902)</p> <p>Style: Classical</p>	
<p>Title: Baptism of the Lord</p> <p>Source: here</p> <p>Artist: Unknown - Painting, panel in Holy Cross Priory, Leicester, Great Britain</p> <p>Style: Contemporary</p>	
<p>Title: Baptism of Jesus</p> <p>Fresco from Cathédrale de Sainte Trinité (now destroyed) in Port-au-Prince, Haiti</p> <p>Source: here</p> <p>Artist: Castera Bazile (1950)</p> <p>Style: Contemporary</p>	

<p>Title: The Baptism of Christ - Patinir Source: Wikimedia Artist: Joachim Patinir (circa 1480-1524) Style: Classical</p>	
<p>Title: Baptism of Christ - Albani Source: Wikipedia Artist: Francesco Albani (1578–1660) Style: Classical</p>	
<p>Title: Baptism of Christ - Mantegna Source: Wikipedia Artist: Andrea Mantegna (1431–1506) Style: Classical</p>	
<p>Title: Triptych of Jan Des Trompes Source: Wikipedia Artist: Gerard David (circa 1450/1460–1523) Style: Classical</p>	
<p>Title: Baptism of Christ: Jesus is baptised in the Jordan River by John Source: here Artist: Davezelenka License: here Style: Contemporary</p>	
<p>Title: Baptism of Christ Source: http://www.pdimages.com/03317.html Artist: Visual by here Style: Line art</p>	

Baptism artwork



As Baptism is a significant Sacrament of Initiation for Christians of different denominations, it is represented in various pieces of art in original ways. While classical art and other detailed artwork can aid pupils' understanding of the theme, contemporary artwork can inspire them to create their own artwork which is more accessible and achievable. Below are some examples.

[Elizabeth Wang - Radiant Light - various images](#)

This website has many contemporary Catholic images and you can search by theme. Each image has a little description about it which is helpful.

[Jen Norton - Baptism](#)

The artist uses words and phrases in her artwork which often link to Scripture. Pupils could create their own artwork in this style.

[Contemporary art by Gloria Ssali](#)

This artwork uses colour, movement and symbols to illustrate the sacrament. Pupils could use this for discussion and create their own versions.

[Baptism into New Life by Lance Brown](#)

This image shows the person emerging from the water after Baptism. It is filled with emotion and intent which would encourage interesting discussion.

[Baptism of my 10 year old sister by Gabrielle Aimee Seguin](#)

This artist has created a portrait of her 10-year old sister made for her baptism ceremony. She wanted to depict the spiritual experience behind this religious initiation. A description of the piece is given by the artist.

[A Baptism in the River by Mirinda Reynolds](#)

This piece shows a lady being baptised in the river. Only the colours blue, green and white are used. The lady looks so peaceful it is as if she is dead. It could prompt questions and discussions and contrasts with other pieces.

[Emergence by Henry Blackmon](#)

This shows a Black boy who has happily and peacefully emerged from the waters of Baptism and is surrounded by colourful stained-glass. Again, it provides contrast as well as highlighting different practices of Baptism in Christianity.

[He so loved the world by Sister Rebecca Shinas](#)

This very bright and colourful piece shows Jesus being baptised by John and would be useful to use with the images included above, some of which also show eversion and Baptism in a river.

Baptism Arts and Crafts

Here are some ideas for arts and crafts for the very young to the very old.

[Stushie art: Baptism of Jesus art](#)

This artist uses bright colours and symbols to illustrate his themes. This website includes pieces to colour as well as to inspire. It is accessible for pupils of various ages and ability.

[Baptism symbols play dough mat](#)

This is a playdough mat using the different symbols of Baptism and is suitable for EYFS and KS1.

[El Salvadorian crosses including Baptism](#)

This shows crosses with a variety of designs such as the symbols of Baptism, Noah's ark and Christianity. They can be used to inspire pupils of all ages.

[Celebrate Baptism: Children of God craft](#)

This shows how to create a poster using craft materials showing the symbols of Baptism. Clear instructions are given with vocabulary associated with each symbol as well as a prayer.



[Crafts on the Baptism of Jesus](#)

This shows how to create mobile 'Holy Spirit: Dove' and 'Jesus is baptised' crafts. Clear instructions are given and they can be used with EYFS and KS1 pupils.

[Catholic Icing – Baptism of the Lord ideas including EYFS video](#)

Simple dove and Baptism crafts as well as Baptism of the Lord table crafts are suggested here along with quick facts about the event and an animated video. Useful for children of various ages in primary.

[Catholic Icing: ideas for teaching Catholic kids about Baptism](#)

Baptism gift and party ideas are given here along with instructions for various crafts. There are also links for free teaching resources (for home/school learning) including a video about a Baptism.

[The Religion Teacher Baptism activities](#)

This website includes various free links to resources including the following and various printable activities, games and crafts which can be used for learning at home and at school:



[Sacrament of Baptism Activities](#) (The Catholic Toolbox)

[Ideas for Teaching Kids about Baptism](#) (Catholic Icing)

[Guided Meditation on Our Baptisms](#) (Engaging Faith)

[Activities for the Feast of the Baptism of Christ](#) (Catholic Culture)

[Comparing Accounts of Jesus' Baptism](#) (Engaging Faith)

[Renewing Baptismal Promises Activity](#) (Look to Him and Be Radiant)

Top Ten ideas for using Baptism artwork

Here are some ideas that could be amended and adapted for different year groups.



1. Traffic Lights

Look at a variety of images on Baptism. Put a green dot beside the ones you like, red for the ones you dislike and amber for the others. Give a reason for giving red and green.

2. Spot the difference

Look at two different pieces of artwork of different styles. Spot how they are different from each other and a Gospel reading. What is missing in the artwork? See [Baptism of Jesus \(mandala art from India, Brojoe Joseph\)](#), [John baptises Jesus - Mafa art](#) and [The Baptism of Christ-the earliest images](#) for inspiration.

3. Culture Club

Look at artwork from different cultures and how they are similar to each other. Research other Baptism artwork from different cultures. See [Contemporary icons from Ukraine, Russia, Poland, Greece, and Romania](#) and [In the Name of the Father by Johnny-Myers - Black Art Depot](#) for inspiration.

4. Number One Hit

Look at some pieces of artwork from different periods in history in detail. Explain which one is your favourite and give reasons for this. Can you quote anyone famous you might agree or disagree with?

5. Word up!

Design your own piece of artwork in the style of [Jen Norton - Baptism](#) and incorporate some pieces of Scripture into the art.

6. Question Time

Look at a piece of art you haven't seen before. What questions do you have about the piece? Make a list of the questions and see if anyone else has the same questions as you. Can you think of what the answers to other people's questions might be? See [Baptism of Christ: China - He Qi](#); [India - Solomon Raj](#) for inspiration.

7. Get cross

Design a Baptism cross using signs and symbols of Baptism or a Baptism story in the Bible. See [El Salvadorian crosses including Baptism](#) for ideas.

8. Start from Scratch`

Design a piece of Baptism art by using a scratching technique. See [Stushie art: Baptism of Jesus art](#) for inspiration. Think carefully about what the colours and symbols represent.

9. Detective work

Look at one small piece of a picture without seeing the rest of it. Can you guess who is there and what is happening? Look a bigger snapshot to find more clues before you see the whole picture.

10. Let it flow

Look at a piece of Baptism art and then write a poem or song about the theme. Think about how Baptism might affect your life and others and how you are called to follow Christ.



I wonder...

Which piece of art helped you to engage most with learning about this sacrament?

Can you find inspiring pieces of artwork for Confirmation or other sacraments?

Sources

Images

All images from Pixabay

Books

All Bible references are from the New Revised Standard Version

Catechism of the Catholic Church

YouCat: Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church

Catholic Foundation Stones by Archbishop John Wilson and Fr Andrew Allman

Websites

<https://www.dummies.com/religion/christianity/catholicism/goes-catholic-baptism/> (What happens at a Baptism)

<https://www.togetheratonealtar.catholic.edu.au/craft/> (Signs and symbols)

<https://www.biblestudytools.com/topical-verses/bible-verses-about-baptism/> (30 verses about Baptism)

<https://www.liturgytools.net/> (Baptism of Jesus artwork Year A, B and C)

Other websites and videos used are included in the text.