

# *Celebrating Baptism*



*St Mary's & Ladychapel Parish, Maynooth*

# Our Child



place a  
photograph  
of your child  
here

*Name of Child* \_\_\_\_\_

*Date of Birth* \_\_\_\_\_

*Date of Baptism* \_\_\_\_\_

*Mother* \_\_\_\_\_

*Father* \_\_\_\_\_

*Godfather* \_\_\_\_\_

*Godmother* \_\_\_\_\_

*Celebrant* \_\_\_\_\_

# Welcome into the Christian Family

*Dear Parents,*

*We, the Catholic Community of Maynooth & Ladychapel, are happy to welcome your child into the Christian Family. The sacrament of Baptism is an action of Jesus Christ whereby your child begins to share in his risen life and in this way becomes a member of his Church. It is an important and joyful event for you and your child. It is also a day of happiness and celebration for our Parish and for the whole Church.*

*While Baptism is the beginning of new life in Christ for your child, it is our prayer that this life will grow and flourish in the years ahead. Moreover the seed of faith sown today needs to be cultivated in order to grow. This will require your love, your care and your example. The way you live, the way you love, your religious attitudes and practice, your faith and your prayer-life will all contribute to your child's formation. Through your witness, your child will experience what it means to be a Christian – a member of the Body of Christ, the Church.*

*Today your child begins a life-long journey of faith and love. Later, through reception of the sacraments of Holy Communion and Confirmation, your child will become a full member of the Church, living a Christ-like life and witnessing to him in the world. As parents, you are both privileged and graced with new responsibilities to nourish that Christ-life in your child. We will support you in this in whatever way we can.*

*Maynooth Baptismal Team*

## The Welcome

The ceremony begins towards the back of the Church – symbolising entry into the Christian Community. Parents are invited to accept responsibility for handing on the Christian way of life to their child.

*Celebrant* The Lord be with you

*All* **And also with you.**

*Celebrant* What name have you given your child?

*Parents* N.

*Celebrant* What do you ask of God's Church for N.?

*Parents* Baptism.

## The Commitment

*Celebrant* You have asked to have your child baptised. In doing so you are accepting the responsibility of training him/her in the living out of the faith.

Will you tell him/her about God our Father, Christ our Brother and the Spirit of love?

Will you teach him/her to pray?

*Parents* We will

*Celebrant* Are you ready to help these parents in their duty as Christian mothers and fathers.

*Godparents* We are

*"When we were baptised in Christ Jesus we were baptised into his death ... we went into the tomb with him and joined him in death, so that, as Christ was raised from the dead by the Father's glory, we might live a new life." (Rom: 6:34).*

*Celebrant* Do all of you here promise to offer these parents the support of a Community of Christian love and concern.

*All* We promise the support of the Christian community.

*Celebrant* I welcome this child on behalf of all in the Christian family and I make the Sign of the Cross to show that he/she belongs to Christ.

The celebrant invites the baptismal team, parents, godparents, family and friends to trace the Sign of the Cross on the child's forehead. The Sign of the Cross is a sign that the child is admitted to the community and is a sealing of the faith that has been expressed by the parents, godparents and friends.

## Celebration of God's Word

We listen to the Word of God which tells us what it means to be baptised.

### First Reading

*Reader* A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans.  
(Romans 6: 3-5)

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death? We were buried therefore 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.

The Word of the Lord.

*All* **Thanks be to God.**

*Baptism is administered to children, for it is a grace and a gift of God. It does not presuppose any human merit; children are baptised in the faith of the Church.*

## Responsorial Psalm

*Reader*      **The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.**

The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.  
Fresh and green are the pastures  
Where he gives me repose.  
Near restful waters he leads me,  
To revive my drooping spirit.

*All*              **The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.**

*Reader*      He guides me along the right path;  
He is true to his name.  
If I should walk in the valley of darkness  
No evil would I fear.  
You are there with your crook and your staff,  
With these you give me comfort.

*All*              **The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.**

*Reader*      You have prepared a banquet for me  
In the sight of my foes.  
My head you have anointed with oil;  
My cup is overflowing.

*All*              **The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.**

*Reader*      Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me  
All the days of my life,  
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell  
Forever and ever.

*All*              **The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.**

*Faith and Baptism are inseparable. Initiation into the Church of Christ must take place within the context of faith, otherwise the ritual becomes redundant. Hence the importance of parental preparation for this sacrament.*

## Alleluia

*All*

**Alleluia, Alleluia  
I am the light of the world, says the Lord,  
Anyone who follows me will have the light of life.  
Alleluia**

## Gospel

*Reader*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.  
(Matthew 28: 18-20)

*The apostles are sent to preach the Gospel  
and to baptise.*

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, baptising 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."

The Gospel of the Lord.

*All*

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

## Homily

The celebrant may explain something of the mystery of the sacrament of Baptism, e.g. a gateway into the Church; a dying and rebirth in Christ; a sharing in the risen life of Christ.

*There are three distinct stages in the journey of initiation into full membership of the Catholic Church. Baptism is the gateway to the sacraments, the beginning of new life. Confirmation is its strengthening. The Eucharist is its completion whereby we are nourished with Christ's body and blood for our transformation in Christ.*

## Prayer of the Faithful

Families may wish to use their own prayers either in place of, or in addition to those below.

*Celebrant* Let us now ask Our Lord Jesus Christ to look with love on these children to be baptised, on their parents, godparents, family and friends.

*Reader* By the mystery of your death and resurrection, bathe these children in light, give them the new life of Baptism and welcome them into your holy Church. Lord hear us.

*All* **Lord graciously hear us.**

*Reader* Through Baptism and Confirmation, make these children your faithful followers and witnesses to your gospel. Lord hear us.

*All* **Lord graciously hear us.**

*Reader* Lead these children by a holy life to the joys of God's Kingdom. Lord hear us.

*All* **Lord graciously hear us.**

*Reader* Help to make the lives of their parents, godparents and family examples of faith to inspire them. Lord hear us.

*All* **Lord graciously hear us.**

*Reader* We thank you for our parents and all who handed on the faith to us. Lord hear us.

*All* **Lord graciously hear us.**

*Reader* Renew the grace of our Baptism in each one of us. Lord hear us.

*All* **Lord graciously hear us.**

*So that Baptism may clearly appear as the sacrament of the Church's faith and of admittance into the people of God, it is normally celebrated in the parish church. Baptism is only celebrated in a private home with the Archbishop's permission.*

*Celebrant* We conclude our Prayer of the Faithful by invoking the Saints

*Celebrant* Holy Mary, Mother of God     *All* **Pray for us**  
 Saint John the Baptist     **Pray for us**  
 Saint Joseph     **Pray for us**  
 Saints Peter and Paul     **Pray for us**  
 Saint Patrick     **Pray for us**  
 Saint Brigid     **Pray for us**  
 (Insert here the names of those being baptised)

## Prayer of exorcism or protection

Life is often a struggle between good and evil. We ask God to protect these children and to help them to do what is right. When we are born, whether we like it or not, we commence a struggle between good and evil which will go on all our lives. This is a prayer for the protection of these children in that struggle.

*Celebrant* Almighty God, you sent your only Son to rescue us from the slavery of sin and to give us the freedom only your sons and daughters enjoy. We now pray for these children who will have to face the world and its temptations. Your Son died and rose again to save us. By his victory over sin and death bring these children out of the power of darkness. Strengthen them with the grace of Christ and watch over them at every step of life's journey. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

*All* **Amen**

*Baptism is conferred in a communal celebration for all the recently born children of the parish. Initiation into the Church is deeply personal but is never a private family affair.*

## The Anointing Before Baptism

The gladiator's body was rubbed with oil to strengthen and prepare him for the struggle ahead. This prevented the enemy from getting hold of him. These children are anointed on the breast with Oil of Catechumens to protect them from harm and strengthen them to grow and live as Christians.

*Celebrant & Baptismal Team* We anoint you with the oil of salvation in the name of Christ our Saviour. May he strengthen you with his power, who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

*All* **Amen**

At this stage in our ceremony, the Liturgy of the Word and preparatory rites have been completed. In the early Church this process would have taken two to three years for adults after which they could apply for Baptism. If they were found to be living in accordance with Gospel values and as disciples of Christ they would be admitted to Baptism at the Easter vigil. The procession or pilgrimage to the font symbolises that earlier journey.

## Procession to Font

The families and friends now process to the front of the Church where the Baptismal Font is located.

*Celebrant* Our Christian life is a journey to our true home in Heaven. We are a pilgrim people moving towards the promised land.

*Through Baptism your child is freed and purified from Original Sin. Before Baptism every person, child or adult, bears the mark of sin and the consequences of evil.*



# Celebration of the Sacrament of Baptism

## Blessing of Baptismal Water

*Celebrant* My dear brothers and sisters, God blesses this water to give his divine life to those who believe in him. Let us turn to him, and ask him to pour his gift of life from this font on the children he has chosen.

## A Prayer of praise and thanks

*Celebrant* Praise to you Almighty God and Father for you created water to cleanse and to give life.

*All* **Blessed be to God**

*Through Baptism your child is reborn into a new life in Christ and becomes an adopted child of the Father through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Your child will share in Christ's risen life and becomes a sharer in the Church's mission.*

*Celebrant* Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, the Father's only Son, for you offered yourself on the cross, that in the blood and water flowing from your side, and through your death and resurrection, the Church might be born.

*All* **Blessed be to God**

*Celebrant* Praise to you God the Holy Spirit for you anointed Christ at his Baptism in the waters of the Jordan, so that we might all be baptised into you.

*All* **Blessed be to God**

### **Prayer of Intercession**

*Celebrant* Come to us Lord, Father of all, and make holy this water which you have created, so that all who are baptised in it may be washed clean of sin and be born again to live as your children.

*All* **Hear us Lord**

*(For the remaining intercessions, the celebrant touches the holy water to signify the coming of the Holy Spirit).*

*Celebrant* Make this water holy, Lord, so that all who are baptised into Christ's death and resurrection may become more perfectly like your Son.

*All* **Hear us Lord**

*Celebrant* Lord, make holy this water which you have created so that all those whom you have chosen may be born again by the power of the Holy Spirit and may take their place among your holy people.

*All* **Hear us Lord**

*Through Baptism your child becomes a member of Christ's body, the Church.*

*Celebrant* You have called your children, to this cleansing water that they may share in the faith of your Church and have eternal life. By the mystery of this consecrated water lead them to a new and spiritual birth. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

*All* **Amen**

*The blessed water is solemnly poured into the Font in silence.*

### **Renunciation of Sin and Profession of Faith**

*Celebrant* Dear parents, godparents and friends, you have asked to have these children baptised. By water and the Holy Spirit, they will receive the gift of new life from God who is love. It will be your constant care to bring them up in the practice of the faith. Baptism is parents' day too, since you publicly promise to hand on the faith to your child.

If your faith makes you ready to accept this responsibility, we ask you to renew the vows of your own Baptism. Reject sin, profess your faith in Christ Jesus. This is the faith of the Church. This is the faith in which these children are about to be baptised.

*Celebrant* Do you reject Satan and all his works and all his empty promises?

*All* **I do**

*Celebrant* Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth?

*All* **I do**

*Through Baptism, your child is incorporated into the communal life of the Church, sharing in the priesthood of Christ and becoming one with all fellow members.*

*Celebrant* Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified, died and was buried, rose from the dead, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father?

*All* **I do**

*Celebrant* Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting?

*All* **I do**

*Celebrant* This is our faith, this is the faith of the Church. We are proud to profess it in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

*All* **Amen**

## Baptism – The Water of New Life

*Celebrant* Is it your will that N should be baptised in the faith of the Church, which we have professed with you.

*Parents & Godparents* It is.

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

*Celebrant invites all those at Font to dip their hand into the Baptismal Water and bless themselves to recall and renew their own Baptism.*

*Through Baptism, your child receives on their soul an indelible spiritual sign, the character of which consecrates the baptised person for Christian worship. Therefore, Baptism cannot ever be cancelled or repeated.*

## Anointing with Chrism

*Immediately after the Baptism with water the child's head is anointed with the Oil of Chrism. This second anointing is a sign of a special calling through the coming of the Holy Spirit. Jesus was anointed at his Baptism and given a special calling to bring about the Kingdom of God. Every Christian shares this calling – to build up the Kingdom of Love, Justice and Peace in our world.*

*Celebrant* God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, has freed you from sin, given you a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit and welcomed you into his holy people. He now anoints you with the Chrism of Salvation.

*Baptismal Team* As Christ was anointed Priest, Prophet and King, so may you live always as a member of his Body, sharing everlasting life.

*All* **Amen**

## Clothing with White Garment

*After Baptism, the first Christians wore white clothes for a week to show that they had taken on a new way of life. The white garment is put around the child by the Godmother.*

*Celebrant* You have become a new creation and have clothed yourself in Christ. See in this white garment the outward sign of your Christian dignity. With your parents, your family and your friends to help you by word and example, may you bring that dignity unstained into the everlasting life of heaven.

*All* **Amen**

*Parents have great latitude in naming their child but are encouraged to choose a name which is not foreign to Christian sentiment.*

## Receiving the Light of Christ

The Godfather lights the child's Baptismal Candle from the Paschal Candle. The Paschal Candle is the large studded candle which represents the Risen Christ with the marks of his five wounds. The Baptismal Candle is a sign that the Risen Christ now shares his life and love with these newly baptised children. Their parents and families nurture and foster this Christian life and love by the caring, sharing, forgiving and guidance the child will receive at home.

*Celebrant* Receive the light of Christ.

Parents and godparents, this light is entrusted to you to be kept burning brightly. Your children have been enlightened by Christ. May they walk as children of light. May the flame of faith be alive in their hearts. When the Lord comes may they meet him with all the saints in heaven.

## Prayer over ears and mouth

Finally, the celebrant blesses the ears and mouth of the child. Christ cured a deaf and dumb person by touch so that he could hear God's word and later proclaim it. This gesture indicates that Christ will, initially through the parents, do the same for these children.

*Celebrant & Baptismal Team* The Lord Jesus made the deaf hear and the dumb speak. May he soon touch your ears to receive his Word and your mouth to proclaim his faith, to the praise and glory of God, the Father.

*All* **Amen**

*One sponsor (godparent), male or female, is sufficient for an infant's Baptism. If there are two, they should be male and female.*

## Conclusion of the Rite

*Celebrant* Dear Friends,

These children have been christened and are now called children of God. It is the beginning of the journey of life for them. Please God you will have the joy of being with your child on first Communion day and see your child take on mature christian living on Confirmation day, when the fullness of God's Spirit is given.

Let us pray together as children of God's family

**Our Father, ...**

## The Blessings

For the Mother

Celebrant may invite mother and child to the altar for a final blessing. This special blessing replaces an older and often misunderstood practice of the churching of women after child birth. In reality, it is a prayer of thanksgiving for their child's safe delivery.

*Celebrant* May God, the source of all life and love, who fills the hearts of mothers with love for their children, bless the mothers of these newly baptised children as they thank God for their safe deliveries. May each of you have joy in the love, growth and holiness of your child.

*All* **Amen**

*Just as there is only one natural mother and one natural father, so an infant can have only one godmother and one godfather. This maintains the gender symbolism of parenthood which represents the child's re-birth into the new life in Christ.*

### For the Father

*Celebrant* God is the giver of all life, human and divine.  
 May he bless you the fathers of these newly baptised children. With their mothers you will be the first teachers of these children in the ways of faith.  
 May you be the best of teachers, bearing witness to the faith by what you say and do.

*All* **Amen**

### For the Godparents, Grandparents and Friends

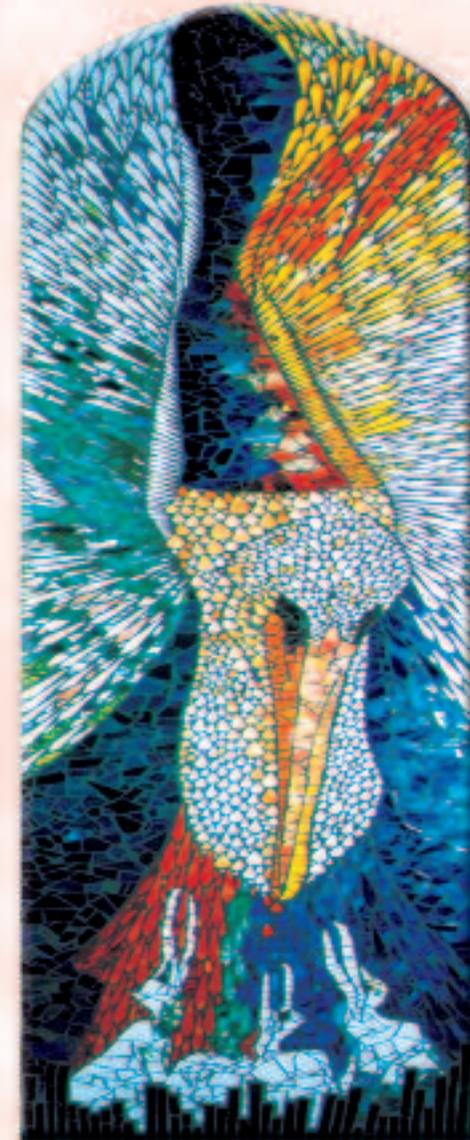
*Celebrant* I bless the godparents and grandparents here today. The godparents and baptismal team represent the believing community into which these children have been baptised. The grandparents are the source of our own faith and represent the great tradition of handing on the faith in the Church which is linked back to Christ and the apostles. May the friendship and prayers of godparents, grandparents, friends and our parish community be loving supports to these children and their families throughout their lives.

*All* **Amen**

*Celebrant* May Almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

*All* **Amen**

*A godparent is appointed by the parents of the child, or failing that, by the Parish Priest. Parents are encouraged to choose a suitable person who has the intention of fulfilling the role. Godparents should be at least 16 years of age, be confirmed Catholics and be actively practising their faith.*



*According to legend the pelican feeds its young with its own blood and revivifies them. St. Augustine used the pelican as a symbol of Christ our Redeemer, who ascended the Cross for us and through the shedding of his blood gave us new life through Baptism.*



*St Mary's & Ladychapel Parish, Maynooth*