



# Saint Paul

## the Apostle



Baptism is birth into the new life in Christ. In accordance with the Lord's will, it is necessary for salvation, as is the Church, which we enter by Baptism (Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) 1277)

In the Gospel of John, Jesus tells Nicodemus, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). Baptism is the first of seven sacraments a Christian receives. It is the gateway to life in the Spirit and the door which gives access to the other sacraments. Through Baptism we are freed from sin and reborn as children of God. We become members of Christ. We are incorporated into the Church and made sharers in her mission. Baptism is the sacrament of regeneration through water in the word (CCC 1213).

The Catechism tells us that "the sacraments confer the grace that they signify" (CCC 1127). This means that Baptism is not just a symbol of cleansing and rebirth; it actually bestows those graces on the one being baptized.

All throughout scripture we see water being used to represent cleansing and new life. Below are a few examples:

- Creation starts with the Holy Spirit moving over the water; connection between life giving water and the Holy Spirit, the giver of life
- Adam and Eve's sin brings death into the story – original sin means, we are born without supernatural life
- The story of salvation is the story of everything God has done to bring his people back into union with him
- The story of Noah and his family – God uses water to give humanity a fresh start

- The story of Moses being drawn from the waters of the Nile as an infant and he leads Israel out of slavery in Egypt through the waters of the Red Sea – this is a type of Baptism (CCC 1221)
- John the Baptist’s Baptism of repentance – our Lord voluntarily submitted himself to the baptism of John, intended for sinners, in order to “fulfill all righteousness”. Jesus’ gesture is a manifestation of his self-emptying. The Spirit who had hovered over the waters of the first creation descended then on the Christ as a prelude of the new creation, and the Father revealed Jesus as his “beloved Son” (CCC 124)
- Jesus sees his crucifixion as a kind of baptism - The blood and water that flowed from the pierced side of the crucified Jesus are types of Baptism and the Eucharist, the sacraments of new life. St Paul sees our baptism as a participation in Christ’s death.



### **What does Baptized do for us and why is it important?**

- Jesus himself affirms that Baptism is necessary for salvation for those to whom the Gospel has been proclaimed.
- All sins are forgiven, original sin and all personal sins, as well as all punishment for sin. In those who have been reborn nothing remains that would stop their entry into the kingdom of God, neither Adam’s sin, nor personal sin, nor the consequences of sin, the gravest of which is separation from God (CCC 1263)
- Baptism not only purifies from all sins, but also makes us adopted children of God. We become a partaker of the divine nature, member of Christ and co-heir with him and a temple of the Holy Spirit (CCC 1265)
- Leaves an indelible spiritual mark incorporated into Christ by Baptism, the person baptized is configured to Christ. Baptism seals the person with the indelible spiritual mark of their belonging to Christ. No sin can erase this mark. Given once for all, Baptism cannot be repeated.

### **What is next after Baptism?**

- We are not baptized into a dead faith

- Baptism makes us members of the Body of Christ. As we are configured to Christ, we transition into the christening as Priest, Prophet, and King.

Priest is someone who gives God right praise. Every baptized person has been given the privilege of giving praise to God. Every time you come to mass, every time you pray, every time you make an act of sacrifice, you are acting out your priestly identity as a baptized person.

Prophet is someone who speaks the divine truth. Every baptized person is meant to be a prophet in your family, among your friends, in your place of work, in your public and private life. As a prophet, we need to boldly and publicly proclaim our faith. Not just with our words, but by how you live your life.



King is someone who is sent on missions to build up the kingdom. We are called to exercise our kingly office in our leadership of temporal affairs, acting as Christ would. Jesus gave his life to conquer sin and death, to bring resurrection and new life. By bringing Christ's leadership and governance in our own life, we offer renewal and new life where it is most needed.

### Symbols of Baptism

- Parents – Just as God saved his people Israel from Slavery in Egypt by the waters of the Red Sea, God wants to give your child a life of freedom in Him through the waters of Baptism. By seeking baptism for your child, you are God's instrument leading your child to freedom and new life, as Moses led the Israelites. It is God who saves, but as a parent choosing Baptism for your child, you have a unique and precious role to play, both now and after the Baptism.
- Godparents – In the Exodus, God brought his people to the promised land with many signs and wonders. He also used many human leaders to teach and guide his people. Moses led the people and gave them God's law. Moses' brother Aaron led the people in worship as High Priest. Moses' sister Miriam led the people in praising God as a prophetess. At God's

command, Moses appointed 70 elders to help him govern the people in the wilderness. By agreeing to be a godparent, you are answering the call to guide and protect the newly baptized as God's chosen leaders guided the Israelites during the Exodus.

- Sign of the cross, on the threshold of the celebration, marks with the imprints of Christ the one who is going to belong to him and signifies the grace of the redemption Christ won for us by his cross (CCC 1235)
- The baptismal water is consecrated by a prayer of epiclesis either at this moment or at the Easter Vigil). The Church asks God that through his Son the power of the Holy Spirit may be sent upon the water, so that those who will be baptized in it may be born of water and the Spirit (CCC 1238)
- Anointing with sacred chrism, perfumed oil consecrated by the bishop, signifies the gift of the Holy Spirit to the newly baptized, who has become a Christian, that is, one anointed by the Holy Spirit, incorporated into Christ who is anointed priest, prophet, and king (CCC 1241)
- The white garment symbolizes that the person baptized has “put on Christ”, has risen with Christ.
- The candle, lit from the Easter candle, signifies that Christ has enlightened the new creation. In him the baptized are “the light of the world”.
- The newly baptized is now a child of God entitled to say the prayer that our Lord taught us: “Our Father”.



### Play video

[Bishop Barron on the Sacrament of Baptism](#)