
Mystery

On behalf of the Christian Community of the parish of Aughanishin, we congratulate you on the birth of your child. For most parents, the birth of a child is one of the most profound and special experiences they will ever have. Many will tell you that, 'miracle', or 'mystery', are the only words that even come close to describing what it is like to give birth to (or be present for the birth of) your own child. The first few days and weeks are an exhausting time for new mothers and fathers, as they come to terms with the awesome responsibility of rearing this dependant, and often very demanding, little human being. However, most will also agree that the experience of birth itself puts them in touch with the miracle of life, gives them a little glimpse of that deep mystery, whom, we believe, is at the heart of all creation, the God of Life.

The fact that the birth of a child is such a mysterious experience is known instinctively by people whose first question after hearing of the birth is often, ... 'And are the mother and child well?'. For we know intuitively that such miracles can never be taken for granted, despite all our modern and technological advances. When you come here today to present your child for *Baptism*, this gift of new life which you bring, and, which we are reminded of in seeing you here, is the first thing we acknowledge and celebrate in this holy place.



Naming

Although we all enjoy seeing a resemblance between a newborn and its parents or relatives, one of the next most important things we celebrate here today is the uniqueness of this child. To signify that distinctiveness, like every human community in the world, we give due care and attention to choosing a name for this child. Today, you will call out that name in public and it will mark a crucial stage in the development of this young child's unique identity in the world. However, you have chosen to do even more than this - you have chosen to name your child in this holy place of Christian worship, because you also want your child to have a Christian identity. You want your child to be *baptised*, and so join you in the challenging task of living as Christian disciples.

The Challenge of being Christian Disciples

To become Christian is to stand for some things and against others. On the child's behalf we will list some of those things during the ceremony. Becoming Christian is also about acknowledging God's presence in the world and God's care for all humanity in the way we treat our family, neighbours, community, world, and even our enemies. It is about caring especially for those most in need, doing all we can to ensure that everyone has 'their daily bread', and it is about forgiving those who trespass against us. Indeed it is such a difficult challenge, and so different from what most other media encourage us to desire, that we can only do it with the support and help of a Christian community. And today the people you have chosen to be Godparents for your child represent the local community here. As believers, they too know the challenges of this way of life, and they are committed to helping you raise your child in the best teachings and practices of Christianity.

Reception of the Child

The celebrating priest greets you and shares the joy you feel and reminds you that God, the source of life, now wishes to bestow his own life on this little one. He welcomes your child into the Christian community.

First the celebrant questions you with these or similar words:

Celebrant: What name do you give your child?

Parents: Name.

Celebrant: What do you ask of God's Church for

Parents: Baptism.

The celebrant speaks to you with these words:

Celebrant: You have asked to have your child baptised. In doing so you are accepting the responsibility of training her/him in the practice of faith. It is your duty to bring her/him up to keep God's commandments as Christ taught us, by loving God and our neighbour. Do you clearly understand what you are undertaking?

Parents: We do.

Then the celebrant turns to the godparents and addresses them in these words:

Celebrant: Are you ready to help the parents of this child in their duty as Christian parents?

Godparents: We are.

He turns to the child:

Celebrant: Name, the Christian community welcomes you with great joy. In its name I claim you for Christ our Saviour by the sign of his cross. I now trace the cross on your forehead, and invite your parents (and godparents) to do the same.

He signs the child on the forehead, in silence.

Then he invites you and the godparents to do the same.

Celebration of God's Word

The readings and preaching of God's word will stimulate your faith and your acceptance of the responsibilities of Baptism. In the living faith of the Church, made alive by you and those present, your child will be baptised and from it will in due course draw his own faith.

*The celebrant invites you, the godparents and others, to take part in the Liturgy of the Word. One or even two of the following passages, are read during which all may sit if convenient.
(Alternative readings may also be chosen.)*

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Philippians (1:3-6;8-11)
Be pure and blameless for the day of Christ.

Every time I pray for all of you, I pray with joy, remembering how you have helped to spread the Good News from the day you first heard it right up to the present. I am quite certain that the One who began this good work in you will see that it is finished when the day of Christ Jesus comes. God knows how much I miss you all, loving you as Christ Jesus loves you. My prayer is that your love for each other may increase more and more and never stop improving your knowledge and deepening your perception so that you can always recognise what is best. This will help you to become pure and blameless, and prepare you for the Day of Christ, when you will reach the perfect goodness which Jesus Christ produces in us for the glory and praise of God.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.



A reading from the letter to the Hebrews (10:22-25)

Our minds sprinkled and free from any trace of bad conscience, our bodies washed with pure water.

Let us be sincere in heart and filled with faith, our minds sprinkled and free from any trace of bad conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us keep firm in the hope we profess, because the one who made the promise is faithful. Let us be concerned for each other, to stir a response in love and good works. Do not stay away from the meetings of the community, as some do, but encourage each other to go; the more so as you see the day drawing near.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Ephesians. (4:1-6)

One Lord, one faith, one baptism

I, Paul, implore you to lead a life worthy of your vocation. Bear with one another charitably, in complete selflessness, gentleness and patience. Do all you can to preserve the unity of the Spirit by the peace that binds you together. There is one Body, one Spirit, just as you were all called into one and the same hope when you were called. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God who is Father of all, over all, through all and within all.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Colossians (3:12-17)

Over all these, to keep them together and complete them, put on love.

You are God's chosen race, his saints; he loves you, and you should be clothed in sincere compassion, in kindness and humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with one another; forgive each other as soon as a quarrel begins. The Lord has forgiven you; now you

must do the same. Over all these clothes, to keep them together and complete them, put on love. And may the peace of Christ reign in your hearts, because it is for this that you were called together as parts of one body. Always be thankful.

Let the message of Christ, in all its richness, find a home with you. Teach each other, and advise each other, in all wisdom. With gratitude in your hearts sing psalms and hymns and inspired songs to God and never say or do anything except in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

(Ps120.R.v.2)

R - My help shall come from the Lord.

I lift up my eyes to the mountains:
From where shall come my help?
My help shall come from the Lord
Who made heaven and earth.

May he never allow you to stumble!
Let him sleep not, you guard,
No, he sleeps not nor slumbers,
Israel's guard.

The Lord is your guard and your shade;
At your right hand he stands.
By day the sun shall not smite you
Nor the moon in the night.

The Lord will guard you from evil,
He will guard your soul.
The Lord will guard your going and coming
Both now and for ever.

R - *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.

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.

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

Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me
all the days of my life.
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell
for ever and ever.

(Alternative psalms may be chosen.)

Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!
There is one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism
and one God and Father.
Alleluia.

Gospel 1

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John (15:9-11)

Jesus said to his disciples:

‘As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my own joy may be in you and your joy be complete.’

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel 2

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

Jesus came up and spoke to his disciples. He said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations, baptise them in the name of Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you. And know that I am with you always; yes to the end of time.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel 3

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark (1:9-11)

Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptised in the Jordan by John. No sooner had he come up out of the water than he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit, like a dove, descending upon him. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on you.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel 4

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark (10:13-16)

People were bringing little children to Jesus, for him to bless them. The disciples turned them away, but when Jesus saw this he was indignant and said to them, 'Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. I tell you solemnly, anyone who does not welcome the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.' Then he put his arms round them, laid his hands on them and gave them his blessing.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel 5

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

(5:13-16)

You are the salt of the earth. But if salt has lost its taste, how can it be made salty again? It has become useless. It can only be thrown away and people will trample on it.

You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and covers it; instead he puts it on a lamp stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way your light must shine before others, so that they may see the good you do and praise your Father in Heaven .

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Homily

The celebrant will now speak to you about the mystery of Baptism and will encourage you to accept the responsibilities which arise from the sacrament.

Intercessions (Prayer of the Faithful)

*(There are a number of prayers suitable for children
at the back of this booklet)*

Celebrant: Let us on this happy day ask God our Father to look lovingly on this child/children who is/are to be baptised, and on the parents and godparents and all present.

Reader: God of Life and of all Creation, we ask your blessing on this child / these children (Name all children that are being baptised) May s/he / they grow strong, loving and confident, assured of her/his/their unique identity in the world. Lord hear us.

Response: Lord , graciously hear us.

Reader: Lord of Life, this day (Name all children that are being baptised) is/are baptised into God's family, the human family. We pray that she/he/they may be provided with healthy and wholesome opportunities to grow and develop into a wise and loving human being. Lord hear us.

Response: Lord , graciously hear us.

Reader: Lord of Love, we ask special blessing upon the parent/parents of this child / these children as they take on the joys and struggles of their responsibilities for her/his/their daily care, love and development. May they come to know the deep wellspring of your love as they respond to a lifetime of challenges ahead. Lord hear us.

Response: Lord , graciously hear us.

Reader: Lord of All, we ask blessing on those gathered here today for this celebration and on all those who will touch the life / lives of (Name all children that are being baptised) in the months and years to come, her/his/their Godparents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins. May they be good role models for (Name all children that are being baptised) in the way they honestly engage in the struggle of being faithful, Christian disciples. Lord hear us.

Response: Lord , graciously hear us.

Reader: Lord of Life and Goodness, we know that without faith in you, our world would be an even darker place. Inspire each of us this day to re-commit ourselves to bring the forgiving, peaceful light of Christ into the dark recesses of our own hearts, homes and communities. May we find there the courage, hope and perseverance to live as Jesus lived. Lord hear us.

Response: Lord , graciously hear us.

Reader: Lord of Resurrection and Life, we ask your peace on those who have died, for and other relations and friends whom we have known and loved. May they find fulfilment in the journey beyond this life. Lord hear us.

Response: Lord , graciously hear us.

Celebrant: Since a great number of the Christian Family is in heaven we call on the Saints:

Holy Mother of God	(All) pray for us
St. John the Baptist	pray for us
St. Joseph	pray for us
Saints Peter and Paul	pray for us
St. Patrick and St. Brigid	pray for us
All you saints of God	pray for us

Anointing

Celebrant: Almighty God, you sent your only Son to rescue us from the slavery of sin, and to give us the freedom that only your sons and daughters enjoy.

We pray now for this child
who will have to face the world with its temptations.
Your son died and rose again to save us.

By his victory over sin and death,
bring this child into his light.
Strengthen her/him with the Grace of Christ,
and watch over her/him at every step in life's journey.
We ask this though Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Oil suggests strength, energy and power. It is used in baptism as a symbol of the strength of Christ which will be with your child.

Celebrant: 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.

Response: Amen

He anoints your child on the breast with the oil of catechumens.

Celebration of the Sacrament

At the font, the celebrant blesses the water in which your child will be baptised. People cannot live and crops cannot grow without water. The blessing will remind you of the wonderful work of God whose plan it is to sanctify us, body and soul, through water. In baptism, through water and the Holy Spirit, your child will be born again from above and will receive new life, the life of grace.

Celebrant: Father, God of mercy, through these waters of baptism you have filled us with new life as your very own children.

All: Blessed be God.

Celebrant: From all who are baptised in water and the Holy Spirit, you have formed one people, united in your Son, Jesus Christ.

All: Blessed be God.

Celebrant: You have set us free and filled our hearts with the Spirit of your love, that we may live in peace.

All: Blessed be God.

Celebrant: You call those who have been baptised to announce the Good News of Jesus Christ to people everywhere.

All: Blessed be God.

Celebrant: You called your child N., to this cleansing water and new birth that by sharing the faith of your Church they might have eternal life. Bless + this water in which they will be baptised. We ask this in the name of Christ the Lord.

All: Amen.

If the baptismal water has already been blessed, the celebrant omits this last prayer and says:

Celebrant: You called your child N., 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 her/him to a new and spiritual birth. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Renunciation of Sin and Profession of Faith

Before your child receives the gift of new life in baptism, as parents and godparents, you are asked to accept the responsibility of handing on to her/him your own Christian beliefs so that she/he may ultimately accept for her/himself the faith in which she/he has been baptised.

Celebrant: Dear parents and godparents:

You have come to present this child for baptism. By water and the Holy Spirit she/he is to receive the gift of new life from God, who is love.

On your part, you must make it your constant care to bring her/him up in the practice of the faith. See that the divine life which God gives her/him is kept safe from the poison of sin, to always grow

stronger in her/his heart.

If your faith makes you ready to accept this responsibility, renew now 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 this child is about to be baptised.

The celebrant asks the congregation to reject sin. Be determined that sin will have no place in your family life.

Celebrant: Do you reject evil in all its forms?

All: I do.

Celebrant: Do you reject selfishness and greed?

All: I do.

Celebrant: Do you reject violence and injustice?

All: I do.

Celebrant: Do you believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth?

All: I do.

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: We believe that this child is a daughter/son of the Father, a sister/brother of Jesus Christ and filled with the Holy Spirit. May this child be helped by all of us who profess the same faith, to think of others in life, to work for others and to be a good neighbour, and to grow in faith.

Response: Amen.

Baptism

At this central moment of baptism, Christ is present and acting as truly as he is at the consecration of the Mass.

The mother or father holds the child; it is sufficient for the godparents to stand close by; they do not have to touch the child during the actual baptism.

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

Parents and godparents: It is.

He baptises the child saying:

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

He pours water upon the child.



Ceremonies After Baptism

Effects of Baptism are expressed in four symbolic actions.

Anointing with Oil of Chrism

Your child is anointed on the crown of the head with the oil of chrism. She/He is now a Christian: an anointed person. She/He shares in the work of Christ, the Priest, Prophet, and King.

Celebrant: God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has freed us from sin, given us a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, and welcomed us into his holy people.

The Celebrant now addresses the child.

He now anoints you with the chrism of salvation. As Christ was anointed Priest, Prophet and King, so may you live always as a member of his body, sharing everlasting life.

Amen.

Then the celebrant anoints your child on the crown of the head with the sacred chrism, in silence.

Clothing with the White Garment

The clothing symbolises his new Christian dignity: A new garment for a 'new person', and white for his innocence.

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

Response: Amen.



The Lighted Candle

The paschal candle represents the risen Christ, the Light of the World. He overcame death and sin as light overcomes darkness. The small candle lighted from the paschal candle and held by the father or by a godparent for your child, is a sign that Christ shares his life and love with your child. At home you will foster and encourage this life and love.

The celebrant takes the paschal candle and says:

Celebrant: Receive the light of Christ.

Someone from the family (such as the father or godfather) lights the child's candle from the paschal candle.

Celebrant: Parents and godparents, this light is entrusted to you to be kept burning brightly. Your child has been enlightened by Christ. She/He is to walk always as a child of the light. May she/he keep the flame of faith alive in her/his heart. When the Lord comes, may she/he go out to meet him with all the great saints in the heavenly kingdom.

The Touching ~ The Rite of Ephphetha

As once our Lord did, so now the celebrant touches the ears and mouth; a symbolic way of saying that your child's ears and mouth have been opened to hear and in due course to speak the word of God.

Celebrant: 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.

Response: Amen.

Conclusion of the Rite

Celebrant: Dear friends,

This child has been Christened and is now called a child of God. It is the beginning of the journey of life. Please God you will have the joy of being with this 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.

All: Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy Name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day, our daily bread,
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.

Amen



Blessing

Blessing for the Mother

Celebrant: May God, the source of life and love, who fills the hearts of mothers with love for their children, bless you on this day. As you give thanks to God today may you find joy in the love, growth and holiness of your child.

Blessing for the Father

Celebrant: God is the giver of all life, human and divine. May he bless the father of this child. As you give thanks to God today may you find joy in the love, growth and holiness of your child.

Blessing for Parents

Celebrant: You as parents will be the first teachers of your child in the ways of the Faith. May you also be the best of teachers bearing witness to the Faith by what you say and do.

Blessing for Godparents

Celebrant: May God bless the godparents here today who are representatives of the believing community to which the child now belongs. May your friendship and prayers be a loving support to the child throughout life.

Blessing for Family and Friends

Celebrant: May the support and concern of family and friends be with this child now and always.

Visit to the Shrine of our Lady

It would be appropriate to pay a visit to the Shrine of Our Lady after the Baptismal ceremony.

The icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Help is available to us all in our needs. Pray that she will be with your family as you begin your Christian lives in a new way in this Baptismal ceremony. As mother and father, in a brief personal prayer or silent gesture of dedication, you may seek the protection of our Lady for your child.

Prayer of the Faithful

Suitable for reading by smaller children

1. We pray for all the children who have been baptised into our Christian family in recent times: may they be led to grow in love of their friend, Jesus Christ.
Lord, hear us.
2. We pray for anyone who has helped in giving us the gift of faith and love, especially our parents, teachers and friends.
Lord, hear us.
3. We remember all our families, living and dead; for those of our family away from home. Bless them Lord, with your love and care.
Lord, hear us.
4. We ask God to bless the members of the Baptism Team in this Parish. May their work communicate our welcome to families who are celebrating a new birth.
Lord, hear us.
5. For those who are sick, especially family or friends, may God give them strength in their illness and loved ones to care for them.
Lord, hear us.
6. May the Holy Spirit lead us to know God better. May the Spirit guide us as we search for the truth in our lives.
Lord, hear us.

<p><i>Child's Name:</i> _____</p> <p><i>Date of Baptism:</i> _____</p> <p><i>Godparents:</i> _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p><i>Priest:</i> _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p><i>Church: Church of the Irish Martyrs</i></p>
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