

LESSON 31: BAPTISM

Instruction for Faith Educators

For Basic Level / Age 8	:	Cover points 1 to 8
For Intermediate Level / Age 11	:	Cover points 1 to 12
For Advanced Level / Age 14	:	Cover points 1 to 15

Revision from previous lesson:

In the past lesson, we learned that the Catholic Church has seven Sacraments that were instituted by Jesus Christ for His Bride. In this lesson, we will learn about the first Sacrament that every believer should receive in order to be a member of Christ's Body: Baptism.

Current lesson:

1. The English word "baptism" comes from the Greek word *baptizo* which means "to plunge, to immerse, to go under".
2. It is commanded by Jesus in Matthew 28:19-20: "Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you."
3. In John 3:5, Jesus tells Nicodemus that Baptism is necessary for salvation: "Truly, truly I say to you, unless one is born of water of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God."
4. Baptism can be administered by sprinkling, by pouring, or by immersion. It signifies our dying (being buried) with Christ, and subsequently, our rising with Him. We die with Christ in Baptism by embracing suffering and sacrifice just as He did for our sakes.
5. Most people in the Catholic Church do not remember their Baptism because they were baptised when they were infants.
6. Effects of Baptism:
 - A) We are incorporated into God's people.
 - B) We receive salvation and new life.
 - C) We receive the promise of eternal life.
 - D) We are cleansed from original sin.
7. The ordinary minister of Baptism is an ordained cleric (bishop, priest, or deacon). In extreme circumstances, anyone can baptise, even unbaptised people. However, the matter and form must always be observed, and the intention for the Sacrament to be administered must be present.

8. A look at some ancient baptismal pools:



9. Adults can be baptised based on their own faith. A sponsor is needed when an adult gets baptised. Children can be baptised based on the faith of their parents. A godparent is needed when a child gets baptised.
10. Baptism leaves an indelible mark on one's soul. "Once a Catholic, always a Catholic." But this does not mean that a person cannot lapse in practising the faith even if he/she is Catholic.
11. Baptism is the doorway to other Sacraments of the Holy Catholic Church.
12. The Rite of Baptism:
 - Scripture Readings
 - Blessing of Water
 - Exorcism
 - Anointing with Oil of Catechumen
 - Renunciation of Sin
 - Profession of Faith
 - Baptism
 - Anointing with Chrism Oil
 - Handing of White Garment and Candle
13. The Catholic Church believes there is only one Baptism. Rebaptism is not required if a candidate has been baptised using the correct matter and form, even if the candidate has been baptised in a non-Catholic community. In cases of uncertainty, conditional Baptism is administered (CIC 869 §1).

14. Baptism is necessary for salvation. However, even though God has bound salvation to Sacraments, He and His mercy are not bound by the Sacraments. This means that there are those who even without the literal act of Baptism are “baptised” by life’s circumstances or by intention:

Baptism by blood

Those who are baptised through martyrdom for Christ (CCC 1258).

Baptism by desire

Catechumens who were unable to receive Baptism (CCC 1259), as well as people who are ignorant of the Gospel but do the will of God in accordance with their understanding of it (CCC 1260).

Unbaptised children

Unbaptised children who die should be entrusted to God’s mercy (CCC 1261).

15. Jesus Himself was baptised by John the Baptist (Matthew 3:13-17) in order to accompany humanity in our darkness, and in so doing, conquered death and darkness. Rather than being sanctified by the waters, it was He who sanctified the waters of Baptism.



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