

The Sacrament of Baptism, 1962 Rite – Part I

By Barbara A. Schoeneberger

In the same way that the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass was changed after Vatican II, so have all the Sacraments been “renewed” in their manner of celebration. Here we will cover the rite according to the 1962 liturgical books as used for the Baptism of infants while occasionally pointing out what has been altered or removed. However, because of our focus we will not go into depth regarding the omissions and alterations. Since there are two rites, we must understand the following first of all:

1. Both rites produce the same effect: the washing away of Original Sin and the infusion of sanctifying grace and the theological virtues, a permanent mark (sacramental character) on the soul, and infusion of gifts of grace. Both rites unite the baptized to Christ as the Head of the Mystical Body and confer membership in it which is, by sanctifying grace, the family of God. The regeneration of the soul into the life of God entitles the baptized to heaven, as long as the Baptismal innocence is maintained. In adult Baptism, one obtains the remission of all sins and all punishment due to sin.
2. The differences between the two rites involve more than emphasis. These are important differences. They involve the omission of certain parts of the ancient rite which point clearly and unequivocally to the role of the priest as *alter Christus*, and our role as Christians in a lifelong battle with Satan. A few of the differences may be attributed to the inadequacy of the ICEL translations into the vernacular but most involve the entire ritual and the Biblical understanding of the Old Testament and New Testament as part of our salvation history. The changes do not affect the validity of the Sacrament, but certainly affect the understanding of the Sacrament and thus the disposition of those involved.
3. The better the disposition of the one receiving a sacrament, the more fruitful the benefits and graces received. In the case of infant baptism, the disposition of the parents and godparents increases the graces they receive, strengthening the spiritual environment in which the child will be raised.
4. Baptism removes original sin and its punishment, but it does not remove concupiscence, our unreasoning appetite that leads to sin.
5. Anyone may baptize in case of emergency by pouring water over the head of the person being baptized and saying the words, “I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (Spirit).” However, the ordinary minister of Baptism is the priest and the ordinary rite is known as the “solemn” rite. When Baptism is administered by someone who is not a priest, there should be, as far as possible, one or two witnesses present who can testify that the sacrament has really been conferred.
6. Since in Baptism he is made “a new creature”, the Christian is then given a new name, that of some saint who will from henceforth be his patron, his model and protector. Therefore, no other kinds of names are acceptable as no other kinds of names offer the spiritual benefits to the child.

Before celebrating the sacrament, the priest, clad in surplice and violet stole, ascends the steps of the altar, and on bended knee offers silent prayers. The penitential color violet signifies the darkness and misery of Original Sin we all inherited from our first parents. Appropriately, the ritual begins at the door of the church with the family and godparents coming out of the world, the dominion of Satan, into the sacred space of the house of God. Since the altar represents the east from whence Christ comes, many churches have a door representing liturgical north. Otherwise, the traditional place of the Baptismal font has been on the north side of the vestibule, north as it relates to the symbolic east of the altar.

In Canaanite mythology north was the seat of divinity, that is, their false gods. Many times the false gods of the ancients were associated with Satan and satanic rituals. In some cases the voices of demons spoke through the gods. The north is the source of disaster (Is. 14:31). “Wail, O gate; cry O city; melt in fear, O Philistia, all of you! For smoke comes out of the north and there is no straggler in his ranks.” Who is associated with smoke and misery but Satan?

North is the land of exile from which God will gather Israel (Is. 43:6-7) “I will say to the north, Give up, and to the south, Do not withhold; bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the end of the earth, every one who is called by my name whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made.” (Jer. 31:8) “Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her who is in travail, together; a great company, they shall return here.” Thus, in greeting the participants in the Baptismal ritual at the door of the church, the priest, as *alter Christus*, signifies Christ calling us from the slavery of Satan with the effects of Original Sin to the freedom of children of our heavenly Father.

The first words the priest says is “Peace be with you,” just as Christ spoke the same words to the apostles in the upper room after His resurrection. It is the resurrected Christ we are encountering in the sacrament of Baptism, through the person of the priest. Then he asks, “What is your name?” The parents respond with the name. Then the priest asks, “N., what do you ask of the Church of God?” The parents answer: “Faith.” “What does Faith offer you?” the priest asks. The parents answer: “Everlasting life.” The new rite significantly departs from the old here by substituting the word “Baptism” for “Faith.”

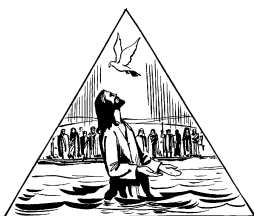
Why is “Faith” such an important answer? We learn in John, 5:24 that Jesus said: “Amen, amen, I say unto you, that he who heareth My word, and **believeth** Him who sent me, hath life everlasting, and cometh not into judgment, but is passed from death to life.” In John, 6:47 Jesus says, “Amen, amen I say unto you, he that **believeth** in me hath everlasting life.”

Holy Mother Church, in these few words of the Baptismal ritual, expresses the exact teaching of Christ. Without Faith we cannot obtain everlasting life. In the name of the child the parents are asking for the theological virtue, infused in the soul at Baptism, and which becomes part of the breastplate of salvation (1 Th. 5:8). This theological virtue is a gift of God, supplying the knowledge, desire, and love of God and His will. It enables us to make the voluntary choice of suitable means to reach the heavenly goal to which we are elevated by Baptism. As Father John Hardon expressed in his Catechism regarding Faith, Hope, and Charity, “These virtues make us well adjusted to our last end, which is God himself; hence they are called theological, because they not only go out to God – as all virtue worthy of the name must do – but they also reach Him. To be well adjusted to our destiny we must know and desire it; the desire demands that we be in love with the object to which we are tending and are confident of obtaining it. Faith makes us know the God to whom we are going, hope makes us look forward to joining Him, and charity makes us love Him.” (p. 196). Thus Faith is the basic virtue which opens the door to all others.

After the short dialogue, the priest then addresses the child: “If then, it is life that you wish to enter, keep the commandments. Love the Lord your God with your whole heart, and with your whole soul, and with your whole mind; and love your neighbor as you love yourself.” This exhortation comes straight from Jesus’ words in the New Testament, the simple recipe for everlasting life, but a difficult one to live.

Next the priest three times blows gently upon the child’s face, saying: “Depart from him unclean spirit, and give place to the Holy Spirit, the Consoler.” Here we have the Trinitarian formula so often found in our Catholic rituals. This act of blowing reminds us of Christ in the upper room blowing on the Apostles, saying, “Receive the Holy Spirit...” In the Old Testament the nose is the organ of breath and of life. It is the breath of God, of life, the child receives and which he breathes out to others as in Job 27:2-4: “As God lives, Who has taken away my right, and the Almighty, who has made my soul bitter; as long as my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils; my lips will not speak falsehood, and my tongue will not utter deceit.” Clearly the gift of the Breath of Life symbolized in the old rite by the blowing on the child’s face, points toward living in the truth of God. Having the Breath of the Holy Spirit in our nostrils precludes speaking evil and deceit and grants us consolation in times of trial and spiritual battle. This part of the ritual no longer exists in the new rite.

The priest, with his thumb, signs the Cross on the forehead and breast of the child. He says: “Receive the sign of the Cross on your forehead and in your heart. Have faith in the teachings of God, and live in such a way that from now on you may be enabled to be a temple of God.” Acting in the person of Christ, the priest has claimed the child for God. The forehead encloses the brain which houses our mind which is the seat of the intellect and the will. With the Sign of the Cross on the forehead the child is marked by God as His own, an outward symbol of the inward gift of Faith conferred in Baptism which impels the soul toward God and His holy Will. The heart is the seat of emotion, feeling, and appetites. With the Sign of the Cross on the heart accompanied by the sign on the forehead, both aspects of our unique humanity are claimed by God. As man, we are creatures of intellect and emotion, mind and body, both of which must be consecrated to God, working in a holy partnership, keeping in balance for our salvation. Only the sign of the cross on the forehead is done in the new rite. Also, the parents and sometimes the godparents are invited to make the Sign of the Cross in the new rite, thus blurring the role of the Sacred Priesthood in this sacrament. In the old rite, the person being Baptized unequivocally encounters the Person of Christ in every step. All other participants clearly have their proper roles such as the Biblical right of the parents to name their child.



After the priest completes the signing of the Cross, he prays: “O Lord, we implore Thee, in Thy kindness hear our prayers, and guard with un failing power this Thy chosen N., who has been stamped with the seal of the Lord’s cross; so that, holding fast to the first truths he has

learned of Thy great glory, he may, by keeping Thy commandments, attain to the glory of rebirth. Through Christ our Lord. Amen. Here again is the way to heaven: keeping the commandments. All of them.

Next the priest lays his hand on the head of the child and then extends it while he prays in graphic words, addressing the need to subjugate the senses to the teachings of Christ: “Almighty and everlasting God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, be pleased to look upon this Thy servant, N., whom in Thy goodness Thou hast called to be instructed in the Faith. Rid him of all blindness of heart; break all the nets of Satan in which he has been entangled. Open to him, Lord, the gate of Thy mercy so that, penetrated by the sign of Thy wisdom [salt], he may be rid of the stench of all evil desires and moved by the pleasing fragrance of Thy teachings, may joyfully serve Thee in Thy Church and daily advance in perfection. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.”

How can a baby be blind of heart, entangled in the nets of Satan, and full of the stench of evil desires as this prayer says? He can't talk or think logically yet. The answer lies in Original Sin. By virtue of this our inheritance, it is our fate to be oriented toward spiritual blindness and to evil and selfish desires. Whether we are aware of it or not, we enter this world entangled in the nets of Satan, and without the theological virtue of Faith, blind of heart. This prayer shows what everyone who is without the great grace of Baptism faces in everyday life, whether he is old enough to be affected by it or not. The priest prays that this soon-to-be new Christian will be a worthy member of the family of God without enslavement by Satan. Think now of all those who walk this earth without the grace of Baptism and what that means to us. By extension, this prayer shows that if we are truly Christian we will evangelize those we meet, first by example and then by words so that they may enjoy the fruits of sanctifying grace and all that it means.

The priest then blesses the salt to be used next in the ritual. He prays: “O salt, creature of God, I exorcise you in the name of God the Father almighty and in the love of our Lord Jesus Christ and in the strength of the Holy Spirit. I exorcise you by the living God, the true God, the holy God, the God Who brought you into being to safeguard the human race, and commanded you to be consecrated by His servants for the benefit of those who are coming into the Faith, so that by the power of the Holy Trinity you might become a health-giving sacrament to put the enemy to flight. Therefore we beg Thee, O Lord our God, to sanctify by Thy power of sanctification this salt which Thou hast created and to bless it with Thy blessing, so that it may become a perfect medicine for all who receive it and may remain always in every fiber of their being. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who will come to judge the living and the dead and the world by fire. Amen.”

This is a typical exorcism prayer using the words: “by the living God, the true God, the holy God...” The prayer, Trinitarian in formula, reminds us that salt is a creature of God, something God has power over, and it is to be used as a sacramental against the devil. Why salt? In ancient times, salt was a form of money, and of very high value. Before refrigeration, people preserved meats and other foods by salting them. Salt, therefore, became a sign of health-giving sustenance. Salt was also a valued seasoning. Moreover, the blood in the body is salty. Without salt in the diet, people can get very sick. Salt is therefore powerful and necessary, a weapon for physical health and by analogy, spiritual health.

Salt also has other spiritual meanings. All sacrificial victims were to be offered with salt (Lv. 2:13; Ezk. 43:24). Through Baptism we become Christians; our purpose is to become like Christ, a sacrificial victim. At the offertory of the Mass we offer ourselves with the bread and wine. The use of salt in the Baptismal rite is a reminder of this victimhood.

We learn in Numbers 18:19 that salt is a covenant of friendship: “All the holy offerings which the people of Israel present to the Lord I give to you, and to your sons and daughters with you, as a perpetual due; it is a covenant of salt forever before the Lord for you and for your offspring with you.” Likewise, in 2 Ch. 13:5 we hear: “Ought you not to know that the Lord God of Israel gave the kingship over Israel forever to David and his sons by a covenant of salt?”

Lastly, as we have seen in the preceding prayer over the child, salt is the sign of God's wisdom. St. Paul writes to the Colossians (4:5-6): “Conduct yourselves wisely toward outsiders, making the most of the time. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer everyone.” When we remain faithful to our Baptismal vows, we speak the wisdom of God to all. When we speak with wisdom, we show the devil up for what he is: a liar and a murderer as Jesus called him in the Gospels.

Therefore, in the next part of the Baptismal rite the priest puts a little blessed salt in the child's mouth and says: “N., receive the salt of wisdom. May it win for you mercy and forgiveness, and life everlasting. Amen.” Note that the blessed salt is placed on the tongue, the organ of speech, and the prayer brings out the covenant aspect of salt. This part of the rite follows the breathing into the child's nostrils thus linking the breathing of the breath of Christ which leads to the speaking with wisdom. We cannot speak without breath and our breath must be God's breath within us. Our words must be the wise words of God, not the frivolous and evil words of Satan.

Then the priest says: “Peace be with you.” The parents and godparents respond: “And with thy spirit.” The priest prays: “Let us pray. God of our fathers, God the Author of all truth, we humbly implore Thee to look with favor on this Thy servant, N., and grant that he who is now tasting this salt as his first nourishment may not hunger much longer before he is given his fill of heavenly food, so that he may always be ardent of soul, rejoicing in hope, and ever loyal to Thy name. Bring



him, O Lord, we ask Thee, to the font of the new birth, so that in company with Thy faithful servants, he may gain the eternal rewards that Thou hast promised . Through Christ our Lord. Amen.”

After this prayer, the priest performs the first exorcism over the child saying: “I exorcise you, unclean spirit, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Come forth, depart from this servant of God, N., for He commands you, spirit accursed and damned, He Who walked upon the sea and extended His right hand to Peter as he was sinking. Therefore, accursed devil, acknowledge your condemnation and pay homage to the true and living God; pay homage to Jesus Christ, His Son, and to the Holy Spirit, and depart from this servant of God, N., for Jesus Christ, our Lord and God has called him to His holy grace and blessing, and to the font of Baptism.”

During the completion of the exorcism the priest makes the Sign of the Cross with his thumb on the child’s forehead while saying: “Then never dare, accursed devil, to violate this sign of the holy Cross + which we are making upon his forehead. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.”

Once again, the priest lays his hand on the child and then extends it saying: “O holy Lord, almighty Father, eternal God, Source of light and truth, I ask for this Thy servant N., Thy fatherly love, eternal and most just, so that Thou mayest be pleased to enlighten him with the light of Thy understanding. Cleanse and sanctify him; grant him true knowledge so that he, having been made fit for the grace of Thy Baptism, may retain unwavering hope, true judgment, and sacred teaching. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.”

He then lays the left end of the stole, a symbol of his priestly authority, on the child and all enter the church while the priest says: “N., enter the temple of God, so that you may take part with Christ in everlasting life. Amen.” At this point, all proceed to the Baptismal font.

An observer at Vatican II noted that some bishops objected to the exorcism prayers because they give the impression that the baby is possessed. If we truly understand Original Sin and its meaning, we can have no doubt that while the baby is not possessed by the devil, he is under the influence of Satan and lacks the spiritual weapons to direct his efforts towards God. As long as the life of God is not in a person, the person is easy prey for Satan. The purpose of the exorcism prayer makes plain to all the power of Christ over His adversary. The priest, acting in the Person of Christ and by His authority, drives the lurking, hateful spirit off.

Next month we will cover the conclusion of the 1962 rite. **XXX**



From the President...



In late January I received an email from Bishop Rifan accepting all who petitioned for inscription into the Society of St. John Vianney. We now have a spiritual link with this group of holy priests and will share in their spiritual goods. Let us remember to pray for the success of the SSJV in Brazil and also the establishment of a worldwide Personal Apostolic Administration. Currently Rome fiddles while souls burn, but evidently enough of us have not been serious about our prayers and penances to bring enough grace to effect a change. As we prepare for Lent, let us make this one of our intentions.

Blessed Sacrament Prayer Group

Una Voce members have been invited by Father Gary Carr, pastor of St. Joseph in Billings, to participate in the Blessed Sacrament Prayer Group once a month. This involves a holy hour in front of the Blessed Sacrament from 12:00 until 1:00 one Sunday a month, followed by Benediction, and then a pot luck in the parish hall. The dates each month vary according to Father’s schedule. Please mark these down on your calendars so we can have a sizeable group of Una Voce members there every month: February 15, March 14, April 18 (Divine Mercy Sunday), and May 23. This is a great opportunity for all of us to see each other more often, especially for those who support us but cannot make the Wednesday night meetings. What’s more, to assist at Benediction this often is a very great blessing. Please keep Father Gary in your prayers as he has two full-time jobs and needs much help from God to be both a good principal and a good pastor.



Symbolism in Church Architecture

The subject of our February 18th meeting will be church architecture. We will see how God instructed His temple to be built and the carry-over into church structures throughout the centuries until the modern era.



Mel Gibson's *Passion*

Campbell Cinema will show the *Passion* starting on Ash Wednesday until February 29th. Ticket prices are the same as usual for show times. I am told that a Protestant Church has already reserved the entire theater for one of the shows. Why isn't every Catholic parish in the area doing the same? From all the reviews I've read, this film is a powerful invitation to conversion, just what the Holy Father invited us to meditate on in Mystery Three of the Luminous Mysteries of the Rosary. Our Protestant brethren will be out knocking on doors preaching the message of conversion because they have seen this movie while we, who have the fulness of truth remain silent and apathetic. We are called to evangelize. Are we ready?

Are we willing? Are we able? Let us begin with our Catholic brethren, inviting them to see this film. Then let us flood the confessionals with penitents and begin to really live our Baptismal promises.

Pray for Priests

Please remember to pray for priests everywhere that they may grow in love of Christ and uphold their commitment to the Bride of Christ. We must do everything we can to encourage them in their spiritual ministry. Our prayers are far more powerful on their behalf than just about anything else we can do. We should especially remember all independent priests who have yet to be incardinated anywhere. Before Vatican II such a thing was unheard of. Today it is far more common than most would believe. All of us must be spiritually subject to someone with proper authority over us or we become our own Magisterium. The slope starts off in inches and becomes a steep decline. Our slide begins slowly until we are so blinded by our hubris that we are speeding into the arms of the devil before we even know we have arrived. Each of us lacks the grace to be our own arbiter of Catholic truth as it is not proper to our state in life. In fact, it is called Protestantism and even priests and bishops are not immune. Remember that the devil doesn't care how he gets us out of the Church. It can be on the modernist side or the traditional side. For him, it makes no difference. The end result is the same.

Classic 1914 Edition of the Catholic Encyclopedia on CD

This renowned edition is available from NewAdvent.org and I recommend it to be a part of every Catholic home. The price is really cheap right now. I got mine for \$29.95 plus shipping. It is great for researching Catholic history and teaching, lives of saints, liturgical vestments, etc., and is completely without the taint of modernism. Hilaire Belloc said, "One of the most powerful influences working in favor of the truth." The Dublin Review called it "The greatest triumph of Christian science in the English tongue." Plus, it helps the kids in researching home school assignments. We Catholics have an extremely rich history. This will help us become better acquainted with it.

Wishing all our readers, members, and sympathizers a holy Lent... **XXX**

Barbara A. Schoeneberger

Truth

All truth, wherever it is found, belongs to us as Christians.

Justin Martyr

No one is truly poor but the one who lacks the truth.

Ephraem the Syrian

Truth is one; contradictions of the truth are manifold.

Cyril of Jerusalem

Nothing conquers except truth; the victory of truth is charity.

St. Augustine

