



**St Mary's Church, Thorpe**  
**Church Approach, Egham, Surrey, TW20 8TQ**  
Charity: 1176929. Vicar: The Revd. Damian Stewart Miles, BTh  
[www.stmaryschurchthorpe.co.uk](http://www.stmaryschurchthorpe.co.uk)



**Your Child's Baptism at St Mary's Church Thorpe**

*Thank you for your interest in having your child baptised at St Mary's Church, Thorpe. We really look forward to sharing in your celebration and hope these notes are useful as you prepare for your family occasion with us.*

**Baptism (Christening)**

In baptism, we thank God for his gift of life and publicly acknowledge his love. In the Anglican Church (Church of England) it is common to baptise young children; this is sometimes known as christening (to "christen" means to "give a name to") whereas baptism is one of the sacraments of the Church and a holy ritual to symbolise grace, that is to say a visible sign of something God does in our hearts. In the Christian tradition baptism can be traced back to Jesus himself being baptized in the river Jordan, by John. Baptism involves naming a person and marking them with holy oil as God's child; they are then washed by water (poured over the head three times) in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**When do services of baptism take place?**

Traditionally, we don't hold baptisms during the season of Lent (February/March). For the rest of the year services of Holy Baptism will be available on the fourth Sunday monthly at 12noon. (By special arrangement they may happen on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday monthly, again at 12noon or in the main 10am Sunday Eucharist Service). Baptism is a public rite (It is not a private occasion) as the Christian church welcomes you and your children into the family of faith.

**What happens on the day of Baptism?**

You need to arrive in good time before the start of the service. St Mary's don't have our own Car Park – there is some parking available at the Vicarage (Please only park cars on the red gravel area) and in Church Approach, but otherwise you will need to encourage guests to find on-street parking within Thorpe Village. (Please note: No use of TESIS School facilities, grounds or buildings is permitted by baptism families or their guests)

On arrival at St Mary's our warden on duty will welcome you and your guests and hand out a printed service sheet which we will follow through – a copy of the service text is attached to these notes. The congregation have an important part in welcoming your child(ren) who are joining the family of the Church and therefore welcomed into membership. The congregation will promise to support and pray for you and your child and this 'Welcome' will be repeated at the next Family Service following on from the Baptism of your child which you are asked to attend.

We ask that Parents and Godparents sit on the front row of the church. If in doubt, the wardens on duty will show you know where to sit. The Baptism part of the Service takes place after the Sermon/talk. The priest will invite you and the Godparents to stand at the front of the church, facing the congregation at the appropriate time. Some parts of the service will be for the whole congregation to join in; some will be for you and the godparents. For the baptism itself, the parents and children are asked by the priest to gather around the font. (The font is a large stone basin on a pedestal, containing the water for baptism which is right at the front of St Mary's Church on the left hand side.)

**Making decisions and promises**

When you bring your child for baptism, you will be asked to declare publicly on behalf of your child that you believe in God and that you will bring your child up to follow Jesus. You, and your Godparents (who must themselves have been baptised) will be asked to answer, on your child's behalf, that you have decided to turn away from everything which is evil or sinful and instead turn towards Christ. The declarations made by you and the child's godparents will be made in front of the church congregation. You will be asked:

*Parents and godparents, the Church receives these children with joy. Today we are trusting God for their growth in faith. Will you pray for them, draw them by your example into the community of faith and walk with them in the way of Christ?*

You answer: **With the help of God, we will.**

*In baptism these children begin their journey in faith. You speak for them today. Will you care for them, and help them to take their place within the life and worship of Christ's Church?*

You answer: **With the help of God, we will.**

## **Frequently asked questions about Baptism**

Q. What's the difference between a baptism and a christening?

These names are sometimes used interchangeable for the same service. Technically to "christen" means to name a child whereas baptism is the whole service, including the pouring of water over the child's forehead three times and one of the sacraments of the Church.

Q. What is the right age for baptism?

Baptism can happen at any age. What matters is that those concerned are committed to bring up a child as a Christian. Teenagers and adults may also be baptized. This is celebrated with confirmation by the Bishop. You can only be baptised once, but there are ways of renewing your Christian commitment publicly as an adult - your priest will be able to advise you.

Q. I'm not a regular churchgoer. Can I still have my child baptized?

Yes. The Church of England believes that God's love is available to all, regardless of their background. Fr Damian can talk you through the options. You may also wish to find out more about the Christian faith and what joining the Church involves before you make a decision about baptism. St Mary's runs regular courses for enquirers. Ask one of the clergy team about these.

Q. What does it cost?

The Church of England charges a small fee of £14 (2019 – fees may change in subsequent years) towards the costs of the certificate and we ask for this to be paid in advance of the ceremony. There are no other charges for a service of Holy Baptism. However, at each service a collection is taken during the Hymn and we ask you and your guests to be as generous as possible in supporting us in this way. Please help us by making your donation in one of our yellow gift-aid envelopes, completing the information required and dating the front. (Only those who pay income tax are eligible to claim gift-aid on their donations).

Q. Who should I choose as Godparents and how many?

Traditionally each child has three godparents but we have made provision on the application form for four. Godparents should have already been baptised because they are making Christian promises before God and have a special role. It's about helping a child to come to know God, encouraging them in their spiritual life and supporting them in their membership of the local church. During the service the priest asks Godparents, as well as parents to declare their intention to do support the child. The priest asks if they are '*prepared to walk with [the child] in the way of Christ*' and will '*help them take their place within the life and worship of Christ's Church*'. God parents need to be able to answer honestly 'Yes' to each of these questions.

## **A prayer to pray with your child**

Heavenly Father, thank you for the gift of *[child's name]* and for all the joy he/she brings us. Be with her/him on her/his Christian journey so she/he may come to know our Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour and friend. Amen.

**St Mary's Church, Thorpe - HOLY BAPTISM SERVICE TEXT (outside the Eucharist)**

**NOTICES & WELCOME**

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

*All*     **Amen.**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

*All*     **And also with you.**

*The minister introduces the service, then a time of silence is kept*

**THE COLLECT**

Heavenly Father, by the power of your Holy Spirit you give your faithful people new life in the water of baptism. Guide and strengthen us by the same Spirit, that we who are born again may serve you in faith and love, and grow into the full stature of your Son, Jesus Christ, who is alive and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit now and for ever.

*All*     **Amen.**                             *the congregation is asked to Sit*

**BIBLE READING**

*At the end of the bible reading, the person reading will say:*

This is the Word of the Lord

*All*     **Thanks be to God.**

**HOMILY** *The priest gives a short talk before inviting the parents and godparents to stand on the step facing the congregation ready to make their promise on behalf of the child / candidate.*

**HYMN** *when the financial collection is taken for St Mary's Church. Please encourage guests to complete a yellow gift-aid envelope for their donation. To collect in the offerings, please pass the basket along the row as directed by the wardens on duty at the service.*

**PRESENTATION OF THE CANDIDATES**             *The priest addresses the whole congregation first:*

Faith is the gift of God to his people. In baptism the Lord is adding to our number those whom he is calling. People of God, will you welcome this child and uphold him/her in his/her new life in Christ?

*All*     **With the help of God, we will.**

*The parents and godparents are addressed by the priest and respond to the next two questions:*

Parents and godparents, the Church receives this child with joy. Today we are trusting God for his /her growth in faith. Will you pray for him/her, draw him/her by your example into the community of faith and walk with him/her in the way of Christ?

*All*     **With the help of God, we will.**

In baptism this child begins his/her journey in faith. You speak for him/her today. Will you care for him/her, and help him/her to take his/her place within the life and worship of Christ's Church?

*All*     **With the help of God, we will.**             *The priest addresses the congregation. All Stand.*

In baptism, God calls us out of darkness into his marvellous light.

To follow Christ means dying to sin and rising to new life with him. Therefore, I ask:

Do you reject the devil and all rebellion against God?

*All*     **I reject them.**

Do you renounce the deceit and corruption of evil?             *All*     **I renounce them.**

Do you repent of the sins that separate us from God and neighbour?

*All*     **I repent of them.**

Do you turn to Christ as Saviour?                             *All*     **I turn to Christ.**

Do you submit to Christ as Lord?                             *All*     **I submit to Christ.**

Do you come to Christ, the way, the truth and the life?     *All*     **I come to Christ.**

*The candidate is signed with the Holy oil of Baptism on the forehead – the priest says:*  
Christ claims you for his own. Receive the sign of his cross.

*The priest addresses the congregation:*

Do not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified.

**All Fight valiantly as a disciple of Christ against sin, the world and the devil,  
and remain faithful to Christ to the end of your life.**

*The priest prays over the child(ren):*

May almighty God deliver you from the powers of darkness, restore in you the image of his glory, and lead you in the light and obedience of Christ.

**All Amen.** *The parents and candidates now move over to the font.*

### **PRAYER OVER THE WATER**

Praise God who made heaven and earth,

**All who keeps his promise for ever.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**All It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

*A seasonal prayer of blessing over the waters of the font is said by the priest. We use fresh warm water in the font for every baptism. The prayer ends with:*

... to whom with you and the Holy Spirit be all honour and glory, now and for ever.

**All Amen.**

**PROFESSION OF FAITH** *The whole congregation with parents and godparents join in.*

I ask you to profess on behalf of these candidates the faith of the Church.

**All We believe in God the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.  
We believe in God the Son, who lives in our hearts through faith and fills us with his love.  
We believe in God the Holy Spirit, who strengthens us with power from on high.  
We believe in one God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.** *Ephesians 3*

### **BAPTISM**

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

**All Amen.**

*The child / candidate is now signed with Christ's name in the oil of holy Chrism, as a sign of the authority we receive under Jesus. (Alpha and Omega – beginning and end) Then the priest prays:*

May God, who has received you by baptism into his Church, pour upon you the riches of his grace, that within the company of Christ's pilgrim people you may daily be renewed by his anointing Spirit, and come to the inheritance of the saints in glory.

**All Amen.**

### **WELCOME AND PEACE**

There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism: by one Spirit we are all baptised into one body. (Therefore we say together)

**All We welcome you into the fellowship of faith; we are children of the same heavenly Father; we welcome you.**

*Prayers of intercession and the Lord's Prayer follow. Then a parent is presented with a lit candle on behalf of the child / candidate. (The light for this is taken from the Easter/Paschal Candle)*

God has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and has given us a place with the saints in light. You have received the light of Christ; walk in this light all the days of your life.

**All Shine as a light in the world to the glory of God the Father.**

*The service concludes with a prayer of blessing.*

*Updated January 2019. DSM*