

Chapter 8: Christ Sanctifies the Waters of Baptism

Through His baptism, Jesus sanctified the waters of Baptism for us.

Chapter Summary

John the Baptist baptized Jesus to “fulfil all righteousness” (Matthew 3:15). Through his own baptism, Jesus made holy the waters of Baptism. He also accepted and began His mission of fulfilling God’s work of salvation, foreshadowed in the events of the Old Testament. In particular, Christ fulfilled God’s work in the waters at Creation, the Flood, and the crossing of the Red Sea and in the events at Marah. Through Jesus, the waters of our Baptism give new life in grace, cleanse our souls, save us from sin and death, and unite us to Christ and His Church. The Sacrament of Baptism is celebrated in a rite where the words and actions reveal and accomplish what God is doing in our souls. When we are baptized, we also share in the mission of Christ, who is the Messiah. We receive the Holy Spirit and participate in Jesus’ work of salvation as Priest, Prophet, and King.

Prepared for Mission

The Rite of Baptism includes an exorcism. The word “exorcism” means “to drive out or away.” An exorcism is a prayer that asks God to drive away the Devil and his temptations. This prayer is said to prepare the person to receive the Holy Spirit in Baptism.

In the Rite of Baptism, the priest or deacon prays, “Almighty and ever-living God, who sent your Son into the world to drive out from us the power of Satan, the spirit of evil . . . we humbly beseech you to free this child from Original Sin, to make him (her) the temple of your glory, and to grant that your Holy Spirit may dwell in him (her). Through Christ our Lord. Amen.”¹³

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states that by this exorcism, the person being baptized “is able to *confess the faith* of the Church, to which he will be ‘entrusted’ by Baptism” (CCC 1237). God frees us from sin through Baptism so that we can more fully share in Jesus’ mission.

Jesus accomplished His mission as priest, prophet, and king. We participate in Jesus’ mission in these three ways as well through our Baptism:

- One way we live out the *baptismal priesthood* is by offering worship to God at all times through the holiness of our lives (see CCC 901).



- We can live as *prophets* through our Baptism by teaching others about the faith and by charitably calling all people to follow God’s laws faithfully.
- We can live as *kings* through our Baptism by serving others as Jesus, the King of the universe, served others. We also live as kings by conquering sin in our lives. We can do this through Reconciliation and choosing to avoid temptations when we can.

For more family faith formation resources, go to the parent portal.