

Christening at Seal

A brief outline for children

This sheet explains some of the things you will see and hear during the Christening service.

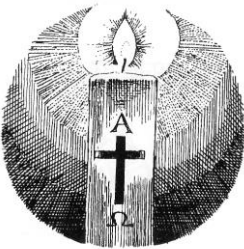
THE BEGINNING OF THE SERVICE.

The priest welcomes everyone. Then we hear a reading from the Bible and a short talk to help us think about the readings.

The priest asks everyone to promise to help the children and their families as they grow up.



THE EASTER CANDLE



We light a large candle at the front of the church. We have a new candle every Easter to remind us of the story of Jesus who died, but then rose again from the dead. It helps us to remember that there can always be a new start when things have gone wrong.

At a Christening we light the candle because this reminds us that there can always be a new start for the children being baptised if things go wrong in their lives. God will always forgive us.

The parents and godparents promise to follow Jesus and to try to do what is right.

THE SIGN OF THE CROSS



The priest makes the sign of the cross on the children's heads. We use olive oil that has been blessed to make this sign. People used oil before soap was invented to get ready for washing.

THE WATER

The priest stands at the font and asks God to bless the water we will be using.



We need water to stay alive and to wash with. It is a symbol of life.

The priest thanks God for water and reminds us that God will always be with us.

THE CHRISTIAN STORY

We say what we believe.

We talk about

- God the Father who made the world and everything in it.
- Jesus, who was born in Bethlehem, died on a cross and rose again from the dead.
- The Holy Spirit – God with us always.

THE BAPTISM



We gather round the font. The priest holds the baby. Older children or adults stand and lean over the font.

THE SHELL

The priest uses a shell to pour the water on the baby's head. This is an old symbol of a special journey called a pilgrimage. People who went on these journeys were called pilgrims. They wore shells to show that they were pilgrims.



Those who are being baptised are on a sort of journey through their lives. They are pilgrims too.

THE SHAWL

After the baptism, we wrap the baby in a shawl as a reminder that God's love is all around him or her.



OIL OF CHRISM

We anoint the baby again with oil. This time we use scented oil. It has frankincense in it as well as other scents. It is called "oil of chrim" (say *krizum*). Oil of Chrim is also used when kings and queens are crowned, and often when people are become priests – times when they are taking on a new job. The smell of the oil should spread out, like the good things they are going to do, so that others know about it. When we anoint the baby with oil of Chrim we are remembering that baptism isn't just about what God does for us, but also what we might be able to do for God and for others.



THE WELCOME AND PEACE



We welcome the children into the family of the church. All Christians everywhere are like brothers and sisters to them.

THE CANDLE

At the end of the service we give the children a candle to remind them that Jesus is like a light to those who follow him, helping them to see the way forward and comforting them when life feels dark and gloomy. The candle helps them remember that the light of Jesus shines in them too. We hope that they will shine like lights in the world to help others.



JUST THE BEGINNING...

Christening is just the beginning. At a Christening, parents promise to help their children grow up as followers of Jesus. That might mean:

- Getting to know the stories of the Bible.
- Thinking about the right way to live.
- Coming along to church to meet with the Christian family – we have activities for younger and older children – ask if you are interested.
- Remembering to pray – saying thank you to God and telling him when we are worried or upset too.
- Enjoying our lives and the wonderful world around us.
- Helping others.
- Coming for preparation to receive Holy Communion as the children grow up and eventually for Confirmation, the special service in which they make their own decision to follow Jesus.