

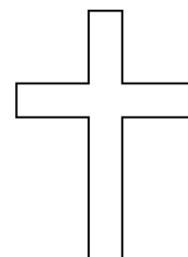
Your Baby's Baptism

The 5 main Symbols of Baptism

Catholic Baptism is marked by specific signs and symbols that have a particular meaning for us.

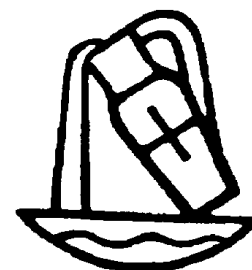
These signs and symbols are:

The **Sign of the Cross** is the mark of Christians showing that Jesus died on the Cross for us. At baptism parents and grandparents trace it on the child's forehead to show that the child belongs to Christ, who now offers his help and grace always to face and overcome the sufferings and trials that life may throw at us.



Water is for cleansing and is a sign that all our sins are washed away; Our baptism continues with life. Through baptism we *belong*; through our lives we strengthen our belief.

Original sin is not a *spot on our soul* that has *to be scrubbed away* but more a truth about what it means to be human – we all try to do our best and do good, but we only have to look around to see this is not always what happens. Baptism gives us the unending strength, joy and comfort that comes from a God who created us in his own image and likeness and loves us unconditionally. God is ever present to us, ever with us, supporting us and walking our lives with us – even when we are not present to God.



Water is also a symbol of life – without water we couldn't live. It shows us that Jesus is our real source of life. As Jesus is raised from the dead by the Father and given new life, so are we through the waters of baptism, raised to life in Jesus Christ and given life in him.

Oil of Baptism which is rubbed on the chest to give us strength; In olden times athletes used to rub themselves with oil to strengthen themselves and prepare themselves for the fight ahead.



Oil of Chrism, (also used at Confirmation) Chrism is a perfumed olive oil consecrated by the bishop during Holy Week (holy Thursday). It is rubbed on the crown or forehead signifying that we are sealed with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. We are anointed to bring the good news to others by the way that we live our lives. We are anointed priest, prophet and king just as Christ was.

Baptismal Candle reminds us that the light of Christ has entered our lives and the flame symbolizes the flame of faith which should burn throughout our lives. The Light of Christ is passed on to us in the form of a lit candle, which was lit from the Paschal Candle (Easter Candle) that was blessed at the Easter Vigil. We are called to be the light of Christ in the world and we are asked to keep that light burning brightly.



The **White Garment** signifies that the newly baptized has put on Christ and has risen with Christ. It is a sign of new identity and echoes what the early Christian used to do. When they were baptized and came out of the water they were clothed in a white garment to show innocence, new beginning, a new dignity/identity and a new life in the resurrection of Jesus.

