



St. Mina Coptic Orthodox Church
Pre-Service Training Seminars



Lecture 2:

*THE SACRAMENT OF
BAPTISM*

**“For God is not the author of
confusion, but of peace”
(1 Corinthians 14:33)**



Overview of the Holy Sacraments



1. The Sacrament of Baptism
2. The Sacrament of Confirmation
3. The Sacrament of Eucharist
4. The Sacrament of Holy Orders (Priesthood)
5. The Sacrament of Repentance & Confession
6. The Sacrament of the Unction of the Sick
7. The Sacrament of Holy Matrimony



Sacrament of Baptism (Purpose)



❖ Purpose of the Sacrament:

1. To remove the consequences of the '**original sin**'.
2. To wash away all other sins committed before the time of Baptism if the person is beyond the age of infancy.
3. To unite the person to "**The Body of Christ**" (that is, the Church).
4. To **open the door of salvation and eternal life** to him or her.





Sacrament of Baptism (Institution)



❖ Overview of the Sacrament:

- Prime sacrament = entrance to the Church
- It is the door by which a believer enters the Church and has the right to partake in the rest of the Sacraments
- One of the 4 redemptive sacraments (Baptism, Confirmation, Repentance & Confession, and Eucharist)
- Instituted by our Lord and conducted **after** His resurrection
- Through Baptism, the believer is **reborn a spiritual birth** from the Water and the Spirit



Sacrament of Baptism (Salvation)



❖ Baptism is necessary for salvation:

- *“He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned” **Mark 16:16***
- *“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit...” **Matthew 28:19***
- *“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God” **John 3:5***





Sacrament of Baptism (Salvation)



- ❖ *“Without shedding of blood [death] there is no remission” **Hebrews 9:22***
- ❖ Salvation = redemptive death of our Lord on the cross
- ❖ Share in salvation = Share in His death and resurrection = Baptism
- ❖ *“That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His suffering being conformed to His death” **Philippians 3:10***
- ❖ *“Or do you not know that as many of you were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death” **Romans 6:3-4***



Sacrament of Baptism (OT Symbols)



- ❖ *“The spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters” **Genesis 1:2***
- ❖ St. Peter’s reference to Noah’s ark
- ❖ St. Paul’s reference to circumcision
- ❖ St. Paul’s reference to the crossing of the red sea
- ❖ Aaron and his sons receiving priesthood
- ❖ The laver of bronze and its water
- ❖ Elijah’s sacrifice



Sacrament of Baptism (Immersion)



- ❖ Baptize (Greek Baptizo) = immerse or to put into.
- ❖ Immersion not sprinkling.
- ❖ St. Philip and the eunuch went down in water
- ❖ *“We were buried with Him through baptism” Romans 6:4, (Burial = Immersion)*
- ❖ *“Be baptized, and wash away your sins” Acts 22:16, (Wash = Immersion)*
- ❖ Sprinkling is allowed only in very specific medical conditions



Sacrament of Baptism (Infants)



- ❖ Baptism is essential for salvation + infants need salvation = infants need baptism
- ❖ Circumcision was a symbol of baptism, infants were circumcised to enter in the old covenant
- ❖ Crossing of the red sea was a symbol of baptism and infants crossed it as well
- ❖ *“Be baptized .. And you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children” Acts 2:38-39*
- ❖ Scripture records families and entire households were baptized together (Acts 16:14-15,33; 1Cor 1:16)



Sacrament of Baptism (Timing)



- ❖ From the birth date: 40 days for a baby boy and 80 days for a baby girl.
- ❖ Baptism should never be delayed.
- ❖ If the new-born is sick and at risk of dying, parents must request the priest to baptize and anoint the baby with the Myron immediately and under any circumstance.
- ❖ If the baby lives, the Baptism is correct and should not be repeated.



Sacrament of Baptism (Rite)



❖ The Water Liturgy

- It is performed by the priest to sanctify the water through prayers and bible readings and finally by pouring the Holy Oil of Mayroon to give the water the power to “cleanse from sins” and be able to give the new birth from “water and spirit” as the Lord said



❖ The absolution for the mother

- A special prayer for the mother when she brings her baby to be baptized, necessary to allow her to partake of the Holy Eucharist.
- The birth of a baby is a reminder to the woman of the original sin and God’s punishment of Eve.
- A cleanliness period after birth is also needed.





Sacrament of Baptism (Rite)



❖ The Prayers of the Holy Baptism

- Occurs after the priest anoints the mother and allows her to partake of the Holy Mysteries.
- From this point on, the prayers are directed to the person being baptized, whereby the priest asks the Lord to uproot all evil from his/her heart and prepare him/her to be a Sanctuary of the Holy Spirit.
- During these prayers, the priest anoints the person to be baptized with the plain oil on his head, hands, heart and back and recite many prayers and supplications so that the Lord grant him/her the open heart and mind to understand and keep the Holy words.



Sacrament of Baptism (Rite)

❖ Renouncing Satan

- The purpose of Baptism is to bring the person into the Church.
- The priest calls upon the godparent to renounce the devil and all his works on behalf of the child. That is done facing the west.
- This renouncing announces the forthcoming baptism as an act of victory.
- Facing the east, the priest asks the godparent to accept Him who is the Light of the World on behalf of the child.
- The child has been transferred from Satan to Christ; from death to life.





Sacrament of Baptism (Rite)



❖ The Creed

- The godparent is then asked to confess the true faith in Christ on behalf of the infant and reads the confession of faith.



❖ The Anointing with the oil of Joy (Ghalilawen)

- Ghalilawen oil is a semi-product of the Mayroon symbolizing the implantation in the Holy Church of God. Kings/priests/prophets were anointed as well.



❖ The Naked Infant

- The removal of all clothes signifies the putting off of the “old man”.
- We are re-born from the Baptismal font anew like we were born from our mother’s womb.



Sacrament of Baptism (Rite)



❖ Immersion into the Baptismal Font

- In obedience to Christ's words, the priest baptizes the infant in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
- At each invocation, the priest immerses and then raises the infant up again.
- After the baptism is completed, the priest places the infant in a new linen sheet held by the godparent.



❖ Godparent

- The godparent promises to see to it that the child is raised and educated in the Orthodox faith. The mother is the natural godparent but others may take that role for specific circumstances.





Sacrament of Baptism (Rite)

❖ New Clothes

- The priest then invests the child in a new garment: “The garment of Eternal and immortal life Amen”.
- The new clothes signify the entirely new life that we receive after we are “buried with Jesus in His death”
- The white garment reminds us of Jesus’ transfiguration. There is now likeness between the baptized child and the transfigured Lord.
- *“For as many of you as have been baptized in Christ, have put on Christ” Galatians 3:26-27*
- *“Therefore, if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold the new has come” 2 Corinthians 5:17*





Sacrament of Baptism (Rite)



❖ The Red Ribbon and Crown

- The priest encircles the infant with a red ribbon, it reminds us of the precious blood of Lord Jesus by whom we were saved.
- As the blood of the Passover lamb was marking the houses of the Israelites to save them, so also the blood of Jesus is the mean and sign of our deliverance.
- The crown is to be put over the head of the child symbolizing his/her belonging to the heavens and his/her victory over death.



Sacrament of Baptism (Rite)



❖ The Commandment to the Parents

- This is the most important part for the parents of the child. The Church urges them to remember the excellence of the mystery that their child has received, and reminds them of their duties concerning this new member of Christ's body.

❖ Discharging the Baptismal Water

- The last step is the prayer upon the water to be returned back to its original nature (simple water) so that we can dispose of it.
- As part of the process, the priest prays: “We ask and entreat Your goodness ...O Lord, to return this water to its first nature to be restored to earth...”