

### **What is Baptism?**

Baptism (or to use its other name, Christening) is a way for you to be able to thank God for the gift of life in your new child and to start your child on the journey of faith with the support of the Church and his or her Godparents. For the child, or in some cases an adult, it's the turning from self and turning to Jesus to guide them in life. It is also becoming a member of the local church and the family of Christ throughout the world. Baptism is often referred to as a 'sacrament', which means a sign that God loves us and has come close to us.

As 'The Church' we take Baptism very seriously so in the Baptism service parents and godparents renew their own baptismal promises and also make promises to bring up their child in the Christian faith by bringing them to church regularly.

Some adults worry that in having their child baptised (Christened) as a baby or infant, they are imposing their views on them and would therefore prefer to wait until the child is older so they can make that decision for themselves. For that reason we also offer a service of Thanksgiving

### **What is Thanksgiving?**

A Thanksgiving service is slightly different. At this service the priest will set aside part of the main church service, usually near the beginning, to give thanks for the life of your child and to pray for them. During the service parents will bring the child to the front of church to be prayed for but they do not make the same promises as in Baptism service. If you choose to have a Thanksgiving as opposed to the Baptism service because you do not feel at that stage you are able to make that bigger commitment of the promises of faith, then there is always the possibility that you may have Baptism at a later date.

In the Thanksgiving service just the parents and child will be asked to come out for the blessing, (there are no Godparents in this service). We do however, encourage family and friends to come along and join with you in thanksgiving.

### **The role of Godparents**

Godparents are very important people who are chosen by the child's parents because they are someone who can be relied upon to pray for their child, tell them about God and encourage them in their Christian faith. Their task is to encourage their godchild to come, along with his or her parents, to church and take an interest in their spiritual life. Godparents must be baptised themselves in order to take on the responsibility, particularly as making very important faith promises on behalf of the child.

If you are not Baptised (Christened) you will not be able to be a Godparent. For many Godparents this is also a time when they ask questions about faith and the church is here to support them as well in their growth in to faith

Here in the Parish of Llantrisant we do not baptise adults in order that they can become Godparents. As an adult we see Baptism as an important statement of you witnessing to your faith and not a means to becoming a Godparent.

But we do encourage adults to be baptised and each year will run a short, six session course called 'Start' which we ask them to undertake before they are baptised.

### **What do I do next?**

Once you have read through this leaflet and decided whether you want to make the commitment to the promises of a Baptism or would like the alternative Thanksgiving service, the next step is to contact the Vicar or Curate. They will look at available dates and book you in for the service you have chosen. Nearer the service date one of them will ring you to arrange a time to come and have a chat about the service, the promises and the format and give you chance to ask any questions and more importantly, get to know you.

### **Some practical issues to consider**

At present the Vicar (or Curate) can only baptise those who live in his or her parish so you will need to check if you are within that area.

Baptisms are usually carried out during the main morning service on a Sunday because whoever is being baptised is then welcomed in to the family of The Church, In special circumstances we will occasionally conduct a service on a Sunday afternoon.

Due to the size of the parish and the demands for Baptism, you may have to be prepared to wait several months for an available date. This is due to the number of Baptisms we perform and also because we only ever baptise the children of one family at a time. We only take multiple baptisms if candidates are related to each other.

### What happens after baptism?

As mentioned earlier, we take Baptism very seriously and want to do all that we can as a church to encourage you and help you and your child to grow in your Christian faith.

There are services in each of the three churches in the parish every Sunday. All the services are slightly different and we can advise which might be most appropriate to you and your family. In Llantrisant church we also have a children's group (Sunday School) which runs during the 11.00a.m. Family Service each week and everyone is welcome to join. This allows parents a time to grow in faith and a safe place for children also to do the same. We also have two youth groups for when the children get older.

For adults, there are various House Groups each week where people meet to study the bible and basically enjoy each others company. There are also opportunities to pray and various social groups and activities. So, lots in which you can become involved and make some life long friends.

*(Please note that we have a Child Protection Policy in place in the parish and a Child Protection Officer. All those who work with children and young people have been CRB checked. We are committed to a safe environment for both children and adults.)*

### Contacting us

If you would like further information or would like to contact parish clergy there are several options.

Viv Parkinson, the Vicar 01443 223356

Email: [vivparkinson@parishofllantrisant.org.uk](mailto:vivparkinson@parishofllantrisant.org.uk)

or Ian Hodges, the Curate 01443 226508

Email: [ianhodges@parishofllantrisant.org.uk](mailto:ianhodges@parishofllantrisant.org.uk)

You can also access our parish website which will give service times and further information about life in the parish.

Go to [www.parishofllantrisant.org.uk](http://www.parishofllantrisant.org.uk)

We look forward to hearing from you.

# Baptism and Thanksgiving in The Parish Of Llantrisant

