

## Responsibility of Godparents

After the baptism the minister will say the following words to you:

*It is now your duty as parent(s) and godparents to see that this child is taught, as soon as he/she is able to learn, the promises you have made in his/her name. And it is your responsibility to ensure that he/she is taught the Christian faith and what it means to trust in Christ.*

*To this end you should bring him/her to church to be taught from the Bible. You should also teach him/her the basics of the Christian faith and how to pray. You are to encourage him/her to lead a godly, Christian life and to follow the example of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And when he/she is old enough you should encourage him/her to publicly confirm the promises made today.*

The key responsibilities are:

**Bring** - or at least encourage the parents to take the child to church. Fellowship is important and at St James we encourage children to worship and we have special Sunday and midweek groups for them.

**Teach** - if you can, do this yourself, otherwise why not buy your godchild a suitable Christian book every so often.

**Encourage** - not just encouraging them to learn, but to live day by day as a follower of Jesus. Perhaps the best way to do this is by giving him/her a good **example**. "Two Ways to Live" sets out a challenge, you can either live your way or God's new way. What example will you give?

Lastly, remember to **pray** for your godchild that they would understand about Jesus and what it means to follow Him.

For further information you can contact the Vicar of St James on 01257-233714.



## Godparents

### What is baptism?

Jesus taught his followers to go into all the world and make disciples baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Gospel of Matthew, chapter 28 verse 19).

We can see in the Bible (especially the Acts of the Apostles) how the early Christians obeyed this command and baptism has been practised ever since.

Christening is another name for baptism although originally it referred to someone becoming a Christian and taking a Christian name.

A godparent is a sponsor for a child, someone who will take responsibility to help the child to understand the Christian faith.

Traditionally a child has at least three godparents, this can include the child's parents, and there should be at least two godparents of the same gender as the child.

This leaflet explains the parts of the baptism service where you as a godparent have something to say, or are being specially spoken to.

### What is a Christian?

The enclosed leaflet, Two Ways to Live, explains simply the Christian faith. It looks at what has gone wrong with the world, who Jesus is, why he died and rose again. It explains that there are two ways to live, either our way, or God's new way.

The baptism service and promises made are about turning away from our own way, accepting who Jesus is, trusting in him and following God's new way.

## The Baptism

Baptism takes place in a normal Sunday morning service during which we also worship God, learn from the Bible and pray. There are usually separate activities and teaching for children during part of the service.

Just before the baptism itself the parents and godparents will be asked to come to the front of church and stand around the font.

The text on the page opposite includes the promises you are asked to make in the name of the child. The words which you have to say are shown in bold type.

The first question and answer are about recognising that there is something wrong with the world - we have all rebelled against God.

The question uses the words of the Apostle's Creed. This has been used at baptism services for at least 1,300 years. The heart of the Creed speaks about Jesus, that He is God's Son who died and rose again for us. As the "Two Ways to Live" booklet explains it is only because of what Jesus did that we can be forgiven by God and have a hope for the future.

The fourth question and answer are about following God's new way. You are making the promise in the name of the child and so you are taking on yourself the responsibility to help him/her understand this as he/she grows.

Then the child is baptised in name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, in accordance with the the command of Jesus.

## Text from the Baptism service

*Parents and godparents to gather round the font.  
You have brought this child to be baptized. You have prayed that our Lord Jesus Christ will receive him/her, forgive him/her, sanctify him/her with the Holy Spirit, and make him/her an heir to heaven and eternal life. You have heard also that our Lord has promised all these things in His gospel and we know that He keeps His promises.*

*At baptism we promise to reject the devil and all evil, constantly to believe God's Word, and to obey His commands. Children should make their own response of faith and obedience towards God, but as this child is at present too young to answer for himself/herself it is proper that this commitment be made in his/her name until he/she is old enough to take it upon himself/herself. I ask therefore:*

*Do you, in the name of this child, renounce the devil and all his works, the empty show and false values of the world, and the sinful desires of the flesh, so that you will not follow nor be led by them?*

***I renounce them all.***

*Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth. Do you believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord? That He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary; that He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; that He descended to the dead. and also that on the third day He rose again; that He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father, and that from there He will come to judge the living and the dead. Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic (which means universal) Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.*

***All: this I firmly believe***

*Do you in the name of this child desire baptism?  
That is my desire.*

*Will you then obey God's commands and serve Him faithfully all the days of your life?  
I will, with the help of God.*