

MYSTAGOGY

Immersion into Baptismal Waters

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the OCIA

*O God,
we rise from
baptismal waters
cleansed, refreshed,
and made new.
May we always live up
to the inheritance
gained through your
life-giving waters.*

Recall the Easter Vigil

You or others approached the font. If it was designed for adult usage of baptismal candidates, you or they entered it and were immersed under or drenched by the pouring of waters. Even if the font could not accommodate an adult body, water from it was poured over the head.

Probe the Mystery

Ordinary water is used for all sorts of purposes. Internally, our bodies need water, so we constantly hydrate ourselves throughout the day. We use it to wash ourselves clean from dirt and grime. A world without clean water would be a world without life.

Christ himself was baptized in the Jordan by John in waters made holy by the One, our Savior, who was immersed into them. Christ provides for us an example. Those who desire his new life must be baptized.

The Greek root word for baptism literally means “plunged.” Baptismal candidates go into those holy waters willingly. Even if they do not physically enter the waters by being plunged into them, their hearts beat quicker as a result of the Holy Spirit given to them in Baptism, their hearts are plunged into newness of life.

How did you feel at your Baptism or as you watched another being baptized? During the Easter season, when we are sprinkled with holy water that recalls our Baptism, what goes through your head and heart?

Savor the Sweetness of Salvation

Each Sunday as you enter into the church for Mass, depending on the design of your worship space, you may be passing by the baptismal font. Many are located inside the entrance to the church. Even if your font is located elsewhere, your entrance doors will have small holy water bowls so that you can dip your fingers in them as you progress into the worship space and remind yourself of your Baptism by making the Sign of the Cross with the water.

Coming into or going out from the church, we remind ourselves that we have been plunged into the life of the Trinity, into their love, holiness, and goodness. By Baptism, love, holiness, and goodness is the path that we travel through life, making progress day by day along with our brothers and sisters in the faith. The water reminds us even as it refreshes us. Is there a special fountain or lake that, when you visit it, delights you? Why is that so?

For three reasons the Savior accepted baptism from John. First, because he was born a man, that he might fulfill a justice and humility of the law. Second, that by his baptism he might confirm John's baptism. And third, that by sanctifying the waters of the Jordan through the descent of the dove, he might show the Holy Spirit's advent in the baptism of believers.

Saint Jerome, *Commentary on Matthew* 1.3.13: CCL 77:18–19

Inspire Others

As you reminisce about your Baptism, invite others to tell you about their own Baptism. Listen to their stories and rejoice that we are one in the Lord, one in the same Spirit of adoption and new life!