

# November

## OVERVIEW

### THE SACRAMENTS



#### VERSE OF THE MONTH

### JOHN 3:5

Jesus answered, “Amen, amen I say to you, no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit.”

#### SAINT OF THE MONTH

### ST. CATHERINE OF ALEXANDRIA

#### LESSON 3

## THE SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION



#### Overview

The aim of this lesson is for your children to understand what it means to be initiated into something, as well as how and why the Sacraments of Initiation bring them into the fullness of the Christian life.

#### Catechism Articles to Read

- 849
- 1115-1116
- 1120
- 1128
- 1131
- 1212
- 1535
- 2013

#### Words to Know

- To Initiate
- Vocation
- Evangelize
- Gospel

## LESSON 4

**BAPTISM****Overview**

In this lesson your children explore the gateway to the Christian life: Baptism. In Baptism, your children were cleansed of the stain of Original Sin and became part of God's family.

**Catechism****Articles to Read**

- › 1213-1284

**Words to Know**

- › Baptism
- › Form
- › Matter
- › Recipient
- › Effect



**BY THE END OF THIS MONTH,  
YOUR CHILDREN SHOULD BE ABLE TO:**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| ✓ Recite this month's<br>Scripture Memorization | ✓ Understand what Baptism<br>is and how it affects us |
| ✓ Define this month's<br>Words to Know          | ✓ Tell you about St.<br>Catherine of Alexandria       |
| ✓ Explain what it means<br>to be "initiated"    |   |



# YOUR *Catholic Home*

## HOLY WATER



Have you ever noticed where the baptismal font is usually located in a cathedral? You will find it near the entrance. This placement signifies that we enter the Christian life through Baptism. We also find fonts of Holy Water near the doors of church buildings. When we enter a church, we dip our fingers in the Holy Water and make the Sign of the Cross. This ritual is meant to help us recall our Baptism and our need for Christ's cleansing.

### **Practice It!**

Bring Holy Water and all of its spiritual benefits into your family life by placing a Holy Water font near the entrance to your home. (To fill it, you can ask your priest to bless water for you, or ask permission to fill a small bottle from your parish baptismal font.) Use the water in the home font to bless yourselves as you come and go each day, to bless the rooms of your house, your children's school things, even your car!

# Celebrate!

## ST. CATHERINE OF ALEXANDRIA NOVEMBER 25



I have become a bride of Christ.  
—St. Catherine of Alexandria



### THINGS TO DO THIS MONTH:

- 1 Mark your calendars with the dates of your family members' Baptisms. Celebrate these days even more than you would a birthday!
- 2 Bring the blessings of holy water into your home with a small font near your front door.

### VERSE OF THE MONTH

#### JOHN 3:5

Jesus answered, "Amen, amen, I say to you, no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit."

#### REMEMBER!

Because of the Sacraments of Initiation, we are given the same vocation as all of Christ's disciples: holiness and evangelization. The word *evangelize* means to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with others.

#### MEMORIZE!

Through Baptism we are freed from sin and reborn as sons of God; we become members of Christ and are incorporated into the Church and made sharers in her mission.



# ST. CATHERINE OF ALEXANDRIA

SAINT OF THE MONTH





# CAR

## *Conversations*

Pretend you are John the Baptist.  
**How do you think he felt when  
Jesus asked to be baptized by him?**

At Jesus' Baptism, the Holy Spirit  
descended and God said, "This  
is my beloved Son, with whom I  
am well pleased." Imagine you are  
one of John the Baptist's disciples  
nearby. **How do you feel when  
you see and hear these things?  
Who do you think Jesus is?**



## LESSON 3

# THE SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION



## Activities and Key Concepts

Activities you will do  
with your children

Key concepts the  
activity will teach

Recommended  
age and time



### What Is an Initiation?

Family discussion

The Sacraments of Initiation make us members of the Church, strengthen us for our life's journey, and give us our vocation as Christians.

**Ages:** All ages

**Time:** 10 minutes



### The Vocation of a Christian

Reading and  
discussion

We are all called to be holy and to share the Gospel.

**Ages:** All ages

**Time:** 10 minutes



## LESSON 3

## WORDS TO KNOW



The Words to Know are words that you and your children should know and understand at the end of this month. Use your best judgment about which words to expect each of your children to learn. For older children, you may want to have them create flashcards to help them remember what they have learned.

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**To Initiate** To formally make a person part of a group.

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**Vocation** The calling of God in which we love and serve Him.

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**Evangelize** To share the Gospel, or the Good News of Jesus Christ, with others.

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**Gospel** The Good News of Jesus Christ.

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## Please choose from the activities for the month.

It is not necessary to complete every activity. We offer a wealth of activities to choose from because each child learns differently, so select the activities that best suit the learning needs of you family. Feel free to shorten or improvise on each activity as necessary. You know best what your family needs!



## What Is an Initiation?

### FAMILY DISCUSSION

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**Age Level:** All ages

**Recommended time:** 10 minutes

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#### What you need to know before you begin:

The Church has seven Sacraments. Of those seven Sacraments, we recognize three as the Sacraments of Initiation because they introduce us to and make us members of the Church, strengthen us for our life's journey, and give us our vocation, or calling, as Christians.

To be initiated means formally to become a part of a group or society. In general, initiations may involve taking an oath, passing a challenge, or enduring a trial. Then upon initiation, the person has a common bond with other members and is given a role or mission. The Sacraments of Initiation resemble this pattern. The Christian life begins with baptismal promises, and then through God's grace we are made members of Christ's Body, the Church. We receive the mission shared by all disciples of Christ to become holy, and to bring the Good News to the world. In Confirmation our baptismal grace is perfected, and we receive a strengthening of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. In the Eucharist, the source and summit of the Christian life, we receive the very Body and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, which nourishes us in our mission to evangelize. We will learn more about these Sacraments throughout the year.

## Discussion

- A. Ask your children to recall a time when they were made part of a group. They may also think of examples from family members' lives. For example:
- their first day of kindergarten
  - their first Cub Scout or American Heritage Girls meeting
  - the day they became part of a sports team
  - older siblings or cousins who matriculated at universities
  - older siblings or cousins who married
  - older siblings or cousins who joined the military
- B. Now ask your child what promise(s) or challenge(s) accompanied this transition, and what new roles or missions came with it. (Not every example will follow this exact pattern, but the point is to look for patterns/similarities.) For example:
- Once in kindergarten, she has to obey the class rules (promise) and is now a student (new role) with the job of learning (mission).
  - At the first Cub Scout meeting, he would have had to take an oath to do his best (promise) and is now a Cub Scout (new role) with the mission of preparing to make morally upright choices (mission).
  - A single woman promises to be true to one man (promise) and is now a wife (new role) with the purpose of helping her husband get to Heaven and welcoming children into their family (mission).
  - A young man takes the enlistment oath and completes training (promise and challenge) and is now a Marine (new role) with the responsibility of defending our nation (mission).
- C. Connect this pattern with the Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist. Ask your children to recall the definition of a Sacrament: a visible sign instituted by Christ to give grace. The Sacraments of Initiation are called that because they introduce us to and make us members of the Church, strengthen us for our life's journey, and give us our vocation, or mission, as Christians.

### NOTE

You may wish to discuss with your older children how the desire for initiation ceremonies/rites of passage transcends human cultures. They have been part of every human society throughout history. When God is a part of these rituals, such as in Baptism, or Holy Matrimony, they are always full of love. When God is left out of them, we see bad practices such as hazing, violent gang initiations, binge drinking, and so forth. These are sinful actions we must avoid. No group that is worth being a part of would expect or demand a violent and hurtful initiation.

## BONUS ACTIVITY

**Initiation Creative Activity**

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**Age Level:** Younger children

**Recommended time:** 10-15 minutes

**What you will need:** Initiation (**page 26** in the children's activity book)

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Have your children draw a picture depicting a time they were made part of a group (e.g., the first day of kindergarten, Cub Scouts, playing on a team, and so forth). Encourage them to show one or more of the parts of an initiation you identified in your family discussion: a promise made, a new role received, and a new mission begun.

They should then color the page listing the Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist.

**Connection to the Catechism**

The sacraments of Christian initiation – Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist – lay the foundations of every Christian life. ...The faithful are born anew by Baptism, strengthened by the sacrament of Confirmation, and receive in the Eucharist the food of eternal life. By means of these sacraments of Christian initiation, they thus receive in increasing measure the treasures of the divine life and advance toward the perfection of charity. (CCC 1212)



## The Vocation of a Christian

### READING AND DISCUSSION

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**Age Level:** All ages

**Recommended time:** 10 minutes

**What you need:** The Vocation of a Christian (**page 27** in the children's activity book)

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#### Activity

- A. Read the essay on “The Vocation of a Christian” and have a discussion about it with your children. For younger children, go over the main points at a level that they will understand. For older children, you may have them read the essay themselves, then discuss with them what they read. The essay is also in the children's activity book on **page 27**.
- B. Make sure to discuss the following points:
  - The Sacraments of Initiation give us a vocation (or calling) to holiness and to the mission to bring the Gospel to every person in the world.
  - Jesus calls us to be holy – to love Him first above all else and love our neighbors as ourselves. The Sacraments of Initiation strengthen us to be able to become holy.
  - Jesus calls us to bring the Good News of His life, Death, and Resurrection to the world.

**NOTE** The word “evangelize” means to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with others. People often use the word today to mean “pressuring” other people to become Christians. This is not the true meaning! Evangelization is a joyful action. We should use both words and actions to bring the love of Christ to the world.



*Sermon on the Mount*, by Bl. Fra Angelico.

## The Vocation of a Christian Essay

The Sacraments of Initiation are the foundation of the vocation of each Christian person—a vocation to holiness and to the mission of bringing the Gospel to every person in the world. The true home of a Christian is not earth but Heaven.

### Our Vocation to Holiness

Jesus tells us in Matthew's Gospel: "So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect" (5:48). He tells us more about what that means in Matthew 22:37-39: "He said to him, 'You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"

Jesus is telling us that to be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect means to love Him first above all else and to love our neighbors as ourselves.

We are all called to be holy. Because of the Sacraments of Initiation—Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist—we are given the vocation of holiness that all of Jesus' disciples share, and we are strengthened by the Sacraments of Initiation to be able to attain that holiness. To be perfect as our Heavenly Father is perfect is to be holy. And Jesus then tells how to be holy, which is to obey the two greatest commandments, to love God above all else, and to love our neighbor as ourselves. This is how we become saints.



## The Mission to Evangelize

Pope Paul VI wrote that the Church “exists to evangelize.” Evangelization is the sharing of the Gospel by word and example of life. Jesus Himself gave the Apostles this mission before He ascended into Heaven. “Then Jesus approached and said to them, ‘All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age’ (Matthew 28:18-20). Evangelization is doing exactly what Jesus commanded His Apostles to do. The Sacraments of

Initiation, as we’ve learned, give us the same vocation as all of Christ’s disciples, which includes evangelization.

The word *evangelization* comes from the Latin word *evangelion*, which means “gospel.” Our word *gospel* comes from the Greek word *eungelion* which means “good message” or “good news.” Although we often use the word *gospel* to mean the four books of the Bible by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, the word has a much richer meaning. The gospel is the Good News of Jesus Christ: that He came down from Heaven, died for us on the Cross, and rose from the dead to offer us salvation. At its heart, the call to evangelization means we are called to share the Good News in our lives.

### BONUS ACTIVITY

## Help Me to Be Holy Prayer

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**Age Level:** All ages

**Recommended time:** 5 minutes

**What you will need:** Help Me to Be Holy (**page 30** in the children’s activity book)

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Have your children write a prayer to the Holy Spirit asking Him to help you grow in holiness as you live out the mission you received at Baptism. For younger children, have him or her dictate the poem to you while you write it down. Then pray it together.

## BONUS ACTIVITY

**The Mission of a Disciple**

**Age Level:** Older children

**Recommended time:** 10-15 minutes

**What you will need:** The Mission of a Disciple (**page 29** in the children's activity book)

Have your older children look up and write out Matthew 5:48 and Matthew 22:37-39. Then help them reflect on the Scripture passages by discussing the following questions:

1. Jesus knows our hearts better than anyone, even better than we know ourselves. He knows that we tend to sin. So how can He ask us to be perfect? *The answer is that He doesn't leave us alone to do it. If we tried to be perfect on our own, we would never succeed. We need Jesus to do it.*
2. To be perfect like our Father in Heaven is to be holy. What does Jesus tell us to do in order to be holy? *"You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself."*
3. What are some ways you can use both words and actions to bring the love of Christ to the world? *Answers will vary.*

**Connection to the Catechism**





Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist are sacraments of Christian initiation. They ground the common vocation of all Christ's disciples, a vocation to holiness and to the mission of evangelizing the world. They confer the graces needed for the life according to the Spirit during this life as pilgrims on the march towards the homeland. (CCC 1533)

## LESSON 4

## BAPTISM



## Activities and Key Concepts



Activities you will do with your children	Key concepts the activity will teach	Recommended age and time
 <b>What Is Baptism?</b> Scripture reading and discussion	Baptism is the gateway to the Christian life	<b>Ages:</b> All ages <b>Time:</b> 10 minutes
 <b>Baptism Prefigured</b> Scripture search	The Great Flood, the parting of the Red Sea, and the crossing of the river Jordan foreshadow Baptism.	<b>Ages:</b> Ages 8 and up <b>Time:</b> 10 minutes
 <b>The Effects of Baptism</b> Activity and Discussion	In Baptism our sins are forgiven, we are reborn in Christ and made sons and daughters of God, made members of the Church, and receive an indelible mark on our souls.	<b>Ages:</b> All ages <b>Time:</b> 10 minutes
 <b>Remembering Your Baptism</b> Discussion and activity	At your Baptism, you were set apart for eternal life with God.	<b>Ages:</b> All ages <b>Time:</b> 10-15 minutes

## LESSON 4

## BAPTISM



### Activities and Key Concepts (continued)

Activities you will do with your children	Key concepts the activity will teach	Recommended age and time
 <b>Jesus' Baptism</b> Scripture and sacred art activity	Jesus was baptized to teach us the way to salvation.	<b>Ages:</b> All ages <b>Time:</b> 10 minutes
 <b>Baptismal Garment</b> Grace person activity	Review of the meaning of the white baptismal garment.	<b>Ages:</b> All ages <b>Time:</b> 10 minutes

## LESSON 4

## WORDS TO KNOW



The Words to Know are words that you and your children should know and understand at the end of this month. Use your best judgment about which words to expect each of your children to learn. For older children, you may want to have them create flashcards to help them remember what they have learned.

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<b>Baptism</b>	The first Sacrament, in which we are reborn in Christ through water.
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<b>Form</b>	The words spoken in a Sacrament.
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<b>Matter</b>	The physical material used in a Sacrament.
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<b>Recipient</b>	The person who receives a Sacrament.
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<b>Effect</b>	The way a Sacrament changes us.
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# What is Baptism?

## SCRIPTURE READING AND DISCUSSION

**Age Level:** All ages

**Recommended time:** 10 minutes

**What you need:** Bible

### What you need to know before you begin:

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* provides a simple explanation for what Jesus does for us in Baptism: “Holy Baptism is the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit, and the door which gives access to the other sacraments. Through Baptism we are freed from sin and reborn as sons of God; we become members of Christ, are incorporated into the Church and made sharers in her mission: Baptism is the sacrament of regeneration through water in the word” (CCC 1213).

Baptism is the very participation in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. St. Paul told the Church at Rome: “We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life” (Romans 6:3-4).

Baptism is necessary for salvation. By our Baptism, we are made new creations – we have “put on Christ” (Galatians 3:27) – and with the support of the whole Christian community, we advance on the journey toward salvation.

### Activity

A. Read aloud John 3:1-7 to your children:

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. He came to Jesus at night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one can do these signs that you are doing unless God is with him.”



Jesus answered and said to him, “Amen, amen, I say to you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.”

Nicodemus said to him, “How can a person once grown old be born again? Surely he cannot reenter his mother’s womb and be born again, can he?”

Jesus answered, “Amen, amen, I say to you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of flesh is flesh and what is born of spirit is spirit. Do not be amazed that I told you, ‘You must be born from above.’”

B. Then read aloud Mark 16:16:

Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved; whoever does not believe will be condemned.

C. Discuss with your children that Jesus is telling us in Scripture that rebirth in Baptism is necessary to go to Heaven. When we are baptized, we die a spiritual death with Christ and when we come out of the waters, we are reborn in the Spirit. We are reborn as sons and daughters of God, and because of this rebirth, we can now receive the rest of the Sacraments. That is why the *Catechism* calls the Sacrament of Baptism the “gateway to life in the Spirit” and “the door which gives us access to the other Sacraments” (CCC 1213).



### Connection to the Catechism

The fruit of Baptism, or baptismal grace, is a rich reality that includes forgiveness of original sin and all personal sins, birth into the new life by which man becomes an adoptive son of the Father, a member of Christ and a temple of the Holy Spirit. By this very fact the person baptized is incorporated into the Church, the Body of Christ, and made a sharer in the priesthood of Christ. (CCC 279)

## BONUS ACTIVITY

**Baptism Is the Gateway**


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**Age Level:** All ages

**Recommended time:** 5 minutes

**What you will need:** Baptism Gateway (**page 77** of this guide) a piece of light colored construction paper, glue, markers and/or crayons

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- A. Tear out the Baptism: The Gateway to Life in the Spirit page on **page 77**. CUT along the dotted lines and FOLD along the solid lines (on either side of the large main gate) so that the gate opens outward. Once you fold out the two panels to allow the gates to open, glue the page onto a piece of light colored construction paper. Make sure not to put glue on the gates themselves, or they will not open.
- B. Ask your children to recall the names of the other six Sacraments (Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance and Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick, Marriage, and Holy Orders). Using markers or crayons, have them write the six Sacraments on the construction paper inside the open doors of the gateway.
- C. As your children write the names of the Sacraments inside the gateway, explain that in Baptism, we are reborn as sons and daughters of God, and because of this rebirth, we can now receive the rest of the Sacraments. That is why the *Catechism* calls the Sacrament of Baptism the “gateway to life in the Spirit” and “the door which gives us access to the other Sacraments” (CCC 1213).



## ACTIVITY 2

## Baptism Prefigured

### SCRIPTURE SEARCH

**Age Level:** Ages 8 and up

**Recommended time:** 10 minutes

**What you need:** Bible, Baptism Prefigured (**page 31** in the children's activity book)



*The Deluge.* by Michelangelo.

### What you need to know before you begin:

Jesus' Baptism and His commissioning of the Apostles to baptize are the culmination of thousands of years of preparation for the Sacrament, as God prefigured the Sacrament of Initiation throughout His saving work in salvation history.

From the very beginning, when the Spirit of God hovered over the primordial waters, to Noah and the Great Flood, to the crossing of the Red Sea and the River Jordan, we have always understood the signs that have pointed the way to Baptism. God's people pass from chaos, death, slavery, and sin, through powerful and life-giving waters, to new life in grace and freedom as a new creation.

## Activity

Ask your older children to turn to **Baptism Prefigured (page 31 in the children's activity book)**. Have them independently look up the Bible verses and write short summaries of the passages, making sure to include who is in the story and what happened. Then, have them connect the stories to Baptism, explaining how God used water in the story just like He uses the waters of Baptism.

### Answers:

1. **Genesis 6:5-8, 7:12-21:** The story of Noah and the flood. The world was overrun with wickedness, except for Noah, who was faithful to God. God flooded the earth, wiping out the wicked while saving Noah and his family. God used the waters to “make an end of sin and a new beginning of goodness” (CCC 1219).
2. **Exodus 14: 10-31:** The story of Moses and the Israelites crossing the Red Sea. After leaving Egypt, the Israelites were being pursued by Pharaoh and his army. The Israelites cried out to God. He parted the Red Sea, allowing the Israelites to pass on dry ground, then released the waters to flow back on the Egyptians, destroying their army. God used the waters of the Red Sea to free the Israelites just like He uses the waters of Baptism to free us from sin.
3. **Joshua 3:14-17:** The story of the Israelites crossing the Jordan River. When the priests carrying the Ark of the Covenant reached the river and submerged their feet, God held back the water, allowing the Israelites to cross into the Promised Land. God used the water to give the gift of the Promised Land, which is an image of eternal life, to the Israelites just as He gives us the gift of eternal life in Baptism.



### Connection to the Catechism

[T]he Church solemnly commemorates the great events in salvation history that already prefigured the mystery of Baptism....

The Church has seen in Noah's ark a prefiguring of salvation by Baptism, for by it “a few, that is, eight persons, were saved through water”...

[T]he crossing of the Red Sea, literally the liberation of Israel from the slavery of Egypt....

Baptism is prefigured in the crossing of the Jordan River by which the People of God received the gift of the land promised to Abraham's descendants. (CCC 1217-1222)



## The Effects of Baptism

### ACTIVITY AND DISCUSSION

**Age Level:** All ages

**Recommended time:** 10 minutes

**What you need:** The Effects of Baptism (**page 32** in the children's activity book)

#### What you need to know before you begin:

Baptism is a visible sign that effects what it signifies, as given to us directly by Christ.

In Baptism, the baptized are:

- Forgiven of all sin, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit are infused into their souls.
- Reborn into new life in Christ. This means they are made new creatures in the sight of God and part of His family, making them co-heirs to all God's promises.
- Made members of the Body of Christ and temples of the Holy Spirit. This allows them access to all the other Sacraments and allows them to share in the priesthood of Christ, taking up Christ's mission to share the Gospel and make disciples.
- Given an indelible spiritual mark on their soul. No sin can remove this seal from the soul. It marks him forever as belonging to God, set apart for the day of redemption and eternal life with Him (see CCC 1279-1280).

#### Activity

- A. Have your older children turn to **The Effects of Baptism (page 32 in the children's activity book)**. Ask them to read the *Catechism* quotes on the worksheet and write each of them in their own words.

- B. As your older children work through the activity, explain the effects of Baptism to your younger children in a way they will understand. Make sure to explain all of the effects: forgiveness of sins, rebirth in Christ, being made members of the Church, and given an indelible spiritual mark.

#### BONUS ACTIVITY

### Baptism SketchPad video

**Age Level:** All ages

**Recommended time:** 6 minutes

**What you need:** Sophia SketchPad Baptism video, found at **SophiaSketchPad.org**

Together, watch the six-minute Sophia SketchPad video on Baptism. The free video is available at **SophiaSketchPad.org**. Ask your children what they thought the most interesting part of the video was.







## Remembering Your Baptism

### DISCUSSION AND ACTIVITY

**Age Level:** All ages

**Recommended time:** 10-15 minutes

**What you need:** Baptismal Remembrance (**page 33** in the children's activity book), family photos, baptismal sign keepsakes

#### What you need to know before you begin:

At each Baptism, there are several visible signs that point to these invisible realities:

- **Water**, which is part of the essential rite of Baptism, symbolizes death, purification, regeneration, and renewal.
- **The candle**, lit from the Easter candle, symbolizes how Christ has enlightened the baptized.
- **The white garment** symbolizes that the baptized person has put on Christ, and has risen with Christ.
- **Oil** symbolizes the gift of the Holy Spirit to the new Christian, who is anointed priest, prophet, and king.

#### Activity

- A. Explain to your children that Sacraments have matter and form. The matter is the physical material used. The form refers to the words that are spoken. In the Sacrament's most fundamental form, the minister of Baptism (ordinarily a priest) immerses the person being baptized three times in water (or pours water three times upon his head) while saying the words given to us by Jesus, "I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (see Matthew 28:19).

- B. Then have children turn to **Baptismal Remembrance (page 33 in the children's activity book)**. Work individually with each of your children to fill in the information about their Baptisms. Discuss how God placed an indelible spiritual mark on their souls that marked them forever as belonging to God. They were set apart for eternal life with Him. Your children's Baptism days were the most important days of their lives!
- C. Tell them stories of any special or memorable things that happened at their Baptisms and show them photos, if you have any. Then go over the visible signs of Baptism (water, candle, white garment, oils), explain how each was used at their Baptisms, and explain what they signify. If you kept any of these items (like the candle or the white garment), you may want to get them out to do a show-and-tell as you go over the signs.



## Jesus' Baptism

### SCRIPTURE AND SACRED ART ACTIVITY

**Age Level:** All ages

**Recommended time:** 10 minutes

**What you need:** Bible, Jesus' Baptism (**page 34** in the children's activity book), markers and/or crayons

#### Activity

- A. Show your children the art on the following page while you read aloud the story of the Baptism of Jesus from Matthew 3:13-17:

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him.

John tried to prevent him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and yet you are coming to me?"

Jesus said to him in reply, "Allow it now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he allowed him.

After Jesus was baptized, he came up from the water and behold, the heavens were opened [for him], and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove [and] coming upon him. And a voice came from the heavens, saying, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

- B. Explain that in this picture we see what happened when Jesus was baptized: the Holy Spirit descended in the form of a dove, and the Father's voice was heard. The Father told everyone that He was pleased with His Son Jesus. Though we cannot see it, the same thing happens every time a person is baptized.
- C. Have younger children turn to **Jesus' Baptism (page 34 in the children's activity book)**, and while they complete the coloring page, explain that Jesus was without sin and did not need to be baptized. But He allowed His cousin John to baptize Him to teach us how to be holy and to show us the way to salvation.



*The Baptism of Christ. by Antoine Coypel.*



### Connection to the Catechism

Our Lord voluntarily submitted himself to the baptism of St. John, intended for sinners, in order to fulfill all righteousness. (CCC 1224)



## Baptismal Garment

### GRACE PERSON ACTIVITY

**Age Level:** All ages

**Recommended time:** 10 minutes

**What you need:** Baptismal Garment Template (page 35 in the children's activity book), scissors

#### Activity

A. Before you begin, read aloud to your children John 13:5-8:

Then [Jesus] poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and dry them with the towel around his waist. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Master, are you going to wash my feet?"

Jesus answered and said to him, "What I am doing, you do not understand now, but you will understand later."

Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet."

Jesus answered him, "Unless I wash you, you will have no inheritance with me."

B. Focus your children on Jesus' words to St. Peter: "Unless I wash you, you will have no inheritance with me."

C. Ask your children: "What is an inheritance? Who normally receives an inheritance?" The answer is that, ordinarily, a child inherits things from his parents. Remember that Jesus is God. We become God's children in Baptism. When Jesus washes the feet of the Apostles, it reminds us of how He cleanses us in Baptism! This is why we receive a white garment when we are baptized. The garment is a sign that we have "put on Christ," who is pure and sinless.

D. Next, ask your children: "What inheritance do we receive from Him when He washes us?" The grace we receive in Baptism makes us more like our Heavenly Father, and

the home He offers us is Heaven. We might squander it, like any inheritance, if we choose to reject His love. This is why it's so important to pray always and to receive the Sacraments!

- E. After you have completed this Scripture reflection, have each family member tear out **Baptismal Garment Template (page 35 in the children's activity book)** and cut out the garment. If you wish, decorate it with white fabric, lace, or ribbon, then have each person place it on your Grace Person.



### Connection to the Catechism

The white garment symbolizes that the person baptized has put on Christ, has risen with Christ. (CCC 1243)



# St. Catherine of Alexandria

## SAINT OF THE MONTH

**Age Level:** All ages

**Recommended time:** 10 minutes

**What you need:** St. Catherine of Alexandria (**page 36** in the children's activity book), markers and/or crayons



### Activity

Read aloud the story of this month's saint. You may also want to show them the full page saint image. While you are reading or sometime the next day, have them complete the coloring page on **page 37** of the children's activity book.

### Biography of St. Catherine of Alexandria

CATHERINE was born in the year 287 in Alexandria, Egypt. When she was young, she read and studied as much as she could. She had a vision of Jesus and Mary, and she became a Christian. This was brave because in the time and place Catherine lived, being a Christian was illegal. The penalty was often torture and death!

But Catherine was not afraid. Since she was the governor's daughter, she could talk to the Roman emperor, Maxentius. She told the emperor to stop being cruel to Christians. The emperor brought 50 people to debate with Catherine. But Catherine was a very good speaker. She not only won the debate, but even won more than 200 converts, including members of Maxentius's own family. The emperor was very angry. He had the new Christians put to death, and he threw Catherine in jail.

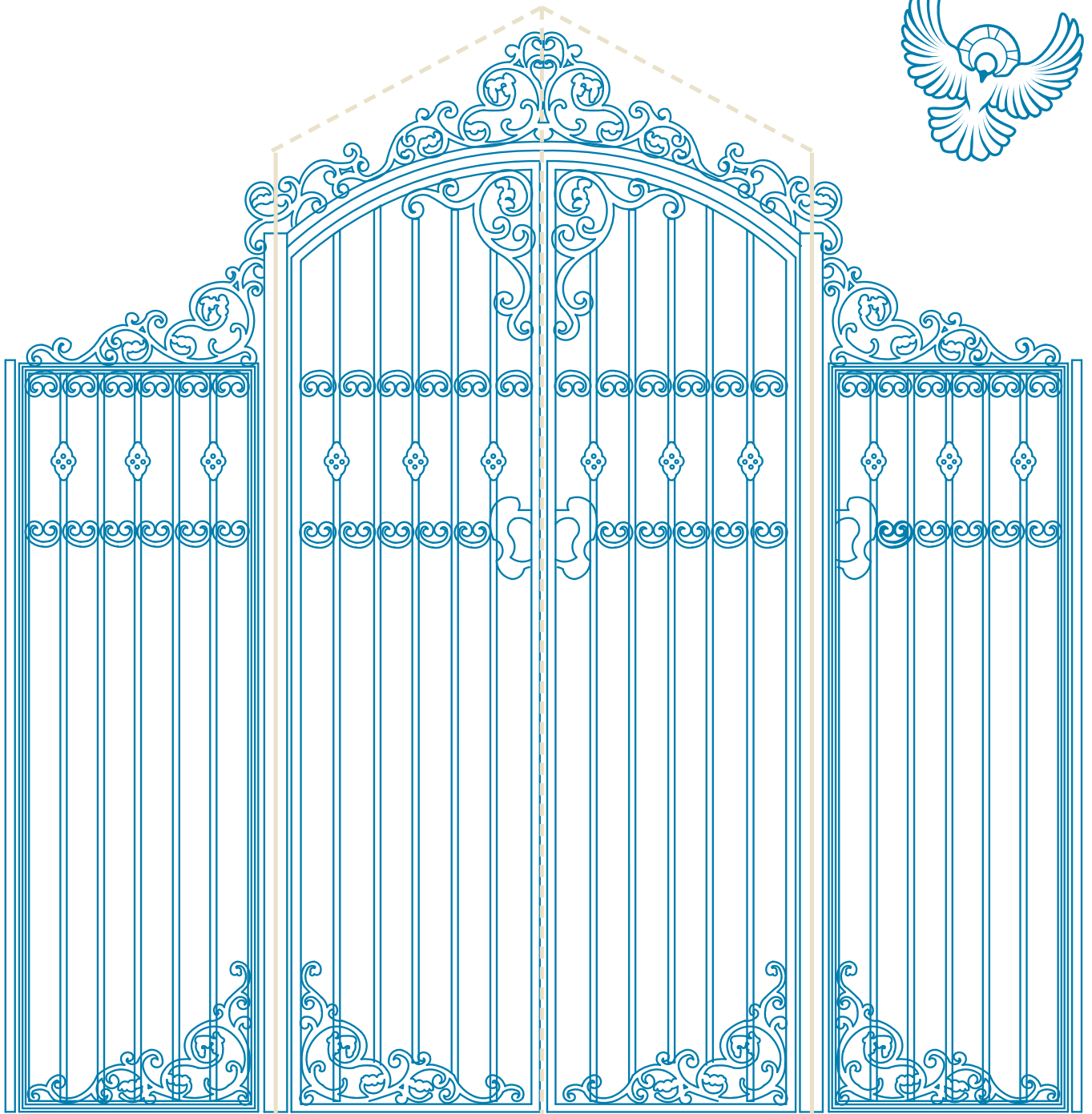
Even in prison, St. Catherine gave every moment to Christ. Many people came to visit her, including the emperor's wife. Many of these people became Christians after their meetings with Catherine. The emperor had them all killed.

When the emperor saw that torture and imprisonment did not stop Catherine from speaking the truth about Jesus Christ, he tried something new. He offered to marry her if she would deny the Catholic Faith. She refused. Catherine told him, "I have become a bride of Christ." So the emperor sentenced Catherine to death. She was 18 years old.

St. Catherine of Alexandria is a great example of courage. She is the patron saint of philosophers, preachers, and young female students. Her feast day is November 25.

# BAPTISM

*The Gateway to Life in the Spirit*







# November in Review

## THIS MONTH YOU EXPLORED AS A FAMILY THE QUESTIONS:

How did I become a part of God's family?

Why was I baptized?

What happens during a Baptism?

### In Lesson 3 your children learned:

- The Sacraments of Initiation make us members of the Church, strengthen us for our life's journey, and give us our vocation as Christians.
- We are all called to be holy and to evangelize.

### In Lesson 4 your children learned:

- Baptism is the gateway to the Christian life, and is necessary for salvation.
- The Sacrament of Baptism is pre-figured in the Old Testament.
- In Baptism our sins are forgiven, we are reborn in Christ and made sons and daughters of God, made members of the Church, and receive an indelible mark on our souls.

In this space below, write some reflections about the past month. What was your favorite activity? What didn't go as well? Will you adjust anything about what you're doing? What special intentions do you have for next month?