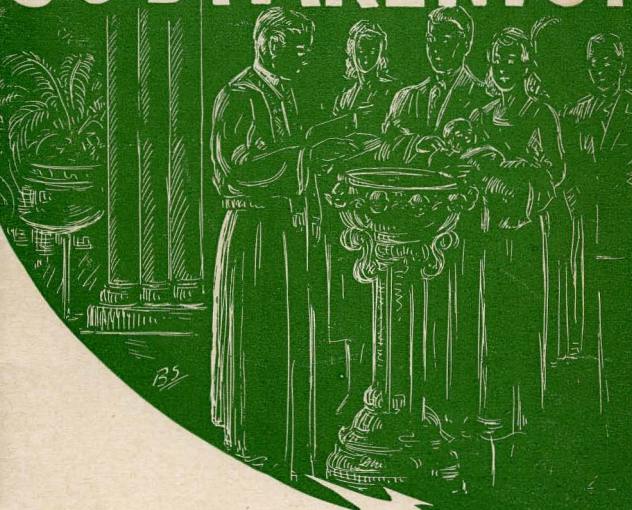


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Attention,
GODPARENTS!



by **DANIEL A. LORD, S.J.**

*A QUEEN'S WORK
PAMPHLET*

ATTENTION, GODPARENTS!

***Some Hints for
People Who Are and
People Who Are About to Be
Godparents***

by

DANIEL A. LORD, S.J.



THE QUEEN'S WORK
3115 South Grand Boulevard
St. Louis 18, Missouri

Imprimi potest:

Daniel H. Conway, S.J.

Praep. Prov. Missourianae

Nihil obstat:

Thomas V. Cahill, C.M.

Censor Librorum

Imprimatur:

✠ Joseph E. Ritter

Archiepiscopus Sancti Ludovici

Sancti Ludovici, die 29 Martii 1951

•
First printing, May 1951

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THE QUEEN'S WORK

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ATTENTION, GODPARENTS!

By Daniel A. Lord, S.J.

EXPECTANT parents can pick up any of a dozen helpful volumes.

This is a booklet for expectant godparents.

All sorts of writers have written guides for parents.

This is a little guide for those who at some time or other became godfathers and godmothers, especially if, in later years, they began to wonder what they did when they stood over a loudly articulate baby and made some half-heard promises. Anyhow, what are they supposed to be doing when the child starts to grow up?

Does their responsibility begin and end at the ceremony?

Does their total obligation consist in an occasional pat on the head of the growing child and a present recurrently dropped in the child's outstretched fists?

You Are Invited

Maybe it is the custom in your family for relatives to be godparents of their cousins and their nieces and nephews as they arrive. If so, the invitation is usually a rather informal thing.

"Bill called up this afternoon, honey. Susan's getting along fine and the baby is going to be baptized Sunday afternoon. Bill asked if you and I would be the godparents. Okeh?"

And the dutiful husband who knows very well that his wife has already accepted the invitation — after all, Susan is her favorite sister — nods agreement and that is that.

More Formally

But sometimes the invitation to be godfather and godmother comes as a sign of friend-

ship, a mark of trust, what is meant to be a compliment.

DEAR BETTY AND BERT,

Thanks so much for your note of congratulations. The new Heir Apparent is a whopper. Ask Susan. She's still staggering a bit from that bouncer. But we're both happy, and we're glad to know you think that Bill Junior had the good sense to pick a right family to be born in.

Sunday is the afternoon we're turning the little heathen into a Christian. Nothing would please Susan and me more than to have our best friends become the godfather and godmother of our first-born. Will you be nice enough to stand up when Bill the Second gets his official title and is properly established as an heir of the kingdom of heaven?

Susan sends her love.

Cordially, BILL

Outward Sign of Many Things

Betty and Bert read that letter with a warm inner glow. The invitation is a sort of ultimate sign of friendship. The parents of Bill Junior want to endow the lad with another pair of parents — godparents, this time. So out of all their friends they settled upon these friends of their youth, these companions of many a pleasant frolic, these partners of golf and contract, and asked them, in a sort of casually charming way, to join the family.

So Bert says, grinning to himself, "Good old Bill!" And Betty says, thinking proudly of her own two healthy babies, "I'll bet Susan's baby is a beauty. Too bad it isn't a girl to inherit Susan's looks."

Bert retorts, "If the kid grows up to be half the man that Bill is — brains *and* looks — he won't do so bad."

So they shoot back a prompt acceptance, don their best clothes, pick up the belaced infant and the bemused father, and hie them to the Church of the Holy Innocents, where the new little innocent puts on a vigorous show, does some magnificent yowling, catches the priest's finger when he touches his mouth with salt, and proves that he's got the legs of a punter and the lungs of a tobacco auctioneer.

In triumph the godparents carry home the little new Christian and sit down with the family for a feast that celebrates a new soul dedicated to God.

Betty kisses Susan and congratulates her, though the mother is quite beyond the need of any praise — hasn't she seen her own incomparable baby? Bill and Bert shake hands feelingly. Then when they get back into their car, Bill says to Susan, "That's that"; Susan says to Bill, "Not nearly as pretty or as intelligent as either of ours"; and the day and the duty is over.

Over . . . or Is It?

Now if you have ever had that happen to you, or something rather like it, it might be well to pause to recall what it was you actually did.

Or if ever you are invited at some future date, it might be the intelligent thing to realize just what you are asked to do.

For you had or will have part in the wonderful sacrament of baptism. Though we're not taking time now to discuss the meaning and value of that glorious beginning of the Christian life, your part was and is significant, something that extends far beyond kissing your godchild on the cheek and giving him on birthdays and at Christmas an electric train or a talking doll — depending on the child's gender.

The Start of the Christian Life

On second thought, it might be a good idea for us, any of us and at almost any time, to give a more than passing glance at baptism.

For baptism is the world's greatest revolution.

In the course of that brief series of gestures and words, the kingdom of Satan and the powers of evil are overthrown in a young soul. The kingdom of Christ is there established. The guilt of original sin, if not all its effects, is banished, and replacing it is the power and flow of sanctifying grace. The little pagan who enters the church, greeted by a priest wearing a purple stole, is turned into a glorious little child of God, whose conversion is greeted by the turning of the priestly stole from purple to white.

What Adam lost in Eden when he committed mankind's first sin is thus essentially restored through the merits of the Savior, who personally established this sacrament as the gateway into His kingdom. The right to heaven which Adam tossed aside is restored. The child of a mere man and his wife becomes the adopted child of the great God Himself. And upon his soul has been placed a mark that distinguishes the child, in the eyes of God and the heavenly hosts, from all earth's unbaptized—a mark that will last as long as God will last.

The child has been literally reborn of "water and the Holy Spirit"; for what has happened has given to the soul of the child a God-like life that will make it possible for him to do throughout his earthly journey things pleasing to God and meritorious of heaven, while some day, because of that life, he will in heaven be able to do the God-like

acts of seeing, knowing, loving, and possessing the infinite God Himself for all eternity.

Now the Godparents

“Godparents” is an English term for the sponsors who hold the child at the baptismal font and in his name make the sacred promises.

In the liturgy of the Church the word is *patrini*, from the same root as *pater*, “father,” but really meaning sponsors.

The Church believes in the practice of infant baptism for the simple reason that it believes explicitly in the words of Christ’s spoken command. Christ made His statements about baptism broad and sweeping. He ordered His disciples to preach the Gospel to every creature, baptizing them all in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. He said that “unless a man be born again of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” The command reached out to all the human race. The necessity of rebirth by water and the Holy Spirit regarded all mankind, with no limitation of age. So the Catholic Church, following the practice of the earliest apostolic period, calls for all to be baptized.

Baptism works of its own inherent power. When water is used and the words of Christ’s command spoken, the human soul of any age is reborn and turned from its fallen state (the consequence of Adam’s sin) to the elevated state (regained by Christ’s passion and death). So in case of necessity baptism may be administered without godparents. Water and the words, properly used in accordance with the intention of Christ, have their proper effects.

Godparents, however, are expected by, and

have always been present in, the most ancient practice of the Church. Since the child cannot ask for baptism or make the promises that bind his precious soul to God, the sponsors do for him the glorious things which later on he will be able to do for himself.

In the Child's Place

The sceptic snarls at this point: "By what right do you put words into the mouth of the child? How dare you inflict upon him a status about which he knows nothing? How can you assume for him obligations which later on he may not want to accept?"

The same sceptic is likely the one who also snarls, "I didn't ask my parents to bring me into the world; why should I be grateful for the gift of life?"

As Christians we believe that life is precious, the fundamental gift of God. We believe that parents who "force health" upon their children are doing them a favor. We think that a father and mother are right who see to it that their children have a beautiful home, good clothes, wholesome food; that a father is right who works hard that his children will always have a decent inheritance—physical, mental, spiritual, and financial. We who love America do not wait until the child is twenty-one before we ask him if he would like to be an American. We give him the privileges of American citizenship from birth.

Even more we think that the gift of supernatural grace, the right to be God's child, citizenship in the kingdom of heaven, the glorious heritage of eternal happiness, the endowments Christ won for humanity through His wondrous life and sacrificial death are rich prizes . . . of which no child should be deprived, for which any human being should be

in earthly and eternal life profoundly grateful.

And when the godparents stand with the child at baptism, they ask for these priceless gifts and accept them in the child's name.

Let's Look at Godparents

The Roman Ritual, constantly used in administering the sacraments, but regrettably usually a sealed book to the laity, goes into details about the sponsors or godfather and godmother.

Only one godparent is absolutely necessary. Two are permitted, a godmother as well as a godfather. Only the two are allowed.

The godparent must be a baptized Catholic. The ritual suggests what is obvious, that he must be sane. But it adds that the godparents must have the intention of fulfilling the obligations of their new office.

Godparents of a Catholic child cannot be Protestants, Jewish, or members of a schismatic church. They cannot be excommunicated Catholics nor Catholics under ecclesiastical condemnation. They cannot be notorious sinners or criminals.

Since, in a way, the godparents supplement the functions of the natural father and mother and are supposed to stand ready to take up the duties of father and mother, should this be necessary, they cannot be godfather or godmother for their own children. Nor can a husband be the godfather of his converted wife, or the wife the godmother of her converted husband.

Relationship

The reason for this is simple. Godparents mean what the word expresses: the Church regards them as contracting a "spiritual rela-

tionship" toward their godchildren. The little baptized infant becomes their son in God, their daughter in God; and they correlatively become truly the father in God or the mother in God of this child.

Just to forestall a difficulty, let's remember this:

Once on a time, godparents contracted a spiritual relationship toward one another. So, many years ago, some real problems arose. An engaged couple acted as godparents for a baby; later on they discovered that they had contracted a spiritual relationship which made their marriage invalid. Because of this possibility many a young man declined to be godfather when he noticed that the proposed godmother was a singularly attractive young lady; he ran no chances of finding that, after he might fall in love with her, he was barred from marriage by a spiritual relationship.

That is no longer the case. The godfather and godmother contract a spiritual relationship to their godchild. If when the girl child grew up, for example, her godfather wished to marry her, he could not without a special dispensation. The godfather and godmother of the same child, however, contract no such relationship. They may marry later on should they so wish.

To Be a Godparent

Godparents should be at least fourteen years old. Exceptions for this can be made for real reasons.

The godparents should know the essentials of the Catholic faith.

The reason for this is the fact of their later responsibility for the Catholic education of the child, should the parents for any reason fail in their duty.

As a matter of fact, this obligation to provide a needed Catholic training is one of the main reasons why the Church requires godparents. More than ever nowadays, children must not merely be baptized Catholics; they must be educated in the essentials of the faith. So when godparents accept the office, they take with it stern—but beautiful—obligations:

They must see to it that their godchildren are brought up Catholics.

If the parents die, the duty of watching over that Catholic training devolves upon the godmother and godfather.

In cases where the natural parents fail in this duty, the godparents may actually have to enter into the situation and supply what the parents have neglected to do.

So when you hold that child in your arms or lay your hand upon him, remember that you have assumed a serious obligation, the obligation of seeing that the supernatural life of faith given him in baptism grows and develops. You may, in the course of time, have to provide for a Catholic education. You may find yourself with the real responsibility for seeing that he gets to know his Faith, practice his Faith, and grow into Catholic manhood.

Who Can't Be Godparents?

Religious—that is nuns, brothers with religious vows, or priests of religious congregations—cannot be godparents. Their vows make it extremely difficult for them to accept the responsibilities of godparenthood. They have the vow of poverty; hence, should the parents not be able to give the children a religious education, these religious would not have the money to provide it. Their vow of obedience moves them about, and they might

not, because of appointment to some remote place, be able to keep an eye on the progress and spiritual growth of their spiritual charges.

A diocesan priest may be a godfather only if his bishop gives permission.

Exact Duties

Let's see exactly what the official Roman Ritual has to say about the duties of godparents. We'll give the exact words:

"It is the obligation of sponsors (godparents), from the very fact that they have undertaken this responsibility, to regard the child as a spiritual son or daughter entrusted to them. They must carefully watch over those things which relate to the instruction of the child in correct Christian living, so that the child may show forth in his entire life the obligations which the godparents in the solemn ceremony have vowed he would keep."

Disbarred

Perhaps you wondered, when you heard that excommunicated people could not be godparents, whom exactly that would mean. Who is barred these days?

Well, a person who has been divorced and remarried could not be a godparent. Nor could a Catholic person who has married outside the Church. They would not be able to promise to set an example to their spiritual children when they are already living as bad Catholics.

Reversing that a little, a Catholic may not be a godfather or godmother for a Protestant child in or out of a Protestant church.

Every once in a while a Protestant friend will ask a close Catholic associate to stand sponsor for his child's baptism.

“My baby is going to be baptized Sunday in the Compton Avenue Church. Our minister is very broadminded, and I’d love to have you act as one of the godparents.”

No Catholic can accept. In fact, if the Protestant understood what godparents promise in a correct baptism, he would not want a Catholic to accept. For Catholics do not regard baptism as a pleasant social function. Nor do we, as do some Protestants, think of it as the simple rite of initiation, an external sign that indicates the soul has already been saved and sanctified.

Patrick Kelly acting as godparent for young Watson Wilson would be promising to see to it that the little Protestant was brought up a good Catholic. Kelly could not make such a promise; and the parents of young Watson would feel with perfect justice that they had been tricked and duped and betrayed if he did.

The Ceremony

Now, my dear godparents, let’s approach the ceremony of baptism, the great and initial sacrament that Christ commanded for all mankind, to see your place in what dramatically and realistically will occur.

You, the child, and the priest—you with God are the important ones. For a time the real mother and father of the child take a secondary position. They gave the child his natural life; you will assist in giving the child his supernatural life, his life of grace, his life far above the natural life of body and soul.

You come as good Catholics, delighted to have part in something that Christ regarded as essential.

You come, chosen by God and the parents, because it is hoped that throughout life you

will represent to the child what good Catholics can and should be.

You will answer the questions of the priest and speak, when you are asked, grave promises and glorious truths.

In all this you are repeating what once on a precious time was done for you when you were an infant. This might be a very good time to recall what was done for you then, and out of the fulness of faith and gratitude, to put real meaning and personal resolve into what you now say for another.

Officially you speak for the child who will be baptized. You ask in his name for the grace of God. You for him renounce the enemy, Satan, and accept God as Father, Savior, and Sanctifier.

You sign verbally the agreement that makes the child God's heir, entitled now to the endless happiness of heaven.

You yourself accept this child as your spiritual son or daughter.

In the sight of God and those present you solemnly promise that, should there be need, you will see to it that he is brought up a good Catholic and, as far as in you lies, will reach adulthood ready to serve God faithfully, the Church devotedly, and his fellow men in accordance with the Commandments of God given through Moses and through the divine Savior.

This is a very important occasion. You are doing something very pleasing to God.

The Powerful Drama

Let's briefly go through the rite of baptism and see your place in it.

With the child and those who accompany the child, you approach the baptismal font.

Often this font is very beautiful, another deliberate sign of the importance of what takes place there. It contains water, especially blessed for the ceremony. Yet the plainest of plain water will in emergencies serve.

The priest in surplice and purple stole meets the child and asks him the great question:

“What is it you seek from the Church of God?”

Your voice answers for the wordless child: “Faith.”

“Faith?” repeats the priest after you. “What will that afford you?”

Out of your own personal faith you answer, “Eternal life.”

What the priest says then states the fundamental law of Christianity: “If then you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and thy whole soul and thy whole mind, and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.”

Wisely, the godparents in their hearts renew the promise made long ago to keep these commandments on which depend the happiness of earth and the winning of heaven.

The Revolution

Then the priest gently breathes three times into the face of the infant.

“Go forth from this child, O unclean spirit, and give place to the Holy Spirit, the Comforter.”

This is indeed the promise of world revolution: Satan, the prince of evil, is to be expelled; the Holy Spirit, the source of light and love, is invited into the child's soul.

The priest with his thumb makes the Sign

of the Cross on the infant's forehead and upon its breast.

"Receive the Sign of the Cross both upon your forehead and upon your heart; accept faith in the heavenly commandments; and be such in your conduct that you are able to be the temple of God."

The child is marked with the glorious sign of Christ's victory.

He is established as the living temple where God will dwell upon earth.

Official Name

Now for the first time the child is called by his chosen name.

That name has deep meaning. As he starts his new life, he receives officially the name he will bear forever. It is a Christian name, hence often this ceremony is called the "christening": it is the name of a saint, of a hero of God. The saint in heaven is honored that a child is called after him, and though the earthly relative or friend "for whom he is named" is also pleased, the infant has been given a special patron before the throne of God to protect and guard and pray for him during his life.

"We beseech thee, O Lord, to listen to our prayers; guard this chosen soul" (and the priest calls him by name) "signed now with the mark of the Cross of the Lord, with ceaseless strength; so that, holding tight to the fundamentals of thy great glory, he may deserve to arrive at the glory of rebirth through the keeping of thy commandments. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen."

The priest then touches the child with his hand, and during this prayer he continues to extend his hand over the child. From the days

of the Gospel, this extending of the hand was an external sign of the rain of grace into a soul. Christ did it, and so did the Apostles.

“Almighty and eternal God, Father of our Lord, Jesus Christ, be good enough to look down upon this thy servant” (and again he calls the child by his newly given name) “whom thou hast been pleased to call to the fundamentals of faith. Heal him of all blindness of heart; break all the bonds of Satan with which he had been fastened. Open to him, O Lord, the gate of thy mercy, so that, signed with the seal of thy wisdom, he may miss the evils brought on by human greeds, and delighted with the sweet perfume of thy laws, he may be faithful to thee in thy Church and grow more perfect from day to day. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.”

The Salt

From the days of unrecorded history, salt has been used by men as a preservative. It soaked into meat to keep it against decay and spoiling. Besides that, it gave relish to food.

Christ called His followers “the salt of the earth,” an expression that has become current when applied to extraordinarily good and wholesome people.

So now the priest solemnly blesses a particle of salt and places it upon the tongue of the infant. This is a sign that he too is to be “the salt of the earth,” that he is to find relish in the new life he has just begun, and that the supernatural life within him may be preserved from the corruption of sin.

During the course of this ceremony of the salt, the priest prays, “Peace be with you,” to which the answer is, “And with your soul.”

The Devil

Through original sin the devil knew his first and most complete triumph over the sons and daughters of God. Adam and Eve threw away the friendship of their heavenly Father for the trickery of the great deceiver. They stripped themselves of the riches of sanctifying grace, and since we were their heirs, we, who should have been born spiritually rich, were born without the friendship of God, His love, or His grace. Like the heirs of a rich man who threw away his possessions, we inherited, not spiritual wealth, but spiritual poverty. But Christ by His life and death regained for us the right to those spiritual riches. Satan knew crushing defeat as Christ triumphed on Calvary and won again for us the friendship of God.

Now the priest drives away Satan, to whom Adam and Eve had betrayed us, and calls the Holy Spirit to take up His place in the liberated and enriched soul.

Expelled

"I drive thee forth, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; so that you may go forth and depart from this servant of God" (he again calls the child by name). "For the command is His, thou evil, lost one, whose feet walked upon the sea and who stretched forth his right hand to Peter as he sank into the waves.

"Therefore, accursed devil, yield to the sentence passed upon thee and give honor to the living and true God; give honor to Jesus Christ, His Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Depart from this servant of God" (again he calls the child by name) "because Jesus Christ, our Lord and God, has been pleased to call this

child to His Holy grace, to His blessing, and to the baptismal font."

Again the priest with his thumb makes the Sign of the Cross on the forehead of the child.

"And this Sign of the Holy Cross, which we place upon his forehead, do thou, O accursed devil, never dare to violate. Through the same Christ, our Lord. Amen."

Then with his hand on the child's head, the priest prays that he may be flooded with divine light and truth so that life for him may be guided by grace and wisdom and sound judgment.

Into the Church

The priest next lays the end of his stole upon the child, and symbolically leads the child into the church.

"Enter into the temple of God, that you may have part with Christ unto life eternal. Amen."

Clear voices then firmly recite the Creed, as an act of faith, and the Our Father, as the basic prayer taught by Christ to His followers.

Sometimes this is done during the course of what is a quite solemn processional, as the entire group approaches the baptismal font, ready for the actual baptism.

Again, conscious of the power of the evil spirit over the world, recalling that this child must be freed from all association with Satan, to whom our first parents betrayed him, the priest once more lifts his hand to banish the evil spirits who seek the ruin of mankind.

The Banishment of Satan

"I drive thee forth, every evil spirit, in the name of God, the omnipotent Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, His Son, our Lord and

Judge, and in the power of the Holy Spirit. Depart from this image of God" (again he calls the child by name) "whom our Lord has been pleased to call to His holy Church, so that he may become a temple of the living God, and the Holy Spirit may dwell in him. Through the same Christ, our Lord, who will come to judge the living and the dead, and the world through fire. Amen."

Once on a time, Christ opened the ears of a boy born deaf by mixing His saliva with earth and placing it in the child's ears. The priest symbolically opens the ears of this child to the voice of Faith by touching his ears lightly as if with the slightest particle of saliva.

"Ephpheta!" he cries out, using the very word employed by Christ. "That means, let thy ears be opened." He then touches the child's nose, saying, "Unto an odor of sweetness!" Again he commands the evil spirit: "Devil, take flight; for the judgment of God will come upon thee."

Renunciation of Evil

The questions now asked are directed to the child. The voices of the godparents make the proper answers.

"Do you renounce Satan?"

"I do renounce him."

"And all his works?"

"I do renounce them."

"And all his pomps?"

"I do renounce them."

Oil

As long as the human race has known its value, oil has been the sign of light and strength. Oil anointed the limbs of athletes.

It served as butter does nowadays. It fed the lamps which lighted the houses of the world.

A special oil has been blessed for this occasion, and now the priest, dipping his thumb in the oil, rubs it lightly in the form of a cross on the child's breast and between his shoulder blades.

"I anoint you with the oil of salvation in Christ Jesus, our Lord, so that you may have eternal life. Amen."

The Change to White

Because the joyous moment is near when the little pagan child will become a Christian and a child of God, the priest has changed his stole from purple, the color of sin and mourning, to white, the color of joy.

Again he addresses the child. But once more it is the godparents who profess the faith which is theirs and now will be his.

"Do you believe in God the Father almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth?"

"I do believe."

"Do you believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was born and suffered?"

"I do believe."

"Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, in the holy Catholic Church, in the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?"

"I do believe."

Baptism Itself

Once more calling the child by name, the priest asks: "Do you wish to be baptized?"

The godparents answer, "I do wish it."

Then while either the godfather or godmother or both hold the child over the font,

the priest, using a small shell-like scoop, pours the baptismal water three times over the head of the child, each time in the Sign of the Cross, while clearly and distinctly he says the words ordered by Christ:

“I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”

This is the essential act and these are the vital words of the sacrament of baptism, as Christ gave them and commanded them, and as the Church obediently has used them ever since.

Once again the priest dips his thumb in the holy oil and makes the Sign of the Cross on the top of the child's head.

“May the almighty God, Father of our Lord, Jesus Christ, who has given you new life by water and the Holy Spirit, and who has granted you the remission of all sins, anoint you with the oil of salvation in the same Christ Jesus, our Lord, unto everlasting life. Amen.”

White Garment and Light

The baptized child is now the child of God. His soul is beautiful with sanctifying grace. He is the happy little heir of heaven. Satan has been driven far away. Deep in his soul, faith has been infused like a bright light that will guide him all his days.

As a sign of the lovely grace with which the child's soul is now arrayed, the priest rests upon his head a white linen garment.

“Receive this white garment,” he commands the child, “which you must carry without stain before the judgment seat of God, so that you may have life everlasting. Amen.”

The prayer is for a sinless life, the deep

hope that the child's now stainless soul may never know the soiling effects of evil.

A candle is now lighted and given to the godparents who hold it for the child. It is the bright light of his new faith.

"Accept this burning light that without voluntary fault you may guard your baptism. Keep the commandments of God so that, when the Lord comes to the nuptials, you may be able to meet Him together with all the saints in the celestial halls, and live forever and forever. Amen."

The reference is obviously to the wise virgins of the parable who met the heavenly Bridegroom, their lamps trimmed and brightly burning.

Go in Peace!

There is a smile on the face of the priest and something of real gladness in his voice as he turns for the last time to the child. A great wonder, my dear godparents, has been worked before your eyes. God has bent down and taken into His fatherly arms an adopted child. Satan has been expelled and Christ established as the King of that soul. Original sin is wiped away and sanctifying grace takes its place. The great revolution has occurred and the reign of peace may well ring out.

"Go in peace!" says the priest to the child. "And may the Lord be with you! Amen."

So, godparents, you take out of the church and home to his mother this little child of God. There well may be feasting and rejoicing. But for you, a new relationship now exists and new responsibilities rest upon you. You have helped a soul find God. You must see to it that that soul, as far as you can, never loses God. You are to be second parents

to that child, friends, examples, and advisers. And if ever his Faith is being neglected or seems to be in danger, you have the obligation of doing your best to provide what others have failed to give.

This is now your spiritual child and you are his spiritual father and mother. God trusts you to watch over the future of your child. His arrival in heaven will be new cause for your own personal glory and happiness.

THE QUEEN'S WORK
3115 South Grand Boulevard
St. Louis 18, Mo.

Printed in U. S. A

