

Explaining Baptism

By Deacon Tim Sullivan

It's vitally important for Catholic parents to regularly bring up the significance of Baptism to their children. Using age appropriate language, here are the principles which I recommend to help youngsters incorporate their Baptism into their lives.

First of all, observe the anniversaries of the Baptisms in the lives of each child. Birthdays are wonderful, but they don't directly influence our salvation the way Baptism does. Have some sort of ritual to honor a baptismal anniversary, like lighting a candle and offering prayers of gratitude for this sacrament.

Second, continue to emphasize that Baptism is the beginning of a special way of life, the key to which is making Jesus the center, the top priority, in everything we do. This way of life includes frequent prayer, obedience to the Bible and the teachings of the Church and treating others in a Christ like manner.

Third, our children must realize in a humble way that they are a gift from God to the world. God created each of them as a unique, unrepeatable person who has a specific mission and purpose on earth. Help the children identify their gifts and how God wants them to use these gifts to better the world. As time goes by, they will develop a clearer sense of God's will for their lives.

Fourth, make sure your children know how much you value your own Baptism. This means that you should take ownership of your own Baptism. Recommit your life to Jesus and His Church, with your children as witnesses. I promise you they will help you honor your commitment!

A short prayer to say often: "Jesus, I love You. I live for You."