

# I have been baptized



John 3:5 / 1 Peter 3:21

*Holy Baptism is the covenant of a good conscience with God. At baptism original sin is also taken away. This covenant is the prerequisite for receiving the Holy Spirit. Without these acts of grace, no one can attain the kingdom of God.*

6

The children are happy that they have been baptized.  
They learn the meaning and procedure of Holy Baptism.

**M**artin is seven years old. He considers himself quite a big boy already, especially since the birth of his little brother, David. David is still very small and sleeps most of the time. Martin is not allowed to wake him. Tomorrow David will be baptized. Martin is very happy about this. He wonders what it will be like for his little brother to be baptized. He hurries off to the kitchen to ask his mother who is busy with the preparations for tomorrow.

1

"Mother, is David looking forward to being baptized?" he asks his mother. "I think so," she replies. "Come and sit here at the table, you can help me." Martin gladly helps his mother. He says: "I hope David won't cry when he is bathed in church tomorrow." Mother looks up in surprise and says: "David is not going to be bathed. He is going to be baptized. For this only a few drops of water are needed."

"But what actually happens at a baptism then?"

"Well, tomorrow we dress little David very beautifully as he is the most important person of the day. Then we go to church as we usually do on Sundays. Towards the end of the service, Daddy and I with your little brother, are called to stand in front of the altar. The rector will say a few

words to us and then he will take a dish with water and baptize David. The rector consecrates the water, dips his finger into it and makes the sign of the cross on David's forehead three times while saying: 'David, I baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.' Through this act something quite wonderful happens: the Lord makes a covenant with our David. He promises to be with him always as his friend. He grants him grace and forgives all his sins. At the baptism Father and I promise the Lord to bring up David in such a way that he will know and love the Lord."

At this moment, David starts crying in his cradle. He only quiets again when his mother picks him up and gives him his bottle. Martin stands next to them. He is almost a little envious. All attention seems to be centred on David: tomorrow's feast, Mother's care and concern, everything is focused on him, and to top it all David will also get such a great and wonderful friend!

2

Mother notices that Martin feels a little left out. She lovingly strokes his head and asks him to fetch the family's photo album. While David is being fed, Martin looks at the photos. "Is that me?" he asks again and again in amazement. The little baby on the photographs looks very much like his little brother, but it is Martin. Mother explains some of photographs. "Look! This photograph we made on the day you were baptized. We invited family and friends to a lovely dinner. I

was very proud of you because you were so good during the baptism. You looked at the Priest with huge, serious eyes as if you understood everything that was happening." Martin feels better now. He has also been baptized. That means that the Lord is his friend too. He says: "What a pity that I cannot remember that day. I hope David will be good in church

tomorrow too."

"So do I, but you know, Martin, the dear Lord would certainly not hold it against him if he were to cry. Our dear friend understands everything!"

3/4



*The Lord made a covenant with me. I have been baptized.*

- 1 What preparations are made for a baptism? (Here the inner, spiritual preparations as well as the regional customs can be discussed.)
- 2 Who will be David's new friend? Have the children understood this aspect? They tell what happens during baptism in their own words.
- 3 We discuss their own baptism. Do the children recall this? Do they have a photograph of it? We look at the photographs which the children have brought and let them paste them into their book (If the parents agree to this.) A suitable picture can also be drawn. On the blank lines the children can fill in when, where and by whom they were baptized.  
We look at the photographs. (We explain to the children that not only small children are baptized. God also makes this covenant with adults. This covenant with God is like an invisible bond. The Lord wishes to be with us at all times and guide us. We want to keep this beautiful bond intact)
- 4 It would be nice if the children had good seats during the next service with a baptism to be able to observe the ceremony. Maybe the children could jointly make a picture, or decorate a ribbon portraying the connection with God, and present it to the baby or person being baptized. (A photograph of this occasion can also be pasted into their book.)