

THE CREED

"I believe in One God, Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible. And in One Lord, Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages. Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten, not created, of one essence with the Father, through whom all things were made. For us and for our salvation He came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became Man. He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and He suffered and was buried. On the third day He rose according to the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again with glory to judge the living and the dead. His kingdom will have no end. And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, Giver of Life, who proceeds from the Father, who together with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who spoke through the prophets. In one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. I expect the resurrection of the dead; and the life of the age to come.

Amen."

The Sponsor/s will be required to recite the Creed.

THE PREPARATION

A person who wishes to sponsor a candidate for Baptism or Chrismation must be an Orthodox Christian in good standing and a supporting member of an Orthodox parish. A person may not serve as a sponsor if his or her marriage has not been blessed by the Church or, if civilly divorced, he or she has not been granted an ecclesiastical divorce, or for any other reason he or she is not in communion with the Orthodox Church.

Please contact the Church Office to book the date and time of your baptism. The office will need the following information:

- *Names and phone numbers of the parents and Sponsor/s.*
- *Name of the child being baptized, according to the traditions of the Orthodox Church, ONE name of Orthodox Christian Origin should be given to the child at the time of baptism.*
- *The Sponsor/s **must** be Orthodox and will be required to provide proof of baptism.*
- *The parents and Sponsor/s must all be members in good standing with the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Community of London and Vicinity. Membership dues for two consecutive years constitute members in good standing. If the parents or Sponsor/s are members of another Orthodox Church sacrament fees will apply.*
- *The Sponsor/s should provide the following: a large white candle, two small white candles, a small bottle of olive oil, a bar of soap, two hand towels, a white sheet and a large white towel, a cross and the baptismal outfit.*

Baptism service fees and obligations:

- \$130.00 Administration fee
- Must be good standing members (paid 2 most recent years).

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY BAPTISM



HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX COMMUNITY OF LONDON & VICINITY

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EXPLANATION OF THE SACRAMENT

The Baptismal Service begins in the narthex (entrance hall) of the Church where the priest calls upon the sponsor to denounce (for the child) the devil and all his works and to declare his belief in Christ. To symbolize the renouncing of the devil the priest faces West and blows gently making a gesture of spitting upon the unseen enemy. The sponsor does the same. In accepting Christ for the child, the sponsor faces the altar (East) and recites the Creed.

AS GOD BREATHED UPON MAN to make him a living soul, so the priest breathes three times upon the infant to symbolize the new life that it will receive through Baptism.

THE SPONSOR. The use of sponsors in Baptism dates back to the days when Christians were prosecuted by Nero. Parents were often massacred during these persecutions. Thus, the sponsors were provided to instruct the children in the Christian faith in the event the parents were martyred.

A CHRISTIAN NAME is given to the infant. From the moment the child is received into the Church, emphasis is placed on his individuality. He is given his own particular name.

WATER. Water is a visible means used to express to us that through Baptism the child is being invisibly cleansed of sin.

OLIVE OIL. Olive oil is blessed and then applied by the priest to the various members of the child's body: hands feet ears, mouth etc. in order to dedicate them to the service of Christ. The sponsor then anoints the entire body of the infant with the olive oil.

This custom had its beginning among the ancient Greek wrestlers who anointed their bodies with olive oil to make it difficult for the opponent to maintain a grip on them. In Baptism the child is anointed with the olive oil to symbolize the fact that with Christ's help the infant will be able to elude the grip of sin.

TRIPLE IMMERSION. We believe that Christ died for our sins. To show that we, and not Christ, are worthy of death because of our sins, we are immersed in the Baptismal Font. The immersion in water symbolizes death, since a person cannot live long under water. The person being Baptized, however, is not kept under water; he is immediately taken out. This shows our faith that we do not have to die for our sins, since Christ already died on our behalf. So the Baptized person rises out of the Baptismal Font a new man, cleansed of every sin and promising, like St. Paul, to surrender his life to Christ, his Saviour: "He died for all that they who lived should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them". The triple immersion symbolizes the three days our Lord spent in the tomb.

CONFIRMATION. Having taken the child out of the Baptismal Font and placed in the sponsor's arms, the priest then administers the Sacrament of Confirmation by anointing the child with Holy Myron, which is blessed on Holy Thursday by the Patriarch of Constantinople. While Baptism empties the child of all sin, Confirmation fills the vacuum by imparting to the child the grace of God, thus enabling it to live the life of Christ. This is the Sacrament by which we receive the Holy Spirit.

CUTTING OF HAIR. After confirming the child, the priest cuts 3 locks of hair from the child's head. This is an expression of gratitude from the child, who having received an abundance of blessings through the Sacrament of Baptism and Confirmation and having nothing to give to God in return, offers part of its hair, which is symbolic of strength. The child, therefore, promises to serve God with all its strength.

NEW CLOTHES. New clothes are put on the infant after Baptism to signify that he/she has become a new member in Jesus Christ.

HOLY COMMUNION. The Epistle and Gospel are then read and immediately afterward Holy Communion is given to the child. It is customary that the Sponsor bring the child to Church on the following two Sundays to receive Holy Communion.

A RELIGIOUS PROCESSION is made around the Baptismal Font with the priest accompanied by the sponsor who holds the newly Baptized infant. This reflects the belief that at this moment the angels in Heaven are dancing, expressing their joy that a new soul is registered in the Book of Life. The priest chants, "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27). This expresses our belief that through Baptism the child has "put on Christ".