



The order of Baptism as an independent service

Authorised by General Synod in 2017

The letter *C* stands for congregation, the letter *A* stands for all service participants (priest/liturgist and congregation), and the letter *L* stands for liturgist (service leaders, priest, or another person who has a bishop's permission to administer the service). *CL* (co-liturgist) is used to indicate roles for readers, prayer leaders, communion assistants, cantors, choirs and others who perform liturgical tasks. When there are two letters, *L/CL* or *CL/L*, the first has primacy. More elaborate descriptions of the tasks of the liturgist and the co-liturgists may be found in the guidelines on different parts of the service in the Service handbook.

1. The baptismal candidate(s), family and sponsors gather in the church before the service begins.
2. A procession into the church may be arranged during section 1 Prelude. Where a processional cross is used, it should always be carried first. The cross may be followed by the baptismal pitcher, which is placed on the baptismal font. The person(s) who carries/carry the child(ren) may be accompanied by one of the sponsors or a family member.
3. The procession and entrance hymn may be combined. Likewise, the newly baptised and accompanying persons may process out of the church during the postlude.
4. Only the candidate's first name is required for the baptism (any middle name or surname is omitted). The full name(s) of the candidate(s) is (are) announced at the greeting, at I.3.
5. The priest should bear a white stole or a stole of the appropriate colour according to the church year.

i. The Gathering

1 Prelude

A prelude may be performed, normally in the character of a chorale prelude to the entrance hymn.

The baptismal candidates (both children who are carried and those able to walk), enter the sanctuary during the prelude in a procession. They take their places according to local practice.

The congregation stands for the procession.

2 Entrance hymn

The congregation remains standing during the entrance hymn.

3 Greeting

L | In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit ✠.

or

L | In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit ✠: Our creator, redeemer and sanctifier.

The congregation is seated.

A short introduction to the service may be made at this point. The priest announces the full name of the baptismal candidate(s).

Here may follow:

4 | Gathering prayer

L | Let us pray.

either A

L/CL | Holy God, we praise you for all things that help us know that you are good. We give thanks for baptism in which you bind your great promises to our lives. Here, in your presence, we pray: Give us open minds, thankful hearts and willing hands, so that we may receive your word, praise you for your goodness and in word and deed witness to your mighty works.

or B

L/CL | Holy God, you gave us the gift of life. We give you thanks for receiving us in baptism and for strengthening us through the Eucharistic meal. Lead us by your word, and help us to accept all that you will give us.

or C

A | **Triune God, who in baptism has given us a home in your church and an eternal place with you in heaven, lead us along your paths.**

or D

Another suitable gathering prayer.

5 The reception of the baptismal candidate(s)

For the baptism of children:

L | With thanks and joy we bring *this child/these children* to God through the sacrament of baptism. Through baptism, God receives us and unites us with the crucified and resurrected Jesus Christ.

For the baptism of older children, adolescents or adults:

L | With thanks and joy we bring you to God through the sacrament of baptism. Through baptism, God receives us and unites us with the crucified and resurrected Jesus Christ.

The following text may be read:

L | For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. [John 3.16](#)

L | Hear how kindly Jesus receives children, and how he opens the kingdom of God to them:

The following text may be read by a member of the baptism party, a co-liturgist or the liturgist:

CL/L | People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, 'Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.' And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

[Mark 10.13-16](#)

For the baptism of an older child, adolescent or adult, this text may be replaced with the following:

L | Hear what the apostle Paul writes about baptism:

CL/L | But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. **Titus 3:4-7**

or

L | Jesus says that we are reborn in baptism:

CL/L | Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by 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 do apart from the presence of God.’ Jesus answered him, ‘Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.’ Nicodemus said to him, ‘How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?’ Jesus answered, ‘Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. **John 3.1-5**

or

L | Hear what the apostle Paul writes about baptism:

CL/L | Do you not know that all of us who have been baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death? Therefore, we have been buried with him by baptism in death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. **Romans 6.3-8**

L | Let us give thanks and pray:

CL/L | Eternal God, you give life to all beings and have created us in your image: We thank you for *NN/NN (first name)*. She/he/they is/are precious in your sight. Keep *her/him/them* in your care, and give *her/him/them* a home in your church. Amen.

ii. The Word

7 Readings from the scriptures

L | Let us hear the word of the Lord.

One or two of the following texts may be read. These may be replaced by one or two of the texts from the appropriate Sunday in the church year, taken from the lectionary of the Church of Norway.

The text(s) may be read by one of the sponsors, family members or another layperson.

L | As it is written in the Gospel according to John, Jesus says we are reborn in baptism:

CL/L | Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by 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 do apart from the presence of God.’ Jesus answered him, ‘Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.’ Nicodemus said to him, ‘How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?’ Jesus answered, ‘Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. [John 3.1-5](#)

or

L | The apostle Paul writes about baptism in his letter to Titus:

CL/L | But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. [Titus 3.4-7](#)

or

L | The apostle Paul writes about baptism in his letter to the Romans:

CL/L | Do you not know that all of us who have been baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death? Therefore, we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as

Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. *Romans 6.3-5*

or

L | The apostle Paul writes about baptism in his letter to the Galatians:

CL/L | For in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. As many of you as were baptised into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. *Galatians 3.26-28*

or

L | In his letter to the Romans, the apostle Paul tells of what those who are baptised receive in faith:

CL/L | Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. *Romans 8.35, 38-39*

Other appropriate texts may be found here:

Ps 8.4-6,10; Ps 139. 13-16, Matt 3.13-17; Mark 9.33-37; John 3.5-8; Acts 2.37-41; Acts 8.36-38; Eph 3.14-21; 1 John 3.1-2.

The reading(s) may finish with the following words:

This is the word of the Lord.

7 The baptismal hymn

The baptismal hymn may be divided into two or more sections, so that some verses may be sung before and after the homily.

8 The sermon

The priest holds a short sermon relating to one or more of the scriptural texts that have been read.

The sermon may finish with the following doxology:

L | Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, who was, is and shall remain one true God, from eternity to eternity.

iii. The Intercessions

The intercessions may be omitted from this order.

9 The intercessions of the congregation

After the intercessions a short congregational response follows.

L | Let us give thanks and pray:

either

CL/L | Heavenly Father:

Thank you for creating us,
and for creating the world in which we live.

Thank you for knowing and loving us.

Help us to care for one another and for everything
you have created.

C | **Lord, hear our prayer.**

CL/L | Dear Jesus:

You have conquered evil and death.

You are our friend and will remain with us always.

Thank you for keeping us safe.

Stay with those who are lonely and afraid.

Help us to support one another.

Help us to fight against oppression and injustice.

C | **Lord, hear our prayer.**

CL/L | Gracious Holy Spirit:

You lead us on the right path.

Give us the will and perseverance to follow it.

Give us the wisdom and strength to join each other.

You have called us to be your Church.

Come to us with your gifts

and help us to be the light and salt of the earth.

C | Lord, hear our prayer.

or

Another suitable prayer, which may be formulated according to local needs or traditions.

iv. The Baptism

10 Baptism and faith in scripture

L | Let us hear the words of Christ about baptism:

The text may be read by a member of the baptism party, a co-liturgist or the liturgist.

CL/L | And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’ **Matthew 28.18-20**

11 The responsibility of the godparents/sponsors

For the baptism of a child:

L | Would the parents and godparents/sponsors please stand.

You are witnesses to the Christian baptism of *this child/these children*. Together with our congregation and the whole Church, you are now given a holy responsibility: to care for *her/him/them*, pray for *her/him/them*, teach *her/him/them* to pray and help *her/him/them* to use the word of God and receive the sacrament of the Eucharist so that *she/he/they* may live and grow in the Christian faith.

For the baptism of an older child/adolescent or adult:

L | Would the (parents and) godparents/sponsors please stand.

You are witnesses to the Christian baptism of *NN/these candidates*. Together with our congregation and the whole Church, you are now given a holy responsibility: to care for

her/him/them, pray for *her/him/them*, teach *her/him/them* to pray and help *her/him/them* to use the word of God and receive the sacrament of the Eucharist so that *she/he/they* may live and grow in the Christian faith.

12 The renunciation of evil and the confession of faith

For the baptism of children:

L | Together, let us renounce the devil and all evil, and confess the faith in which we baptise our children:

All stand.

For the baptism of an older child, adolescent or adult:

L | Will you join this congregation in renouncing the devil and all evil, and confess the faith in which you wish to be baptised?

Candidate | Yes.

The candidate may, if necessary, both here and where otherwise appropriate, respond in non-verbal language.

When both the children, adolescents and/or adults are baptised in the same service, the eldest are addressed first.

Once everyone has answered, the liturgist says:

L | Let us together renounce the devil and all evil works and confess our faith:

All stand.

A | **I renounce the devil, the ways of sin, and all evil works.**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,**

**he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge
the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.**

Amen. *The Apostle's Creed*

13 The baptism

Water is poured into the font.

L | Merciful God, thank you for the waters of baptism, which by your word is a source of grace. In baptism, you forgive us our sins, free us from the powers of death and give us the promise of eternal life. Send down your Spirit, so that *she/he/those* who *is/are* to be baptised may rise up into a new life with Jesus Christ our Lord.

L | Barmhjertige Gud, vi takker deg for at dåpens vann ved ditt ord er en nådens kilde, der du tilgir oss vår synd, frelser oss fra dødens makt og gir oss løfte om det evige liv. Send din Ånd så hun/han/de som døpes reises opp til det nye livet med Jesus Kristus, vår Herre.

A verse from a suitable hymn may be sung between each baptism.

For the baptism of children:

L | What is the child's name?

The person who carries the child states the child's name.

L | Do you wish for *NN* to be baptised in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and to be brought up according to the Christian life and faith?

The person carrying the child, together with the parents, guardians and godparents/sponsors, responds:

Yes.

For the baptism of an older child, adolescent or adult:

L | What is your name?

The candidate responds by stating his or her name. If necessary, another person may state his or her name.

L | *NN*, do you wish to be baptised in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and to live according to the Christian life and faith?

The candidate responds:

Yes.

The liturgist says the prayer before and after the signing of the cross with an open hand, facing the child/candidate:

L | May God protect your coming and your going both now and forever.

I make the holy sign of the cross (✠) as a sign that you will belong to the crucified and risen Jesus Christ, and believe in him.

L | *NN*, according to the words and commandments of our Lord Jesus Christ, I baptise you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

While this is being said, the liturgist generously ladles water by hand over the head of the child/candidate three times. The liturgist places her/his hand on the head of the child/candidate (the hands of the child's parents/guardians and godparents may also be so placed) and says:

L | The almighty God has in baptism given you his Holy Spirit, made you one of his children and accepted you into the fellowship of his faithful people. May God strengthen you with his grace to eternal life. Peace be with you.

The child/candidate may then be presented with the following words:

L | This is *NN*, a child of God, who has been baptised into our congregation and the worldwide Church of Christ.

After the baptism, a candle may be lit for each child/candidate. The lighting of candles may take place here or during the intercessions of the congregation. The liturgist may say:

L | This light shines for *NN*.

The candle(s) is/are then placed into a candleholder and are allowed to burn until the service is completed.

When (all) the candle(s) is/are lit, the liturgist says:

L | Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.' [John 8.12](#)

14 Prayer and thanksgiving

L | Let us give thanks and pray.

either A

CL/L | Faithful God, we thank you for the sacrament of baptism, in which you receive us and call us by our names. We pray for *NN/the children/those* who *has/have* been baptised here today. Strengthen *her/his/their* parents and godparents. Lord, hear our prayer.

or B

CL/L | Faithful God, we thank you for the sacrament of baptism, in which you welcome us into your Church. We pray for *NN/the children/those* who *has/have* been baptised here today. Hold your protecting hand over *her/him/them*, and give your love and wisdom to all those who care for *her/him/them*. Lord, hear our prayer.

or C

CL/L | Faithful God, we thank you for the sacrament of baptism, and for the promise that your Son will remain with us now and forever. We pray for *NN/those* who *has/have* been baptised today. Keep *her/him/them* in *her/his/their* faith in you, so that *she/he/they* may walk in the light and reach our eternal place in your kingdom. Lord, hear our prayer.

The Lord's Prayer now follows. If there is communion in the baptism service, the Lord's Prayer may be omitted here.

L | Let us say together the prayer that Jesus taught us:

A | **Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,**

your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.

Other recognised translations of the Lord's Prayer may be used instead.

L | Blessed be God, the father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us new birth and a living hope through Christ's resurrection from the dead. **1 Peter 1.3**

Communion may follow here if it is included as part of the baptismal liturgy.

15 Music

Family, sponsors and others may perform suitable vocal or instrumental music at this point.

v. Dismissal

16 Closing hymn

The congregation stands during the hymn and the blessing.

17 The blessing

The blessing may be read or sung.

The blessing may be received personally by making the sign of the cross.

The introduction to the blessing may be as follows:

CL/L sings or says | Let us praise the Lord.

C sings or says | **God be praised. Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.**

or

L | Receive the blessing.

L | The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you.

The Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace. ✠

When the blessing is sung, the congregation responds with:

C | **Amen. Amen. Amen.**

A bell is rung nine times, in sets of three with a short pause in between.

18 Dismissal

If the congregation remains seated during the postlude, the words of dismissal may be said after the postlude.

either

L | Go in peace.

or

L | **Go in peace. Serve the Lord with gladness.**

Another dismissal that is appropriate to the day may be used instead.

19 Postlude

When there is a recessional, the congregation may follow the procession.

The church should remain open for a while after the service, allowing for photographs to may be taken, the lighting of candles and silent prayer.