

# About This Section

## PART THREE • For the Parish Assembly

The whole community is responsible for initiation (see RCIA 9). This section of the program director's manual was designed to assist the parish assembly with its essential role in sacrament preparation. Many members of the community have not had the opportunity to reflect on the meaning of sacraments in their lives as adults. Resources in this section can help facilitate a deeper awareness and experience of the sacraments.

This section includes:

- **Parish Blessings**

Each week during the preparation period, young people are called forward or asked to stand before the final blessing at the parish liturgy. The presider and the entire community join in blessing them and sending them forth.

- **A Parish Flyer: Sacramental People**

- Reproduce the entire flyer each week of the preparation period and include it in your parish newsletter or bulletin.
- Consider adapting these flyers to meet your needs by adding suggestions that reinforce the message of the lead article for your particular parish community.

- Reproduce elements of the flyer directly into your parish bulletin or newsletter.
- Use the flyers as handouts for parents and adults at meetings.
- Mail the flyers to families each week of the preparation period along with any reminders that you are mailing.

- **Bulletin Announcements**

These announcements can be placed in the bulletin each week as an update. You can add meeting times, schedule information, or include other details to personalize your program.

- **Parish Involvement**

This piece includes a variety of suggestions to connect the parish community with those preparing for sacraments.

- **General Intercessions**

These prayers can be used at the Sunday liturgies, weekday liturgies, school liturgies, and other parish prayer experiences.

# Sacramental People

AS MEMBERS OF THIS PARISH COMMUNITY PREPARE FOR SACRAMENTS,  
WE THE FAITHFUL JOURNEY WITH THEM.

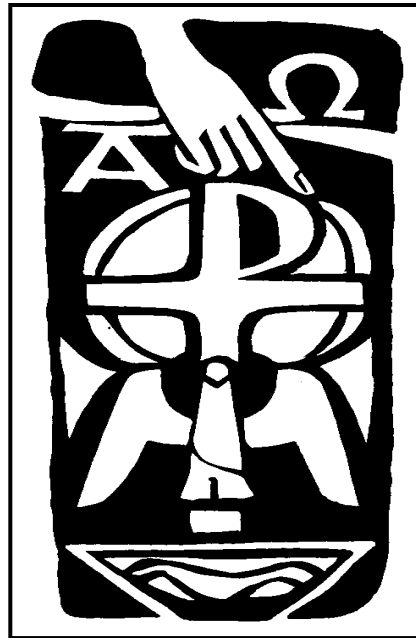
## We Belong

### Baptism as Entrance into the Life of Christ and the Church

It may seem strange to start preparing children for their First Communion by discussing Baptism. But, in fact, nothing could be more logical.

Baptism is the very first of the sacraments, and only those who are baptized may approach the table of the Eucharist.

Because of Baptism we belong to God's family and have a right to sit at the table of the Lord's Supper. It is Baptism that makes us sharers in the life of Christ and members of the Body of Christ, and



joins us to the community of the Church.

In the waters of Baptism, God claims us as his very own children with an irrevocable love. We are a "chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation," thanks to the special relationship with God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—that we receive when we are baptized.

## Faith Focus

**B**aptism joins us to Christ and to the members of the church community.

## The Church Says . . .

**B**aptism incorporates us into Christ and forms us into God's people. This first sacrament pardons all our sins, rescues us from the power of darkness, and brings us to the dignity of adopted children, a new creation through water and the Holy Spirit. (See *Christian Initiation*, General Introduction, 2)

## Prayer

**G**od, our loving Father,  
we thank you for the gift of our baptism.  
You welcome us into your Church.  
Send us the Holy Spirit  
as we learn to live as children of God.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

## For Reflection

**W**hat difference does it make in my life that I am baptized?

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