

# Baptism at 12 Steps

December 26, 2024, Celebrating the Baptism of Sally Ann Cook

Use this guide in combination with the other worship guide, which has the readings we will hear tonight.

The order of service starts with the Centering Prayer as usual. We will follow the usual order through the second prayer and musical interlude. Then follows this reading:

Matthew 3:13-17

Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. John tried to dissuade Jesus, saying, "I should be baptized by you, and yet you come to me!"

But Jesus replied, "Leave it this way for now. We must do this to completely fulfill God's justice." So John reluctantly agreed.

Immediately after Jesus had been baptized and was coming up out of the water, the sky suddenly opened up and Jesus saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and hovering over him. With that, a voice from the heavens said, "This is my Own, my Beloved, on whom my favor rests."

## Matt's Reflection

## Presentation of the Candidate

The Candidate for Holy Baptism will now be presented.

The candidate is presented by her Sponsor, as follows:

*I present Sally Ann to receive the Sacrament of Baptism.*

Sally Ann, do you desire to be baptized?

*I do.*

## The Baptismal Covenant

The Baptismal Covenant begins with six questions that follow a form that goes back to at least the fourth century. Although we understand the grace of God's unfailing love to be a gift that is given by God unconditionally, we also recognize that part of the gift is God's willingness to let us reject it. Thus we are also given the opportunity to accept it and commit ourselves to follow Christ in return.

Do you renounce the malice, fear and greed in society that protect the power of the powerful while denying justice for God's most vulnerable people?

*I renounce them.*

Do you renounce the disease, decay and destruction that harm the creatures of God?

*I renounce them.*

Do you renounce the desires, distractions and appetites that draw you from the love of God?

*I renounce them.*

Do you turn to Jesus Christ and accept God's gift of renewal and resurrection offered through Christ?

*I do.*

Do you put your whole trust in Christ's grace and love?

*I do.*

Do you promise to follow the way of Christ as the way of life?

*I do.*

Will you who are in this community of faith encourage and support this person in her life in Christ?

**We will.**

Let us speak in solidarity with the one who is entering into the covenant of Baptism.

The notion of God as three and yet one is a mystery that has nurtured the faith of the followers of Jesus from the earliest times. Originally described as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the Trinity certainly transcends the limitations of gender and other aspects of our understanding of personhood. Yet many have experienced the presence of God as very personal. This affirmation is experimental, written by the rector.

Do you believe in the Triune God?

**We believe in God, who is the source of all creation, seen and unseen.**

**We believe God's divine life is conceived by God and was born in the human form of Jesus, through his mother Mary.**

**In his life, death and resurrection, Jesus embodied God's self-giving love for the world and God's will to regenerate life, reclaiming us from the oblivion of death.**

**We believe the Spirit of God is present in this world, in our hearts, and within this community, guiding us into all truth and inspiring us to love as we have been loved, to create as we have been created.**

Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?

**I will, with God's help.**

Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

**I will, with God's help.**

Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?

**I will, with God's help.**

Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

**I will, with God's help.**

Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?

**I will, with God's help.**

Will you strive to safeguard the integrity of God's creation, and respect, sustain and renew the life of the Earth?

**I will, with God's help.**

## Prayers for the Candidates

Let us now pray for this person who is to receive the sacrament of new birth.

*Deliver her, O Lord, from the way of sin and death.*

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Open her heart to your grace and truth.*

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Fill her with your holy and life-giving Spirit.*

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Keep her in the faith and communion of your holy Church.*

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Teach her to love others in the power of the Spirit.*

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Send her into the world in witness to your love.*

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Bring her to the fullness of your peace and glory.*

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

Grant, O God, that all who are baptized into the death of Jesus Christ your Son may live in the power of his resurrection and look for him to come again in glory; who lives and reigns now and for ever. **Amen.**

# Thanksgiving over the Water

May God be with you.

**And also with you.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

We thank you, Almighty God, for the gift of water. Over it the Holy Spirit moved in the beginning of creation. **Through it you led the children of Israel out of their bondage in Egypt into the land of promise. In it your Son Jesus received the baptism of John and was anointed by the Holy Spirit as the Messiah, the Christ, to lead us, through his death and resurrection, from the bondage of sin into everlasting life.**

We thank you, O Lover of Souls, for the water of Baptism. In it we are buried with Christ in death. By it we share in resurrection. Through it we are reborn by the Holy Spirit. **Therefore in joyful obedience to your Son, we bring into his fellowship those who come in faith, baptizing them in the Name of the Triune God.**

*At the following words, the priest touches the water*

Now sanctify this water, we pray you, by the power of your Holy Spirit, that those who here are cleansed from sin and born again may continue for ever in the risen life of Jesus Christ our Savior. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and for ever. **Amen.**

While baptizing the candidate, the priest says,

*Sally Ann*, I baptize you in the Name of the Triune God, the Holy Three in One who both conceives and is conceived, and is present to us in Spirit. **Amen.**

Gracious God, we thank you that by water and the Holy Spirit you have bestowed upon this your servant the forgiveness of sin, and have raised her to the new life of grace. Sustain her in your Holy Spirit. Give her an inquiring and discerning heart, the courage to will and to persevere, a spirit to know and to love you, and the gift of joy and wonder in all your works. **Amen.**

The priest anoints the newly baptized person and says,

*Sally Ann*, you are sealed by the Holy Spirit in Baptism and marked as Christ's own forever.

The priest then presents a candle, lit from the paschal candle, saying

*Sally Ann*, receive the light of Christ, and be for it a lantern, both to shelter it and to shed it abroad for all the world to see. **Amen.**

Let us welcome the newly baptized.

**We receive you into the household of God. Confess the faith of Christ crucified, proclaim his resurrection, and share with us in his eternal priesthood.**

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

**And also with you.**