



Timeline of OBC

1969 — *Ordo Baptismi parvulorum*

- ✘ First liturgical text released after the Second Vatican Council, even before the *Missale Romanum*.
- ✘ Promulgated by Pope Paul VI on September 8, 1969 (Nativity of BVM)

1973 — *Ordo Baptismi parvulorum, editio typica altera*

- ✘ Decree: August 29, 1973 Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship, Memorial of the Passion of St. John the Baptist; “certain variants and additions”
- ✘ Other variants to be in harmony with liturgical books

2004 — *Ritual para el bautismo de los niños*

- ✘ Spanish translation approved for use in USA (adapted from the Mexican edition)
- ✘ Recognition from the Holy See in 2008
- ✘ January 10, 2010 -- Mandatory use in USA

English Translation of the *Ordo Baptismi parvulorum, editio typica altera* for the Dioceses of the USA

- ✘ November 14, 2017: Approved by USCCB; includes appendices for the rite within Mass
- ✘ April 11, 2019: CDWDS sends decree of recognition and confirmation (received May 7)
- ✘ June 10, 2019: Decree of Publication (Memorial of the BVM, Mother of the Church)
- ✘ February 2, 2020: Feast of the Presentation -- the revised texts may be used in the Liturgy
- ✘ April 12, 2020: Easter Sunday -- the revised text must be used in the Liturgy; from that date forward, no other translation of the rite may be used in the dioceses of the United States.

Getting the Book

Please contact the the following publishers if you are in need of a copy of the ritual book.

[LTP](#)—\$39.95

[Liturgical Press](#)—\$39.95 (also available in bilingual edition)

[Catholic Book Publishing](#)—\$27.95 (also available in bilingual edition)

[USCCB Publishing](#)—\$44.95

[Magnificat](#)—\$29.95

Some Details on the *Order of Baptism of Children*

Contents

- ✘ Christian Initiation: General Introduction
- ✘ The Order of Baptism of Children: Introduction
- ✘ Chapter I—Order of Baptism for Several Children
- ✘ Chapter II—Order of Baptism for One Child
- ✘ Chapter III—Order of Baptism for a Large Number of Children
- ✘ Chapter IV—Order of Baptism of Children to be Used by Catechists in the Absence of a Priest or Deacon
- ✘ Chapter V—Order of Baptism of Children in Danger of Death, or at the Point of Death, to be Used in the Absence of a Priest or Deacon
- ✘ Chapter VI—Order of Bringing a Baptized Child to the Church
- ✘ Chapter VII—Various Texts for Use in the Celebration of Baptism of Children
 - ✘ including prayer texts and Scripture readings
- ✘ Appendix—Order of Baptism of Children within Mass
 - ✘ Order of Baptism for Several Children within Mass
 - ✘ Order of Baptism for One Child within Mass

Five adaptations approved:

- ✘ The text of an optional introduction
- ✘ The addition of a simple acclamation after each baptism
- ✘ Rubrics which incorporate previous adaptations made in previous USCCB editions
- ✘ An option to expand the Litany of the Saints
- ✘ A new appendix with the Baptism of Children within Mass (with a detailed outline)

Most of these appeared in the Spanish-language USA edition (*Ritual para el Bautismo de los Niños*) which was implemented in 2008. The two updates would be the expanded version of the Litany of the Saints and the appendix with the Order within Mass.

- ✘ Portions of the new translation were taken from the Easter Vigil Mass in the *Roman Missal*:
 - ✘ the Blessing of Baptismal Water
 - ✘ formulas for the renunciation of sin
 - ✘ threefold profession of faith.
 - ✘ optional expanded Litany of the Saints
 - ✘ Provision to add local and personal patron saints remains
- ✘ Sacramental formula of Baptism – “N., I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit” is unchanged
- ✘ Threefold immersion in or pouring with holy water is unchanged
- ✘ Inclusion of one option for an acclamation after each Baptism
 - ✘ The other twenty options are in Chapter VII
- ✘ Four formulas of the solemn blessing received new translations
- ✘ Chapter VII gathers all the options for readings and psalms, acclamations, petitions, and prayer formulas in one place

Some Samples of Changes/Additions to the *Order of Baptism of Children*

OBC, #36; Greeting of Parents & Godparents

1969: [no sample text]

2019: **He may use these or similar words:** Dear parents and godparents: Your families have experienced great joy at the birth of your children, and the Church shares your happiness. Today this joy has brought you to the Church to give thanks to God for the gift of your children and to celebrate a new birth in the waters of Baptism. This community rejoices with you, for today the number of those baptized in Christ will be increased, and we offer you our support in raising your children in the practice of the faith. Therefore, brothers and sisters, let us now prepare ourselves to participate in this celebration, listening to God's word, praying for these children and their families, and renewing our commitment to the Lord and to his people.

OBC, #41; Signing of the Cross

1969: **N.** and **N.** (**or:** My dear children), the Christian community welcomes you with great joy. In its name I claim you for Christ our Savior by the sign of the cross. I now trace the cross on your foreheads, and invite your parents (and godparents) to do the same.

2019: **N.** and **N.** (**or:** Dear children), the Church of God receives you with great joy. In her name I sign you with the Sign of the Cross of Christ our Savior; then, after me, your parents (and godparents) will do the same.

(emendation ordered by Pope Benedict XVI in 2013)

OBC, #60; Baptism

1969: **After each baptism it is appropriate for the people to sing a short acclamation.**

2019: **After the Baptism of each child, it is appropriate for the people to sing a short acclamation, such as:** Blessed be God, who chose you in Christ. **Other optional acclamations, nos. 225-245.**

(21 different acclamation options provided in Chapter VII)

OBC, #63; Clothing with a White Garment

1969: ... See in this white garment the outward sign of your Christian dignity...unstained into the everlasting life of heaven.

2019: ... May this white garment be a sign to you of your Christian dignity...unstained into eternal life.

OBC, #64; Handing On of a Lighted Candle

1969: ... walk always as children of the light. May they keep the flame of faith alive in their→

hearts. When the Lord comes, may they go out to meet him with all the saints in the heavenly kingdom.

2019: ... walk always as children of the light and, persevering in the faith, may run to meet the Lord when he comes with all the Saints in the heavenly court.

OBC, #65; “Ephphatha”

1969: The Lord Jesus made the deaf hear and the dumb speak. May he soon touch your ears to receive his word, and your mouth to proclaim his faith, to the praise and glory of God the Father.

2019: May the Lord Jesus, who made the deaf to hear and the mute to speak grant that you may soon receive his word with your ears and profess your faith with your lips, to the glory and praise of God the Father.

Order of Baptism of Children within Mass

From the Appendix Introduction

250. To illustrate the paschal character of Baptism, it is recommended that the Sacrament be celebrated at the Easter Vigil or on a Sunday, when the Church commemorates the Resurrection of the Lord. Furthermore, on a Sunday, Baptism may be celebrated also within Mass, so that the whole community may be able to take part in the rite and so that the connection between Baptism and the Most Holy Eucharist may stand out more clearly. Nevertheless, this should not happen too often.

251. This ritual set out in this Appendix is provided to assist Priests who wish to celebrate Baptism within Mass, and is based on the instructions found in the Introduction of the OBC, nos. 29-30.

Outline

INTRODUCTORY RITES

RITE OF RECEIVING THE CHILDREN

At the door of the church or where the parents/godparents are gathered

Begins with Entrance Chant or hymn, if circumstances allow

Greeting, Penitential Act omitted

Procession to the Altar

In the customary manner, with singing if possible

GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST

If prescribed, but separate from the Procession

COLLECT PRAYER

LITURGY OF THE WORD

BIBLICAL READINGS AND HOMILY

Homily should take Baptism into account

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

May add petitions for the universal Church and for the needs of the world

Litany

May use extended litany from Chapter VII

PRAYER OF EXORCISM AND ANOINTING BEFORE BAPTISM

Anointing may be omitted for serious reasons

Procession to baptistery if needed (with song if possible)

CELEBRATION OF BAPTISM

BLESSING OF WATER AND INVOCATION OF GOD OVER THE WATER

Options in Chapter VII

RENUNCIATION OF SIN AND PROFESSION OF FAITH

BAPTISM

Appropriate to sing a short acclamation following Baptism

EXPLANATORY RITES

ANOINTING AFTER BAPTISM

CLOTHING WITH A WHITE GARMENT

HANDING ON OF A LIGHTED CANDLE

“EPHPHATHA”

At discretion of the celebrant

THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

THE CONCLUDING RITES

BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

May use one of the blessings from the rite of Baptism

Best Practices and Reminders

OBC is for children

- ✘ “Children” means those who have “not yet reached the age of discretion” (OBC, Introduction, no.1)
- ✘ Those who are seven years and older are initiated through the RCIA

Timing of Baptism (OBC, nos. 8-9)

- ✘ First consideration is “welfare of the child”
- ✘ Second consideration is “health of the mother”
- ✘ Third consideration is “sufficient time to prepare parents”
- ✘ Otherwise “within the first weeks after the birth”
- ✘ Recommended “at the Easter Vigil or on a Sunday”
- ✘ In danger of death baptize “without delay”
- ✘ The only times Baptism (outside danger of death) may not be celebrated are the days of Holy Week and the Triduum prior to the Easter Vigil

(continued on next page)

Place for Baptism (OBC, nos. 10-14)

- ✘ Celebrated in a church
 - ✘ Baptism is only celebrated outside of a church for a grave reason, such as danger of death or some great difficulty in getting to a church
- ✘ Why is this important?
 - ✘ No. 10—Baptism is the “Sacrament of the Church’s faith and of incorporation into the people of God,” and the parish church is where the people of God gather in faith
 - ✘ The rite uses the church building to illustrate the path of Christian life
 - ✘ Starts at the door of the church to represent Baptism as one’s “entrance” into the Church
 - ✘ Moves to ambo (or other suitable spot) for Biblical readings
 - ✘ Hearing word of God in turn moves us to font (accompanied by the intercession of the communion of saints)
 - ✘ Procession from font to altar representing the place where the life of the Baptized is nourished and sustained

Ministers for Baptism

- ✘ Ordinary ministers of Baptism are priests and deacons (and bishops)
- ✘ Others may assist as needed or as appropriate—servers, reader, music, etc.
 - ✘ Having the participation of others (especially music) can help to emphasize the importance of the celebration
- ✘ If there is a great number of children to be Baptized in one celebration, the celebrant may be assisted in various parts of the rite by other priests and deacons as noted
 - ✘ This would probably be a rare occurrence for our diocese
- ✘ The same minister must say the Trinitarian formula while the child is immersed/poured with the water
 - ✘ You cannot have one minister recite the formula while another pours the water

What May/May Not be Omitted

Rite of Receiving the Child

- ✘ Signing of the child—godparents may be invited to do so “if it seems appropriate”

Sacred Celebration of the Word of God

- ✘ Celebrant should preach a brief homily
- ✘ Prayer of the Faithful and Litany are always done
- ✘ Anointing with Oil of Catechumens may be omitted if “for serious reasons, the celebrant judges it pastorally necessary or desirable.”

Celebration of Baptism

- ✘ Water is always blessed, or if it is already blessed, a thanksgiving is made over the blessed water

Explanatory Rites

- ✘ Anointing after Baptism, Clothing with a White Garment, and Handing On of a Lighted Candle always occurs
- ✘ “Ephphatha” takes place “at the discretion of the celebrant”

The Role of Deacons at Baptisms within Mass

In anticipation of the new edition of the *Order of Baptism of Children* (OBC), the Secretariat of Divine Worship of the USCCB was been asked about the proper role of a deacon during the celebration of Baptism within Mass. The rite says little about the role of deacons in this situation, so it would seem that general liturgical principles provide an answer to this question. Perhaps most importantly, although there is no doubt concerning the validity of Baptisms performed by deacons at Mass (with the priest celebrant standing by as an observer), the traditional role of the deacon is to assist the priest at the liturgy, and not to preside over other sacraments when a priest is celebrating the Mass. As for the other aspects of the celebration, common sense must prevail and there will naturally be circumstances when a deacon may be called upon to take a more active role in the Baptism of children within Mass, for example, when the priest is elderly or if there is a large number of children.

At a Mass in which Baptism takes place, the deacon would, first and foremost, perform his usual roles at Mass: 1) carry the Book of the Gospels in the entrance procession and reverence the altar with the priest; 2) proclaim the Gospel; 3) retain the possibility of preaching the homily (in which case he follows the instructions given in the Order of Baptism, basing his homily on the sacred text but also considering the Baptism being celebrated); 4) read the intercessions in the Prayer of the Faithful, drawn from the Order of Baptism and supplemented with petitions for the needs of the Church and the world; and 5) take on his usual roles in the Liturgy of the Eucharist and Concluding Rites. (In the Universal Prayer at a Baptism within Mass, the deacon reads the petitions, but the priest celebrant leads the invocation of the saints, as indicated by the rubrics.)

Within the Order of Baptism itself, “[i]f there are very many children to be baptized, and there are several Priests or Deacons present, these may assist the celebrant in performing those rites that are indicated in the text” (OBC, no. 34). In such cases, deacons may join in the prebaptismal anointing with the Oil of Catechumens, baptizing some of the children, and anointing them with Chrism afterward. In more usual circumstances, when there are a small number of children to be baptized, deacons could assist the priest by helping to dry the holy water off the newly-baptized children and by placing the white garment on each child. They could also distribute the baptismal candles to the fathers or godfathers and/or lower the paschal candle to assist them in lighting the baptismal candles.

Given the wide variety of local situations, the Church relies on its ministers and lay collaborators to work together in a spirit of harmony to ensure that the celebrations of its rites are solemn, prayerful, efficient, and joyful.

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