

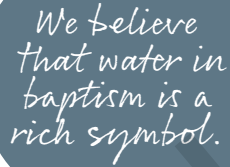
## **Baptism and Confirmation**

- 1212** We Catholics celebrate three sacraments  
to become fully initiated  
into the People of God, the Church.  
The first of these is baptism, where we are born anew.  
The second is confirmation,  
which strengthens us.  
The third is Eucharist,  
which gives us the food of eternal life  
and continues throughout our lives.  
We are, in a sense, never fully initiated  
but are constantly entering more deeply  
into the mystery of the Church  
and into life in Christ.
- 1213–14** We begin with baptism.  
The term comes to us from a Greek word  
which means to plunge or immerse.  
Going into the water  
is a symbol of entry into Christ’s death,  
and coming out of it a “new person”  
is a symbol of the resurrection.
- 1215** In the early Church, it was also called  
“the water of rebirth” or  
“the washing of rebirth”  
in the Letter to Titus, chapter 3, verse 5.
- 1216** It has also been called “enlightenment”  
because by it, we enter the community  
in which grace and light  
are received and shared.  
Indeed, through baptism,  
we become light for the world.
- 1217** The baptismal water is blessed  
on Holy Saturday night  
during the Easter Vigil.

We believe that grace comes to us  
through the sacramental signs  
and this grace reveals God's  
unseen powers.

We believe that water in baptism  
is a rich symbol.

**1218** We believe that the Spirit of Love  
breathes upon these waters,  
making them a wellspring of love.



*We believe  
that water in  
baptism is a  
rich symbol.*

**1222–23** Jesus himself began his ministry  
by being baptized in the River Jordan  
and later sent his followers to baptize as well.

“Go,” he told them after the resurrection,  
“Go ... and make disciples of all nations,  
baptizing them  
in the name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit...”

**1224–25** God is love, we read in the Gospels,  
and Christ reveals that love to us  
in its fullness.

In baptism, the Spirit of that love enters into us  
because of the life, death, and resurrection  
of Christ.

In baptism, we receive the grace to love deeply,  
profoundly,  
and generously  
and to move away from selfishness.

## Confirmation

**1285** Let us begin by saying clearly here  
that confirmation is intimately connected  
to both baptism and Eucharist.

They are all sacraments of initiation,  
adding to and completing each other.  
The reception of confirmation is required  
for initiation to be complete.

1286 We must also begin by saying once again  
that God revealed his great love to us  
entirely and wholly in Christ.

At his own baptism, the Spirit descended on Jesus,  
fulfilling what Isaiah 11:2 had said:

“The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him,  
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the spirit of counsel and might,  
the spirit of knowledge  
and awe in the face of God.”

This is the Holy Spirit of God.

Jesus was conceived in this Spirit,  
and his entire mission was rooted in love,  
in complete communion with God.

1287 It is clear that this Spirit  
deeply touched the apostles.

It filled their hearts with the fire of love  
and gave them courage,  
hope,  
and strength.

And most strikingly, through this same Spirit,  
Peter and the others found the words  
to communicate the wonders of God;  
and through those words,  
the Spirit touched other hearts  
so still more people joined the Church.

And on and on and on... throughout the centuries  
right up to this present moment.

Wherever you are, the Spirit is with you.

1288 From the earliest years of the Church,  
the apostles laid hands on the newly baptized,



conferring on them the gift of the Spirit,  
completing the grace of baptism.

1289 But also very early, anointing with holy oil  
was added to the laying on of hands.

In fact, the name “Christian” means  
“one who is anointed.”

The anointing signifies the gift of the Spirit,  
who brings love,

courage,  
and wisdom to us.

Indeed, the Spirit is the sacred source  
of all wisdom and love.

### GROUP OR PERSONAL PROCESS

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*What does it mean for you to be baptized?*

*How do you “put on Christ like a garment”?*

*How does being baptized into the death of Christ help you practice the art of self-giving love?*