Catechism

- Curriculum
- Catechism Binder?
- Truth: Scripture & Tradition
    - 01 - What is Truth?
    - 02 - What Holy Scripture Is
    - 03 - Canon of Holy Scripture
    - 04 - How Scripture is Used
    - 05 - Sola Scriptura
    - 06 - Tradition in Scripture
    - 07 - Gifts of Holy Tradition
    - 08 - Holy Tradition, Human Traditions, False Traditions
- Salvation in the Orthodox Concept
    - 01 - The Need for Salvation
    - 02 - What is Salvation?
    - 03 - Salvation by the Blood of Christ
    - 04 - Faith
    - 05 - Introduction to the Sacraments
- Mysteries of Christian Initiation
    - Resources
    - 01 - The Mystery of Baptism
    - 02 - Baptism: Prefigured in the Old Testament
    - 03 - Baptism in the Early Church
    - Baptism: Special Topics
    - 04 - Sacrament of Confirmation
    - 05 - Contemporary Rite of Baptism & Confirmation

- Mysteries of Christian Life & Renewal
  - 01 - The Eucharist
  - 02 - The Eucharist: Prefigured in the Old Testament
  - 03 - Eucharist in the NT and Early Church
  - 04 - The Mystery of Repentance and Confession
  - 05 - The Life of Repentance & Good Works
  - Resources
- Non-Redemptive Mysteries
  - Resources
- Comparative Theology
  - St Mary in the Orthodox Concept
  - Catholic

Curriculum

Initial Meetings

- Exchange Contact Information
- Setup a few initial meetings to get to know him/her
  - What notions or ideas do they have about God/Christianity/Orthodoxy
  - Why are they seeking the Church? What are they looking for?
  - Who is their family, what kinds of friends, school/work, family attitude about religion, about God, etc.
  - What kind of support system do they have (if any)
- Give them a tour of the church
  - Church and Chapel
  - Church service calendar
  - Who is Pope Tawadros, HE Metropolitan Youssef, HG Bishop Basil, our priests, etc.
- Attend multiple liturgies
- Q&A
- When the time is right, offer for them to start Catechumen classes and explain what that means and what that timeline looks like.
  - REMEMBER: there is no pushiness in Orthodoxy. There is only the Truth. We are not looking for quantity, but for quality. If numbers were the main goal, to fill our pews, then we could compromise the Truth in order to obtain followers. But that is not the case. See John 6.

Meeting Structure

1.5 hours

1. Prayer (in Church/Chapel)
2. Follow-Up
3. Pressing Questions (Q&A)
4. Lesson

Spiritual Canon

The Spiritual Canon is the MOST important part of Catechism.

Prayer

Everyone starts at a different level, but if someone is at zero, I usually go in this order:

1. Pray the Lord's Prayer until it's memorized. Pray extemporaneous prayer after.
2. Add the Thanksgiving Prayer
3. Add Psalm 50

4. Up to twice a day (morning and evening) if not already
5. "Come Let us Kneel Down" (with prostrations) in the mornings
6. Add Gospel of 1st Hour in mornings, 12th Hour in evenings

Scripture

Use NKJV, can read one section at a time or continue through a chapter.

Use Coptic Commentary app to address difficult verses. If you have any question, write it down and bring it to next meeting (or send it to Abouna).

Start with the Gospels as is mentioned below in the pre-catechism.

Fasting

Liturgical Experience

Divine Liturgy

Vespers & Matins

Pascha Week

Part of the benefit of a long catechism is the chance to experience the entirety of the liturgical year/calendar

Curriculum

We may be tempted to use catechism as a way to equip ourselves to "win debates" (even under the guise of "being sure about the Church") but this is temptation by Satan. Satan tempts us to devalue the faith part, and increasingly value arguments, logic, data, etc.

Once I commit to catechism, I commit to obedience to the father the priest and the Church with regards to doctrine, teaching, etc.

Introduction to Catechism

1. Intro to Catechism
    - What is it
        - Preparation for Christian Life - NOT preparation for baptism
    - Discipleship
    - Components
        - Spiritual Canon
        - Liturgical Experience
        - Catechism Class
    - Expectations
        - Commitment

    - Reverence
    - ASK QUESTIONS
  - Misconceptions

2. Introduction to Coptic Church
  - Coptic Orthodox Church
    - Apostolic
    - Martyrs
    - Ascetic
    - Modern
  - Orthodoxy is NOT a denomination
  - Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern US
  - Church Calendar
  - Recommended Websites, Apps, Books, etc.

Unit 1: Truth (10 Weeks)

Accompanying Scripture:

- Gospel of Matthew
- Gospel of Mark
- Gospel of Luke

Recommended Reading:

-

Recommended Viewing:

- HE Metropolitan Youssef: "Why Truth is Important"
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OGTdSbdmHxs
- HE Metropolitan Youssef: "Inspiration/Inerrancy of Scripture"
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nq6lMuuGgY8

Truth

- The point here is to establish a baseline... there is such a thing called Truth. And Truth is important (imperative). And discovering or knowing the Truth is the point of catechism.
  - Some things are unknowable
  - Some things require faith
  - Here, some preliminary ideas can be mentioned as the truth, to "get them out of the way" - homosexuality is sin, transgenderism is sin, abortion is sin
- There is only One Truth
  - You may not know what the below words mean, but just know that the Truth cannot be and at the same time "not be"
  - Either God exists (Theism), or He does not (Atheism)

    - Either Christ is God (Christianity) or He is not (Other Religions)
    - Either the Eucharist is the Mystical Real Presence of Christ; His Flesh indeed and His Blood indeed (Apostolic Christianity), or it's not (Protestantism)
    - Either the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father (Orthodoxy), or He proceeds from the Father and the Son (Catholicism)
    - Either Christ is One (Oriental Orthodoxy) or Christ is Divided (Eastern Orthodoxy)
- How Truth is Revealed
    - Nature
        - "For since the creation of the world His invisible *attributes* are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse" (Romans 1:20)
        - The Church is NOT against Science or the Scientific Method but...
    - Scripture
    - Tradition

Tradition

1. Intro to Tradition & Orthodoxy
2. Benefits of Holy Tradition
3. vs. Sola Scriptura
    - Be careful of Sola Patristica

Scripture

1. Authenticity and Reliability of the Bible
2. Biblical Interpretation
3. Infallibility of the Bible
4. How to Read the Bible

Unit 2: Foundations of Christian Life (Pre-Catechism)

The idea of pre-catechism is to introduce who Jesus Christ is, and to start to establish the Spiritual Canon. We will read the four gospels, the Book of Acts, Genesis, and select Pauline Epistles.

Catechumens should download the app "Coptic Commentaries" and read "St Marcos Commentary" for any passages that are difficult to understand.

For each book, maybe we can have the Bible Study/worksheet.

1. Gospel of Mark
2. Gospel of Matthew
3. Gospel of Luke
4. Gospel of John
5. Acts
6. Genesis
7. Exodus 1-20

- Moses
- Plagues
- Passover
- Red Sea, Bitter Waters, Manna, Water from a Rock
- Ten Commandments

8. Galatians
    - St Paul's apostleship, grace, faith, promise to Abraham
9. 1 Corinthians 11-15
    - Lord's Supper
    - Spiritual Gifts
    - Love
    - Spiritual Gifts (Tongues)
    - Resurrection
10. Ephesians
    - Church as the Body of Christ
    - God's Plan for Salvation
11. Philippians
    - Life of Christian Discipleship
12. Colossians
    - Christ's Supremacy
    - Fullness of Life in Christ

Catechism Readiness Checklist

1. Who is Jesus Christ?
2. What did Christ preach about the Kingdom of God?
3. What did Christ preach about Christian behavior?
4. Why did humanity need salvation? What happened through the Fall?
5. What do Christ's Incarnation, Death and Resurrection accomplish for humanity?
6. What happened at Pentecost?
7. How did the Church grow?
8. Who is St Paul?
9. How did St Paul become an apostle?
10. What do the Scriptures teach about baptism, Eucharist, life in the Church?
11. How do the Old Testament promises and events relate to Christ and the New Covenant?

Unit 3: Salvation in the Orthodox Understanding (20 Weeks)

Salvation by Grace, Faith, Works (5 Weeks)

Accompanying Scripture:

- Gospel of John

- Genesis 1-11
- Exodus 1-20
- Romans

Recommended Reading:

- Salvation in the Orthodox Understanding
  - HH Pope Shenouda III
  - https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/g80ptvvlcjvo580oigj0t/Salvation-in-the-Orthodox-Concept-by-H.H.-Pope-Shenouda-III.pdf?rlkey=jmog2uvp5bfp6xy5frcuskyz2&dl=0
  - https://www.amazon.com/Salvation-Orthodox-Understanding-Pope-Shenouda/dp/B0FCLPFMCV
- The Heresy of Salvation in a Moment
  - HH Pope Shenouda III
  - https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/64ch0dioguo9wum5upw08/The-Heresy-of-Salvation-in-a-Moment-HH-Pope-Shenouda-III.pdf?rlkey=3rficdxk1jcs7498nq7buaaw4&dl=0

Recommended Viewing:

Notes:

Curriculum:

1. The Need for Salvation (Creation and Fall of Man)
   - Who is God?
   - Who is Man?
     - "in the image of God" (Humans) vs. "the image of God" (Christ)
   - Genesis 1 and 2 Understood
   - Image and Likeness of God
   - Genesis 3: The Fall of Man and the Need for Salvation
   - Sin, Death, Corruption
     - Original Sin
     - Death is the common problem that every religion, philosophy, ideology, etc. is trying to solve

2. What is Salvation?
   - Atonement from **sin**
   - Eternal Life (rather than **death**)
   - Perfection of the Likeness of God in Eternal Life (rather than **corruption**)
   - False Ideas of Salvation
     - Universalism - "All will be saved"
     - Limited Atonement - "Only the Elect" (Mormon, Jehovah Witness, etc.)
     - Pluralism
     - Protestantism - one extreme: By Grace through faith

    - EO response to Protestant ideas (e.g. in PSA, Original Sin, Theosis) during the neopatristic movement

3. Salvation by the Blood of Christ
    - Atonement
        - Qualities of the Savior
        - Ransom
        - Punishment? (PSA) - see fraction "O only-begotten Son"
    - How the Lord Prepared the World for His Incarnation
    - No Salvation without the Blood of Christ
    - Conditions for Accepting the Blood of Christ
        - Faith
        - Works

4. Faith
    - Living Faith
    - Faith Working Through Love
    - See Fr Reweis Sermon 10/11/2026

5. Introduction to the Sacraments
    - The point in this unit is NOT to deep dive sacraments (or address questions about baptism, Eucharist, Original Sin, Theosis, etc.
    - Redemptive vs. Non-Redemptive
    - Efficacious Sign (Visible Sign, Invisible Grace)
    - Redemptive Sacraments according to the Scripture
    - Repentance & Confession, include these points:
        - Evil works lead to death
        - Judgment according to our works/deeds

Mysteries of Christian Initiation [Sacraments I] (5 Weeks)

Scripture:

Recommended Reading:

- Comparative Theology
    - HH Pope Shenouda III
    - https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/gsuz0hh4jari1xsqhqke1/COMPARATIVE-THEOLOGY-HH-Pope-Shenouda-III.pdf?rlkey=eplgm0u8r08sx91mbx2pe8sn2&dl=0
    - https://www.amazon.com/Comparative-Theology-Orthodoxy-vs-Protestantism/dp/B0H8FXNJ2L

Recommended Viewing:

Notes:

Curriculum:

1. What is Baptism?
    - Meaning
    - Institution of the Mystery
    - Visible Sign
        - Water as the Material Element
        - Three Immersions
        - Declaration of the Faith
    - Conferred Grace
        - Death and Resurrection with Christ
            - *Special Topic: Right-Hand Thief*
        - New Creation (Born Again)
        - Forgiveness of Sin (Original Sin)
        - Adopted into God's Family (Membership in the Body of Christ)
        - Put on Christ
    - Special Topics
        - *Special Topic: Baptism of Infants*
        - *Special Topic: One Baptism*

2. Baptism Prefigured in the OT
    - New Creation
        - Primordial Waters
        - Deluge
    - Covenant and Incorporation into God's Family
        - Circumcision
    - Salvation Through Water
        - Noah's Ark
        - Crossing the Red Sea
        - Crossing the Jordan
    - Cleansing and Consecration
        - Ritual Washing
        - Naaman Washing in the Jordan
        - Elijah's Sacrifice
        - Ezekiel's Cleansing and New Heart

3. Baptism in the NT and Early Church
    - In the New Testament
        - 1st Century Judaism
        - Baptism of St John the Baptist
        - Christ's Baptism
        - Baptism in the Gospels
        - Baptism after Pentecost
    - In the Early Church
        - Sources (Egeria, Tertullian, Didache, etc.)
        - Sunday before Lent: Preparation, Examination, and Enrollment

    - Lent Period: Photizomenoi
    - Sunday before Resurrection: Renounce Satan & Profess Christ
    - Resurrection Vigil: Baptism

4. What is Confirmation?
    - Meaning
    - Insititution of the Mystery
    - Visible Sign
    - Conferred Grace
        - Indwelling of the Holy Spirit
    - Confirmation in the Book of Acts
    - Work of the Holy Spirit in My Life <-- needs its own lesson?

5. Contemporary Rite of Baptism & Confirmation
    - Absolution of the Woman
        - Only for an already-Orthodox mother who just gave birth
        - *Special Topic: 40 and 80 Days*
    - Preparation (Baptismal Font, Materials, Priest, Parents)
    - Sanctification of the Water
    - Renunciation of Satan & Declaration of Faith
    - Baptism
    - Holy Myron
        - Brief History of the Holy Myron oil
    - Crowning
    - Commandment
    - Procession
    - Loosing the Girdle

Mysteries of Christian Life & Renewal [Sacraments II] (5 Weeks)

Scripture:

Recommended Reading:

- Comparative Theology
    - HH Pope Shenouda III
    - https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/gsuz0hh4jari1xsqhqke1/COMPARATIVE-THEOLOGY-HH-Pope-Shenouda-III.pdf?rlkey=eplgm0u8r08sx91mbx2pe8sn2&dl=0
    - https://www.amazon.com/Comparative-Theology-Orthodoxy-vs-Protestantism/dp/B0H8FXNJ2L

Recommended Viewing:

Notes:

Curriculum:

1. The Mystery of the Eucharist
    - Meaning
    - Institution of the Mystery
    - Visible Sign
    - Conferred Grace
    - Readiness/Preparedness/Worthiness

2. The Eucharist: Prefigured in the OT

3. Eucharist in the New Testament & Early Church
    - Mystical Real Presence
    - Eucharist in the Fathers

4. The Mystery of Repentance & Confession
    - Meaning
    - Institution of the Mystery
    - Visible Sign
    - Conferred Grace

5. Life of Repentance & Good Works
    - Evil works lead to death
    - Judgment according to our works/deeds
    - Life of Virtue

Non-Redemptive Mysteries (5 Weeks)

Although the Unit is called "Salvation in the Orthodox Understanding" and these are non-redemptive Mysteries, yet without the Priesthood, the Redemptive Mysteries cannot be administered! And those who are given to Matrimony, are married for their salvation! And the Unction of the Sick is a prayer for the physical and spiritual healing! So it is necessary that we learn them as a part of this unit.

1. Mystery of Priesthood
    - Meaning
    - Institution of the Mystery
    - Visible Sign
    - Conferred Grace

2. Priesthood in the Scripture
    - OT Priesthood
    - Order of Melchizedek
    - "General" Priesthood
    - Ordination of Women

3. What is Matrimony?
    - Meaning
    - Institution of the Mystery
    - Visible Sign
    - Conferred Grace
    - What God has joined together, let not man separate

4. Contemporary Rite of Matrimony
    - Rings
    - Girdle
    - Vestments
    - Oil
    - Crowns

5. Mystery of Unction of the Sick
    - Meaning
    - Institution
    - Visible Sign
    - Conferred Grace

Unit 4: Who is God

Recommended Reading:

God the Trinity

1. Trinitarian Faith
    1. Introduction
    2. Analogies
    3. Biblical Foundations
2. Attributes of God
3. Trinitarian Heresies

Christology

1. Nature of Christ
2. Christ and our salvation

Unit 5: Comparative Theology

Eastern Orthodox

- The Nature of Christ
- The Neo-Patristic Movement
    - Original Sin
    - Penal Substitutionary Atonement
    - Theosis

Roman Catholic

- All of the above +
- Filioque
- Papacy/Papal Infallibility
- Purgatory
- Immaculate Conception of St. Mary

Protestantism

1. All of the above +
2. Salvation
    1. Mysteries
3. Saints
    1. Intercession
    2. Icons
4.

Non-Christian

Do not believe in the Holy Trinity, or Jesus Christ as the Second Person of the Trinity Incarnate.

1. Jehovah's Witnesses
2. Latter Day Saints (Mormon)
3. Seventh Day Adventist
4. Judaism
5. Islam
6. Paganism

Unit 6: Church Rituals

Divine Liturgy

1. Introduction to Ritual & Liturgical Prayer
    1. What is Ritual
    2. Use of Matter (Icons, Candles, Incense, etc.)
    3. What is Liturgy
2. Divine Liturgy
3. Vespers & Matins

Sacramental Rites

1. Rite of Initiation: Baptism
2. Rite of Initiation: Chrismation
3. Crowning Ceremony

Unit 7: Church History

Catechism Binder?

1. Pre-Tabs
   - Name
   - First Liturgy
   - First Meeting
   - Progression
   - Baptism Day (Blank)

2. Tab 1: Bible Studies
   - Gospel of Mark
   - Gospel of Matthew
   - Gospel of Luke
   - Gospel of John
   - Book of Acts
   - Genesis
   - Exodus 1-20
   - etc.

3. Tab 2: Truth
   - Infograph Summary
   - Information Sheets
   - Worksheets for each topic

4. Tab 3: Salvation in the Orthodox Understanding
   - Infograph Summary
   - Information Sheets
   - Worksheets for each topic

5. Tab 4: Who is God?
   - Infograph Summary
   - Information Sheets
   - Worksheets for each topic

6. Tab 5: Church History
   - Infograph Summary
   - Information Sheets
   - Worksheets for each topic

7. Tab 6: Divine Liturgy
   - Infograph Summary
   - Information Sheets
   - Worksheets for each topic

Truth: Scripture & Tradition

01 - What is Truth?

02 - What Holy Scripture Is

What is Scripture?

- Writing that is recognized by a worshipping community as inspired by God and authoritative
  - Writing
  - Recognized by a community of faith
    - Canon of Scripture
  - Inspired by God
    - Inspiration of Scripture
    - Inerrancy of Scripture
    - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nq6lMuuGgY8 <-- see this
  - Authoritative

Inspiration of Scripture

Inerrancy of Scripture

03 - Canon of Holy Scripture

04 - How Scripture is Used

How Scripture is Used by the Church

1. Liturgical
2. Homiletical
3. Catechetical
4. Doctrinal
5. Devotional

How to Interpret Scripture

In the context

How to Read Scripture

Strategies

HHPS 1993

- Recommend for each person to keep a small bible in their pocket or purse
- Recommend for each person to have a chair in their house dedicated to reading and benefitting
- Many people read the Bible as a study, but what is more important is the spiritual benefit in the spiritual and practical life of the person
- The Holy Bible is the greatest message
  - When St Antony got a letter from Emperor Constantine, he put it next to him and didn’t read it. So his disciples said to him “You got a letter from the emperor and you didn’t read it?!?” He said “my sons, God sends us a letter every day in the Holy Bible… do we value its reading as much as you value the letter from the emperor?”
  - St Antony, from one verse he heard in the church, it changed his whole life (“If you want to be perfect, go and sell what you have”)
- Open the Bible… but also open your heart as you read it

05 - Sola Scriptura

History of Sola Scriptura

Problems with Sola Scriptura

Fruit of Sola Scriptura

Three False Assumptions

- Assumption #1: The Bible is the FINAL word on faith, piety, worship
- Assumption #2: The Holy Scriptures were the basis of the early Church, whereas Tradition is a human corruption that came much later
- Assumption #3: Christians can Interpret the Holy Scriptures for themselves without the aid of the Church

Sola Scriptura Does not Meet Its Own Criteria

06 - Tradition in Scripture

Tradition in the Old Testament

Tradition in the Gospels

Tradition in the New Testament

Scripture Quotes Tradition

07 - Gifts of Holy Tradition

The Books of the New Testament

Correct Interpretation of Holy Scripture

Liturgical Worship

Doctrinal and Theological Rules

08 - Holy Tradition, Human Traditions, False Traditions

Holy Tradition

"The balance with which we weigh the sound tradition, which is an imperative condition, is its agreement with the Holy Scriptures. On this, our teacher Paul the Apostle says, "But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed." (Galatians 1:8-9) - HHPS 3 (Comparative Theology Intro)

Transmission of Holy Tradition: "And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also" - 5 generations of transmission!

"Tradition" vs "tradition"

Traditions of Men (False Traditions)

Salvation in the Orthodox Concept

01 - The Need for Salvation

The Need for Salvation (Creation and Fall of Man)

- Who is God?
- Who is Man?
  - "in the image of God" (Humans) vs. "the image of God" (Christ)
- Genesis 1 and 2 Understood
- Image and Likeness of God
- Genesis 3: The Fall of Man and the Need for Salvation
- Sin, Death, Corruption
  - Original Sin
  - Death is the common problem that every religion, philosophy, ideology, etc. is trying to solve

02 - What is Salvation?

- Atonement from **sin**
- Eternal Life (rather than **death**)
- Perfection of the Likeness of God in Eternal Life (rather than **corruption**)
- False Ideas of Salvation
  - Universalism - "All will be saved"
  - Limited Atonement - "Only the Elect" (Mormon, Jehovah Witness, etc.)
  - Pluralism
  - Protestantism - one extreme: By Grace through faith
  - EO response to Protestant ideas (e.g. in PSA, Original Sin, Theosis) during the neopatristic movement

See Fr Daniel Abba Moses Fundamentals

- Definition of Salvation
- Synonyms for Salvation
- Principles of Salvation
- God's Role
  - Specific Salvific Works
    - Incarnation, Baptism, Sufferings, Crucifixion, Death, Resurrection, Ascension, Giving of the Holy Spirit
  - Divine Withdrawal
    - How does God work now
- Humanity's Role
  - Partaking in the Divine Nature
    - Baptism
    - Confirmation
    - Partaking of the Eucharist
    - Repentance and Confession

03 - Salvation by the Blood of Christ

- Atonement
  - Qualities of the Savior
  - Ransom
  - Punishment? (PSA) - see fraction "O only-begotten Son"
- How the Lord Prepared the World for His Incarnation
- No Salvation without the Blood of Christ
- Conditions for Accepting the Blood of Christ
  - Faith
  - Works

Salvation in the Orthodox Concept

04 - Faith

- Living Faith
- Faith Working Through Love
- See Fr Reweis Sermon 10/11/2026

05 - Introduction to the Sacraments

> “Wisdom has built her house, she has hewn out her seven pillars.” (Proverbs 9:1)
> Christ has built His Church, He has hewn out her seven sacraments.

Definitions

- Mystery: μυστήριον (Greek) - "Revealed Secret"
  - Something not understood or beyond understanding, a religious truth that one can know only by revelation and cannot fully understand
  - Seven Mysteries: Channels by which we receive the grace and blessings of the Holy Spirit, and were instituted by the Lord Jesus Christ
- Sacrament: *sacramentum* (Latin) - "Consecration"
  - When the Church started to speak Latin, the word μυστήριον was translated to the Latin *sacramentum*
  - It was used to describe the sacred Christian ceremonies (e.g. baptism, Eucharist, etc.) that served as visible signs of an invisible, divine grace
- The Holy Mysteries serve as visible signs of an invisible divine grace

Visible Sign, Invisible Grace

- To a materialist: a mountain is a mountain; the sunset is the sun setting
- To a poet, artist, or saint: a mountain tells the power of God; the sunset tells of His beauty
- A spoken word
  - Visible: sounds that were uttered
  - Invisible: meaning behind the word
- A joke
  - Visible: words are there, anyone can hear them
  - Invisible: only someone who understands the joke will find it funny
  - If a horse heard the joke, he would hear the words, but would not laugh! He only gets the visible part
- A handshake
  - Visible: two hands touching and shaking... it can be seen and felt
  - Invisible: the communication of friendship; or the communication of agreement
- A kiss
  - Visible: it is physical and visible
  - Invisible: the affection and the love behind it
    - This is why Christ asked Judas: "are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?" - do you use the sign of affection to betray?

- The Bronze Serpent
  - “Then the Lord said to Moses, “Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live.” So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived.” (Numbers 21:8-9)
  - Visible: Bronze Serepent
  - Invisible: Healing
  - Invisible Level 2: Typology
    - Another layer of invisible here is not revealed until the Lord speaks to Nicodemus in John 3
    - “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:14-15)
      - The Bronze Serpent looked like the serpents that had bit them - just as Christ, being Crucified with the guilty (sin), would look guilty (sin). But really He is without guilt (sin) as the Bronze Serpent was without venom
      - The Bronze Serpent looked like the serpents that brought death – just as Christ died. But really the bronze serpent brought life, just as Christ came back alive
      - The serpents were conquered by a serpent, as death was conquered by Death.

Sacraments & the Nature of Christ

“And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness:

> God was manifested in the flesh,
> Justified in the Spirit,
> Seen by angels,
> Preached among the Gentiles,
> Believed on in the world,
> Received up in glory.”

(1 Timothy 3:16)

- Christ's Nature is:
  - Divine and Human united in One Nature
  - Eternal and Temporal united
  - Invisible and Visible united
- Why did He take flesh and become man?
  - Because we are man
  - If we were angels or spirits, He would not take flesh to save us, but because we are composed of matter, so He took matter.
- In the same way, because we are composed of Matter, the Holy Spirit works through matter and the material world in the Sacraments to confer the immaterial grace

Sacraments

- Requirements for a Sacrament
  1. Instituted by Christ
  2. Outward Sign (Visible)
  3. Conferred Grace (Invisible)
- Efficacy of a Sacrament
  - “He [The Holy Spirit] will take of what is Mine [Christ] and declare it to you.” (John 16:14)
  - Christ's Passion, Death and Resurrection
  - The Work of the Holy Spirit
  - **Sacraments cannot be separated from the work of God**
- Prefigured in the Old Testament
  - There is Christological Typology - types of the Cross, Resurrection, etc.
  - There is also Sacramental Typology - types of Baptism, Chrismation, Eucharist, etc.

Validity of a Sacrament

1. Canonically Ordained Orthodox Priest to Administer
   - Authority given by the laying of hands
   - Acts as an agent of God by the power of the Holy Spirit
   - “Neither do we the laity perform any of the offices belonging to the priesthood; as, for instance, neither the sacrifice (Eucharist), nor baptism, nor the laying on of the hands (Priesthood), nor the blessing, whether the smaller or the greater: for “no one takes this honor to himself, but he that is called of God.” [Heb. 5:12] For such sacred offices are conferred by the laying on of the hands of the Bishop. But a person to whom such an office is not committed, but he seizes upon it for himself, he shall undergo the punishment of Uzziah. (2 Chronicles 26:19-21)” (Apostolic Constitutions Section 7, X)
2. Proper Ritual: Method & Material
   - Baptism: Water, Oil
   - Confirmation: Myron Oil
   - Eucharist: Bread, Wine

3. Invocation of the Holy Spirit
   - Liturgical Prayers that accompany the Sacraments

The Seven Mysteries (Sacraments)

1. Baptism
2. Confirmation
3. Repentance & Confession
4. Eucharist
5. Matrimony
6. Unction of the Sick
7. Priesthood

Redemptive vs. Non-Redemptive

- These can be split into redemptive and non-redemptive.
- Redemptive Sacraments are necessary for the salvation of a believer:
  1. Baptism
  2. Confirmation
  3. Repentance & Confession
  4. Eucharist
- Non-Redemptive Sacraments are not necessary for the salvation of a believer, and not all believers will receive them:
  1. Matrimony
  2. Unction of the Sick
  3. Priesthood

Preventative, Curative, Supplementary

- Physical Healing has three types of medicine
  - Preventative (e.g. vaccination)
  - Curative (e.g. medicine prescribed after a diagnosis)
  - Supplementary (e.g. vitamins to give energy, immunity, strengthen the body, etc.)
- Same with the Mysteries
  - Preventative
    - Chrismation
    - Matrimony
  - Curative
    - Baptism
    - Repentance & Confession
    - Eucharist
    - Unction of the Sick
  - Supplementary
    - Eucharist
    - Priesthood

Repeatable vs. Non-Repeatable

Certain Church Sacraments are performed with an imperishable feature and must not be performed again

- Baptism
- Confirmation
- Matrimony
- Priesthood

Mysteries of Christian Initiation

Baptism & Confirmation

Resources

- St Rebekah Servants' Meeting: Baptism Topic
  - https://drive.google.com/file/d/17WGoBJLhPD_B2IS1zVobY1rwtw3rVhOs/view?usp=sharing
- SUS Copts Articles
  - Sacrament of Baptism: https://suscopts.org/resources/literature/407/the-sacrament-of-baptism
  - Baptism in the Holy Gospels: https://suscopts.org/resources/literature/408/baptism-in-the-holy-gospels
  - Baptism in the Book of Acts: https://suscopts.org/resources/literature/409/baptism-in-the-holy-book-of-acts
  - Baptism in the Pauline Epistles: https://suscopts.org/resources/literature/410/baptism-in-the-holy-pauline-epistles
  - Baptism in the Catholic Epistles: https://suscopts.org/resources/literature/411/baptism-in-the-holy-catholic-epistles
- Books
  - The Bible and the Liturgy - Jean Danielou, S.J
    - https://www.amazon.com/Bible-Liturgy-Jean-Danielou/dp/0268003734

01 - The Mystery of Baptism

Definitions

Baptism is the Holy Mystery through which we are "born again" by being immersed in the water three times in the name of the Holy Trinity: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

The Mystery of Baptism is the **gate of the Mysteries**. Only after baptism is one given the right to partake of the rest of the Mysteries.

Baptism is also known as the **Mystery of Enlightenment**

βάπτισμα meaning "immersion" or "dipping in water"

- Root Verb βάπτω meaning "to dip" or "to dye"
- Active Verb βαπτίζω meaning "to immerse" or "to submerge" or "to go under"

Institution of the Mystery of Baptism

The Great Commission

- **(Matthew 28:18-20)**: And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age.”
- **(Mark 16:15-16)**: And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.

Nicodemus Discourse

- **(John 3:3)** Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”
- **(John 3:5)**: Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

The Baptism of Christ and the Sanctification of the Waters

- Christ was baptized in order to Sanctify the Waters for our baptism, and to **point us** to baptism
- "No Baptism was necessary for Christ, but He freely received the baptism of a servant [John] to draw us towards His baptism" (Tractate 5 on the Gospel of John - St Augustine)

- "The Lord was baptized, not to be cleansed himself, but to cleanse the waters, so that those waters, cleansed by the flesh of Christ which knew no sin, might have the power of baptism. Whoever comes, therefore, to the washing of Christ, lays aside his sins." (Commentary on Luke 2:83 - St Ambrose of Milan)

What About the Cross?

- Some Protestant objections to baptism will say “We don’t need baptism, we only need the Blood of Christ!”
  - Baptism is not a "magical action" that works independently of God! It is the sacramental means established by Christ to grant us participation in His Blood - His Death and Resurrection.
  - Baptism was not instituted until **after the Resurrection**!
- Christ called the Cross His Baptism!
  - “I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how great is my distress until it is accomplished!” (Luke 12:50)
  - When James and John asked the Lord to sit on His right and left… the Lord Jesus said to them, “You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?” (Mark 10:38) - (Matthew 20:22)
  - Baptism by water and Spirit IS participating in the Sacrifice of Christ. It is dying with Him and being buried with Him, and rising from the tomb with Him.

Conferred Grace - Salvation

"He who believes and **is baptized will be saved**; but he who does not believe will be condemned." (Mark 16:16)

"not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy **He saved us**, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit," (Titus 3:5)

who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were **saved through water** ." (1 Peter 3:20)

1. Death and Resurrection with Christ
2. Forgiveness of Sins, Cleansing of Original Sin
3. Born Again (Regeneration)
4. Adoption as Children of God
5. Membership in the Body of Christ
6. Put on Christ

Imagine a slave who his taken out of slavery to live in the king's palace as his son.

1. He leaves his slavery behind, and becomes a free man.
2. His former life is forgotten.
3. His new life begins

4. He is adopted by the king and becomes his son.
5. He lives in the house of the king, among the family of the king.
6. He is arrayed in the clothing of kings.

This is baptism.

Death and Resurrection with Christ

"For the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23)

"Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission" (Hebrews 9:22)

- Christ did this part

"that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death," (Philippians 3:10)

- St Paul says that we should be conformed to Christ's death
- Unless we undergo such death, we cannot be saved. How do we undergo this death? How do we share in the death of the Lord?

"Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." (Romans 6:3-4)

- Baptism into Christ is baptism into His death
- We are buried with Him in baptism
- We are raised with Him
- We should walk in the newness of life

Baptism, then, is necessary for salvation, because it is fellowship in the death of Christ, and because it is faith in death as a means for life, and it is confession that the wages of sin is death

> St John Chrysostom: "What the cross and burial were to Christ, baptism is to us, though not in all respects. For Christ died and was buried in the flesh, whereas we have died and been buried to sin." (St John Chrysostom - Commentary on Romans 6:3)

"In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with *Him* through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of

requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross." (Colossians 2:11-13)

> This baptism, therefore, is given into the death of Jesus: And so are owned to be heirs of His Kingdom. For since you have "been baptized into the Lord's death" - Apostolic Constitutions

> "There are two mortifyings and two deaths. One of them is accomplished by Christ in baptism, and the other is our duty to effect by earnestness afterwards. For it was Christ's gift that our former sins were buried, but remaining dead to sin after baptism must be the work of our own earnestness, however much we find that God gives us enormous help here as well. For baptism does not just have the power to obliterate our former transgressions; it also protects us against subsequent ones." - (St John Chrysostom - Commentary on Romans 6:5)

> "And that Water of salvation was at once **your grave** and your mother." (St Cyril of Jerusalem - Mystagogical Lectures 2.4)

Remission of Sins and Cleansing from Original Sin

"Then Peter said to them, 'Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'" (Acts 2:38)

"Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God." (1 Corinthians 6:9-11)

St Paul, himself, was in this category. St Paul met the Lord. Had faith. Became an apostle... but that wasn't enough!

"Then a certain Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good testimony with all the Jews who dwelt there, 13 came to me; and he stood and said to me, ‘Brother Saul, receive your sight.’ And at that same hour I looked up at him. 14 Then he said, ‘The God of our fathers has chosen you that you should know His will, and see the Just One, and hear the voice of His mouth. 15 For you will be His witness to all men of what you have seen and heard. 16 And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.’" (Acts 22:12-16)

This Includes the Original Sin

"Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned— (For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come. But the free gift *is* not like the offense. For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many. And the gift *is* not like *that which came* through the one who sinned. For the judgment *which came* from one *offense resulted* in condemnation, but the free gift *which came* from many offenses *resulted* in justification. For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.) Therefore, as through one man's offense *judgment came* to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act *the free gift came* to all men, resulting in justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous." (Romans 5:12-19)

> "We confess one baptism, for the remission of sins" (Nicene Creed)

> "And the bishop shall lay his hand upon them [the newly baptized], invoking and saying: 'O Lord God, who did count these worthy of deserving the forgiveness of sins by the laver of regeneration, make them worthy to be filled with your Holy Spirit and send upon them thy grace [in confirmation], that they may serve you according to your will." (Apostolic Tradition 22:1)

"Renew their birth a second time by the washing of the New Birth and the forgiveness of sins; prepare them to be a temple of Your Holy Spirit" (Rite of Baptism)

> "Since human beings are composite and not simple by nature, mixed from two things — namely, a body with senses and an intellectual soul — they need a twofold healing for the new birth, corresponding to both of the aforementioned. So the human spirit is sanctified by the Spirit, and the body is sanctified by the water, which in turn is also sanctified. Just as water that is poured into a kettle receives an impression of the fire's power by association with the tips of the flame, so also through the energy of the Spirit, perceptible water is transformed into a divine and ineffable power and sanctifies those with whom it comes into contact" (St Cyril of Alexandria - Commentary on John IVP p.98)

> “Christ rubs off all the filth of our soul through holy baptism. We were baptized through the Holy Spirit and fire, remember, and every form of wickedness in us, as it were, dissolved and was consumed like some useless rubbish, which is what fire does, after all.” (St Cyril of Alexandria - Commentary on Isaiah, HCOP, p. 41)

> “Saving and holy baptism suffices for the washing away of sin, and erases the defilement of previous falls.” (St Cyril of Alexandria - Commentary on Isaiah, p.42)

Born Again (Regeneration)

"Jesus answered and said to [Nicodemus], 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' Nicodemus said to Him, 'How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?' Jesus answered, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.'" (John 3:3-6)

- It is a Spiritual Birth. A heavenly birth.

(Titus 3:5) not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the **washing of regeneration** and renewing of the Holy Spirit,

- The word "regeneration" literally means to be "born again" (or to "give birth again" or to "generate again")

> "We receive the hope of eternal life through the **laver of regeneration** and renewing of the Holy Spirit" (St Ambrose - On the Holy Spirit Book III, Chapter 10)

> "And that Water of salvation was at once your grave and **your mother.**" (St Cyril of Jerusalem - Mystagogical Lectures 2.4)

Adoption as Children of God

"But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the **adoption as sons**. And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out,

“Abba, Father!” Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, **and if a son, then an heir of God** through Christ." (Galatians 4:4-7)

- Christ is the Son of God by nature
- We are sons of God by adoption

"Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to **adoption as sons** by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved." (Ephesians 1:3-6)

"For you were bought at a price;" (1 Cor 6:20)

> “This baptism, therefore, is given into the death of Jesus: And so are owned to be **heirs of His Kingdom**. For since you have "been baptized into the Lord's death" - Apostolic Constitutions

"For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Galatians 3:26-29)

Membership in the Body of Christ

"For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also *is* Christ. For by one Spirit **we were all baptized into one body** —whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. For in fact the body is not one member but many." (1 Cor 12:12-14)

- Fellowship with the faithful
  - Serving one another according to our gifts
    - "For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another." (Romans 12:5)
    - As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." (1 Peter 4:10)
    - "If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body,” is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body,” is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling? But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. And if they were all one member, where would the body be? But now indeed there are many members, yet one body." (1 Cor 12:15-20)

    - Strengthen one another
        - "Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing." (1 Thessalonians 5:11)
        - "And the eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you”; nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unpresentable parts have greater modesty, but our presentable parts have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it, that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another." (1 Cor 12:21-26)
    - Caring for one another in love
        - "And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it." (1 Cor 12:27)
    - We are not called to live as isolated Christians
        - Even solitary monks assemble with the rest of the believers to commune
        - Even solitary monks pray for one another
- Having the Church as my Mother
    - “He can no longer have God for his Father, who has not the Church for his mother." - Cyprian of Carthage
- Participation in the Sacramental Life
    - Receiving the Eucharist
    - Receiving Repentance & Confession and the Absolution

This is the Fulfillment of Circumcision

"In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead." (Colossians 2:11-12)

"And the uncircumcised male child, who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant.” (Genesis 17:14)

Putting on Christ

- "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ." (Galatians 3:27)
- A new identity and life
    - In our modern society, people try to find their identity in a group/movement, an experience, a diagnosis, a desire (even sinful), etc. but as Christians, our identity is in Christ.
    - Like wearing a uniform, it makes it clear who you are - so also, our baptismal garment should distinguish us and make it clear we belong to Christ
- "But you have not so learned Christ, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of

your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness." (Ephesians 4:20-24)
    - "Put on the new man in true righteousness and holiness"
- "keep holiness in all your members, as having put on Christ. "For," it is said, "as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ." Wherefore let all your members be holy as becomes their investment in a raiment of holiness and light." (St Basil - Letter 292)
    - That means I should have righteousness in all my members - and we will discuss this when we talk about Living the Baptismal Life.
- "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, My soul shall be joyful in my God; for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness" (Isaiah 61:10)
- You put on Christ.
    - You put on the righteousness that is in Him, which He grants you as a result of baptism.
    - You put on the salvation that He granted you in Baptism by His blood.
    - You put on the divine image that we lost through the original sin.

Visible Sign

- Three Immersions
- Three days in the tomb
    - If we are dying and being buried with Christ, then just as he was in the tomb three days, so also we will immerse three times
- Name of the Trinity
    - Immerse three times in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit

Living the Baptismal Life

"Beloved, be it known to you that those who are baptized into the death of our Lord Jesus are obliged to go on no longer in sin; for as those who are dead cannot work wickedness any longer, so those who are dead with Christ cannot practice wickedness. We do not therefore believe, brethren, that any one who has received the washing of life continues in the practice of the licentious acts of transgressors. Now he who sins after his baptism, unless he repent and forsake his sins, shall be condemned to hell-fire." (Apostolic Constitutions - Book II, Section 3, VII)

St Gregory of Nyssa when he talks about baptism he said “many of you boast about being baptized, about being renewed… but SHOW ME after the sacramental grace, the change in your ways. SHOW ME the purity of your conversion.”

Baptism is not just a ritual… It’s not just something we have to do. It is a change in my life.

- What we see after baptism, with our eyes, is the same person. He doesn’t look different. He still has the same skin color, he has the same hair, same height, etc. Physically, he hasn’t changed. So, he says, how do I know that you have changed?

- By the intentional motions of the soul - the soul separates itself from its old life. And this word "separates" is the word HOLY.
- I become HOLY. SEPARATED from my old life. SEPARATED from the world. To the point that my old self is not even recognizable.
  - Before, I was a liar. Now I am truthful.
  - Before, I was without order in my life. Now, I have structure and order and routine.
  - Before, I was envious of what others have. Now, I am content with my possessions - and not just content but impart from what I have to those who need it.
  - Before, I was a gossiper. Now I am affable. Now I am courteous.
  - Before, I used certain language. Now, my language is clean.
  - Before, I dressed in a certain way - certain clothes, certain hairstyle, piercings. Now I put those away. Now I dress as a prince, the son of a King.
- Like darkness - if a light is ignited, the darkness disappears. It’s no longer recognizable. Like black paint. If you put a single drop of white in it, it’s no longer black. No longer recognizable as black.
- This is what it means - take off the old man and put on the new and superior one

Letter to Diognetus

> For the Christians are distinguished from other men neither by country, nor language, nor the customs which they observe. For they neither inhabit cities of their own, nor employ a peculiar form of speech, nor lead a life which is marked out by any singularity. The course of conduct which they follow has not been devised by any speculation or deliberation of inquisitive men; nor do they, like some, proclaim themselves the advocates of any merely human doctrines. But, inhabiting Greek as well as barbarian cities, according as the lot of each of them has determined, and following the customs of the natives in respect to clothing, food, and the rest of their ordinary conduct, they display to us their wonderful and confessedly striking method of life.
>
> They dwell in their own countries, but simply as sojourners.
> As citizens, they share in all things with others, and yet endure all things as if foreigners.
> Every foreign land is to them as their native country, and every land of their birth as a land of strangers.
> They marry, as do all; they beget children; but they do not destroy their offspring.
> They have a common table, but not a common bed.
> They are in the flesh, but they do not live after the flesh.
> They pass their days on earth, but they are citizens of heaven.
> They obey the prescribed laws, and at the same time surpass the laws by their lives.
> They love all men, and are persecuted by all.
> They are unknown and condemned; they are put to death, and restored to life.

> They are poor, yet make many rich; they are in lack of all things, and yet abound in all;
> they are dishonoured, and yet in their very dishonour are glorified.
> They are evil spoken of, and yet are justified; they are reviled, and bless;
> they are insulted, and repay the insult with honour;
> they do good, yet are punished as evil-doers.
> When punished, they rejoice as if quickened into life;
> they are assailed by the Jews as foreigners, and are persecuted by the Greeks;
> yet those who hate them are unable to assign any reason for their hatred.
>
> To sum up all in one word — what the soul is in the body, Christians are in the world.
>
> The soul is dispersed through all the members of the body, and Christians are scattered through all the cities of the world.
> The soul dwells in the body, yet is not of the body; and Christians dwell in the world, yet are not of the world.
> The invisible soul is guarded by the visible body, and Christians are known indeed to be in the world, but their godliness remains invisible.
> The flesh hates the soul, and wars against it, though itself suffering no injury, because it is prevented from enjoying pleasures; the world also hates the Christians, though in nowise injured, because they abjure pleasures.
> The soul loves the flesh that hates it, and [loves also] the members; Christians likewise love those that hate them.
> The soul is imprisoned in the body, yet keeps together that very body; and Christians are confined in the world as in a prison, and yet they keep together the world.
> The immortal soul dwells in a mortal tabernacle; and Christians dwell as sojourners in corruptible [bodies], looking for an incorruptible dwelling in the heavens.
> The soul, when but ill-provided with food and drink, becomes better; in like manner, the Christians, though subjected day by day to punishment, increase the more in number.
>
> God has assigned them this illustrious position, which it were unlawful for them to forsake.

02 - Baptism: Prefigured in the Old Testament

Introduction

Can water really save?? Would God really rely on material (matter) like water to bring about His Salvation?

The best answer to this question is to see how Baptism was prefigured in the Old Testament.

Old Testament Prefiguring Themes

The symbols of the Old Testament (which are even referenced in the New Testament) show the efficacy of water, and show that the same meanings are given throughout the Scripture because "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever." (Hebrews 13:8)

To look for water in the Old Testament, and say that it prefigures Baptism, is an illustrative typology, and is NOT our goal. But rather, looking for where water is a sign by which we can recognize theological analogies, this is the sacramental typology.

Specific Theological Analogies

- Water of Destruction
- Water that Brings Forth Life
- Regeneration/New Creation
  - The Prophets announced that God, at the end of time, would undertake a new creation.
    - “For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former shall not be remembered or come to mind." (Isaiah 65:17)
  - The New Testament shows that this new creation is already accomplished in Christ through the Mystery of Baptism
    - "Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new." (2 Corinthians 5:17)
- Water Sanctified by the Holy Spirit
- Salvation by Water
- Priesthood

Primordial Waters of Genesis

- "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering

over the face of the waters. Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light." (Genesis 1:1-3)

- "Then God said, 'Let the waters bring forth reptiles having life [of living souls], and winged creatures flying above the earth in the firmament of heaven', and it was so." (Genesis 1:20)
- Two Characteristics of the Primordial Water are Reproduced by Baptism
  - Brings Forth Life
  - Sanctified by the Holy Spirit
- Water that Brings Forth Life
  - "First of all, O man, you should have reverence for the antiquity of the waters as a primordial element" ... " Once the elements of the world were set in order, when it was to be given inhabitants, it was the primordial waters which were commanded to produce living creatures. The primordial water brought forth life, so that no one should be astonished that in Baptism the waters are able to give life." (Tertullian - Baptism, 2)
  - "Why are you plunged into the water? We read: 'May the waters bring forth living creatures (Gen. 1:20). And the living creatures were born.' This happened at the beginning of creation. But for you it was reserved that water should bring you forth to grace, as that other water brought forth creatures to natural life. Imitate this fish, who has received less grace." (St Ambrose - De Sacr. III, 3)
  - "We are little fishes according to the ichthys, Jesus Christ, in Whom we are born, and we only live by remaining in the water" (Tertullian - De Bapt. I)
    - Fish is ichthys, the image of Christ and so of the Christian.
    - □□□□□ - means "fish" in Greek, acronym for Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior
      - □□□□□□
      - □□□□□□□
      - □□□□
      - □□□□
      - □□□□□
- Water Sanctified by the Holy Spirit
  - "The Spirit of God was carried over the waters, He Who was to recreate the baptized. The Holy One was carried over that which was holy, or, rather, over that which could receive holiness from Him Who was carried. It is thus that the nature of water, sanctified by the Spirit, received the capability of itself becoming sanctifying. This is why all waters, by reason of their ancient original prerogative, may obtain the sacrament of sanctification by the invocation of God." (Tertullian - Baptism, 2)
  - "You have seen water. But all water does not heal, if the Spirit has not descended and consecrated that water." (Ambrose, De Sacr. 1, 15)
  - "If you wish to know why it is by means of water and not some other element that grace is given, you will find the reason in going through the Scriptures. Water is a wonderful thing: - and the most beautiful of the four sensible elements of the cosmos - the sky is the dwelling of the angels, but the skies are made of water; earth is the home of men, but the earth has come out of the waters; and before the creation of visible things in six days, the Spirit of God hovered over the waters. The water is the principle of the Cosmos, and the Jordan of the Gospel" (Cyril of

Jerusalem - XXXIII, 433 A)

- Link to the Waters of the Jordan
  - "The indivisible and ineffable Trinity, foreseeing from eternity the fall of human nature, at the same time as It brought from nothing the substance of water, prepared for men the healing which would be given in the waters. This is the reason why the Holy Spirit, in being carried upon the waters, is shown to us as making them holy from this moment and as communicating to them their fecundity. With this we must connect the fact, and it is an important one, that at the moment of the baptism of Jesus, the Holy Spirit came down upon the waves of the Jordan and rested on them" (XXXIX, 692 C).
  - As the Holy Spirit, hovering over the primordial waters, brought forth from them the first creation, so also the Holy spirit, hovering over the waters of the Jordan, brought forth from them the second creation; and it is this second creation to which the baptized person is born in the waters consecrated by the descent of the Holy Spirit.

The Deluge (The Great Flood)

- "For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while *the* ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were **saved through water**. There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 3:18-21)
- Characteristics of the Flood are reproduced in Baptism
  - Water as Destroying
    - The world is filled with sin; the judgment of God destroys the sinful world; one just man is spared to be the principle of a new creation
  - Salvation Through Water
  - New Creation
  - Holy Spirit
  - Church
  - Noah as the priest
- "God has said in Isaiah to Jerusalem: 'I saved you in the deluge of Noah.' By this which God said was meant that the mystery of saved men appeared in the deluge. For righteous Noah, along with the other mortals at the deluge, i.e., with his own wife, his three sons and their wives, being eight in number, were a symbol of the eighth day, wherein Christ appeared when He rose from the dead, for ever the first in power. For Christ, being the first-born of every creature, became again the chief of another race regenerated by Himself through water, and faith, and wood, containing the mystery of the cross; even as Noah was saved by wood when he rode over the waters with his household. Accordingly, when the prophet says, 'I saved you in the times of Noah,' as I have already remarked, he addresses the people who are equally faithful to God, and possess the same signs. For when Moses had the rod in his hands, he led your nation through the sea. And you believe that this was spoken to your nation only, or to the land. But the whole earth, as the Scripture says, was inundated, and the water rose in height fifteen cubits above all the

mountains: so that it is evident this was not spoken to the land, but to the people who obeyed Him: for whom also He had before prepared a resting-place in Jerusalem, as was previously demonstrated by all the symbols of the deluge; I mean, that by water, faith, and wood, those who are afore-prepared, and who repent of the sins which they have committed, shall escape from the impending judgment of God." (St Justin Martyr - Dialogue with Trypho, 138)

- "As, after the waters of the Deluge, by which the iniquity of the ancient world was purified, - after the Baptism, as it were, of the world, - the dove, sent from the Ark and coming back with an olive branch - which is even now a sign of peace among the peoples - announced that peace had come to the earth, according to the same plan, on the spiritual plane, the dove of the Holy Spirit descends on the earth, that is to say, on our flesh, when it comes out of the baptismal pool after the cleansing of its old sins, to bring the peace of God sent down from the height of heaven where the Church is, prefigured by the ark" (Tertullian - De baptismo 8)
- "If anyone could have been saved outside the ark of Noah, then he who is outside the Church is saved." (St Cyprian - On the Unity of the Church)
- "Peter, in showing that the Church is one, and that only those who are in the Church can be saved, said: In the ark of Noe, certain persons to the number of eight only, were saved by water, which Baptism effects in like manner for you. He proves and shows that the one Ark of Noah was the figure of the one Church. If, at the time of this baptism of the world in which it was purified and redeemed, anyone could have been saved without having been in the Ark of Noah, then he who is outside the Church could now also be vivified by Baptism" (St Cyprian - Epistle 68, Ch. 2)
- "The ark of Noah was the type of the Church" (St Jerome - P. L. XXIII, 185 A)
- "The narrative of the Deluge is a mystery and its details are a type of things to come. The ark is the Church; Noah, Christ; the dove, the Holy Spirit; the olive branch, the divine goodness. As in the midst of the sea, the ark protected those who were inside it, so the Church saves those who are spared. But the ark only protected, the Church does more. For example, the ark took in animals without reason and kept them safe, the Church takes in men without logos and does not merely protect them, she transforms them." (St John Chrysostom - 6th Homily on Lazarus and the Rich Man)
- "Receive another witness. All flesh was corrupted by its iniquities 'My spirit will dwell no longer in men,' says God, 'because they are flesh.' By this God shows that, by impurity of body and the stain of grave sin, spiritual grace is taken away. And so also God, wishing to make up for that which was lacking, caused the Deluge, and ordered the just man Noah to go into the ark. And he, when the waters were going down, sent first a crow which did not return, and then sent out a dove of which the text tells us that it came back with an olive branch. You see the water, you see the wood, you see the dove and can you doubt the mystery!" (St Ambrose - On the Mysteries)

Crossing the Red Sea

- "Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea." (1 Corinthians 10:1-2)
- Salvation from Pharaoh's Bondage

    - Salvation from the bondage of sin and death
    - Through Water
- Water of Destruction
    - Pharaoh (devil) and his chariots, destroyed
    - "When the people, willingly leaving Egypt, escaped from the power of the King of Egypt by passing across the water, the water destroyed the king and all his army. What could be a clearer figure of Baptism? The peoples are delivered from the world, and this is done by the water, and the devil, who has hitherto tyrannized over them, they leave behind, destroyed in the water." (Tertullian - On Baptism)
    - "And also the Red Sea which received the Isralites who did not fear it and delivered them from the evils with which the Egyptians were pursuing them, and the whole history of the going out from Egypt, are the type of the salvation procured by Baptism. Egypt, in fact, is a figure of the world, in which we make our own unhappiness by living evilly; the people are those who are now enlightened (i.e. baptized); the waters, which are the means of salvation for the people, stand for Baptism; Pharaoh and his soldiers, for Satan and his satellites" (St Didymus the Blind - On the Trinity)
    - "What concerns the Exodus of Israel is told us in order to signify those who are saved by Baptism.... The sea is the figure of Baptism from the tyranny of the devil. The sea killed the enemy; so in Baptism, our enmity to God is destroyed. The people came out of the sea whole and safe; we also come out of the water as living men from among the dead." (St Basil - On the Holy Spirit)
    - "If Israel had not crossed the sea, they would not have escaped from Pharaoh; so you, if you do not go through the water, you will not escape from the cruel tyranny of the demon" (St Basil - On the Holy Spirit)
    - Redemption: Victory of Christ over the demon, the victory by which humanity is set free
        - Baptism applies this liberation to each Christian
- The Cloud: The Holy Spirit
    - "Our fathers were baptized in the cloud and in the sea" (1 Cor 10:1-2)
    - Pillar of Cloud accompanied the Jews during the Exodus and was a visible sign of the presence of God in the midst of the people
    - The tabernacle was filled with a cloud indicating God's presence
    - "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14)
        - "dwelt" --> "tented"
        - "His Glory"
    - "And the angel answered and said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.'" (Luke 1:35)
    - Cloud in the Transfiguration
    - Cloud in the Ascension
    - "See how the tradition of Paul differs from the historic reading. That which the Jews consider to be the crossing of the Sea, St Paul calls Baptism. That which they believe to be a cloud, St Paul proves to be the Holy Spiirt. And he wishes this passage to be

interpreted in the same sense as the precept of the Lord, saying: If any man is not reborn of water and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven." (Origen - Homilies on Exodus, V)
    - "The third witness is given us by the Apostle: All our fathers were under the cloud... Furthermore, Moses himself says in his cantle: "You have sent out Your spirit, and the sea swalloed them up." So you see that, in the crossing of the Hebrew people, in which the Egyptians perished and the Hebrews escaped, the figure of Baptism was already performed. What else should we learn from this sacrament except that sin is drowned and the error is destroyed while piety and innocence are saved?" and then continues to talk about the Holy Spirit's presence and the cloud, he says "It is this which came down on the Virgin Mary, and the Power of the Most High covered her with its shadow" (St Ambrose - On the Mysteries 12, 13)
- Moses represents the priesthood
- Figure --> Reality --> Mystery
    - Red Sea Crosssing was within a few days of the Passover
    - It was at the time of the Pasch (Passover) that Christ accomplished our redemption by His death
    - It was at the Feast of Pascha (Easter night) that Baptism was ordinarily given
- Baptism of Proselytes in the 1st Century to join Judaism, as an imitation of the Exodus

Circumcision

- "In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead." (Colossians 2:11-12)
- Death
    - In Circumcision, part of the body is cut off and so it dies - a sign of the complete death in Baptism.
    - Circumcision is ineffaceable - so also is Baptism
    - In circumcision, blood flows - so also the new life in Baptism is by the merit of the blood that was shed on our behalf
- Membership in the People of God
    - Circumcision meant that you were a member in the people of God (Genesis 17:7)
    - The Uncircumcised would perish (Genesis 17:14) so also those who would not be baptized
- Remission of Sins
    - "And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses." (Colossians 2:13)

03 - Baptism in the Early Church

Baptism in the New Testament

Baptism in 1st Century Judaism?

Baptism of St John the Baptist

- Those who were baptized by John had to be baptized again...

Baptism of Christ

- The Lord was baptized before He started His ministry, pointing that baptism is the beginning of all blessings
- We, too, start our lives as Christians (children of God) with baptism
- "No Baptism was necessary for Christ, but He freely received the baptism of a servant [John] to draw us towards His baptism" (Tractate 5 on the Gospel of John - St Augustine)
- "The Lord was baptized, not to be cleansed himself, but to cleanse the waters, so that those waters, cleansed by the flesh of Christ which knew no sin, might have the power of baptism. Whoever comes, therefore, to the washing of Christ, lays aside his sins." (Commentary on Luke 2:83 - St Ambrose of Milan)
- St John Chrysostom - Homily 4 on Matthew
- St Gregory Nazianzen - Orat. 39
- St Augustine - Sermon on Epiphany
- St Ambrose - on Luke 3:21

Baptism in the Gospels

Baptism after Pentecost

Baptism in the Early Church

See “The Bible and the Liturgy” - Jean Danielou

Preparation, Examination, and Enrollment

Baptismal ceremonies began at the opening of the Great Fast (Lent). The candidates were enrolled and began their immediate preparation for the sacrament. Until this step, they had been simple catechumens (which could last a long time). Now they are called photizomenoi (“those who are coming into the light”).

The Rite of Enrollment: “Whoever wishes to give in his name does so on the eve of Lent; and a priest notes down all the names. The next day, the opening of Lent, the day on which the eight

weeks begin, in the middle of the principal church,that is, the church of the Martyrium, a seat is placed for the bishop, and one by one the candidates are led up to him. If they are men, they come with their godfathers; if women, with their godmothers. Then the bishop questions the neighbors of each person who comes in, saying, “Does he lead a good life? Does he respect his parents: Is he given to drunkenness or lying?” If the candidate is pronounced beyond reproach by all those who are thus questioned in the presence of witnesses, with his own hand the bishop notes down the man’s name. But if the candidate is accused of failing in any point, the bishop tells him to go out, saying: ‘Let him amend his life and when he has amended it, let him come to Baptism.” (Egeria)

- Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus of Rome (20)
- St Augustine (De cateh. 9)
- Theodore of Mopsuestia (Ho. Cat. XII, 1) - gives interpretation of these rites as a court case against Satan - see Jean Danielou Introduction “The Bible and the Liturgy” (p.20-21)

Lent Period

Come every day during Lent at Matins

Daily exorcism

Catechesis - explaining the Scripture from Genesis (Literal and Spiritual sense)

“Do not think that it consists of ordinary sermons. These are good, but if we neglect them today, we can still listen to them tomorrow. But the teaching that is to follow on the Baptism of rebirth, - if you neglect it now, when can you find it again? This is the time for planting the trees. If you neglect to spade and dig the earth, when can you plant properly a tree that has been badly planted? The catechesis is a building. If we neglect to dig its foundations, if we leave holes and the building is shaky, of what use will be any further work?” (XXXIII, 352, A-B).

Until the Sunday before Easter when they recite the Creed for the first time (redditio symboli)

Renounce Satan and Profess Christ

On Easter Vigil (Day of Baptism)

1. Renounce Satan facing West (St Cyril XXXIII, 1068-1069; also Theodore of Mopsuestia XIII, Introduction) - same wording we have today
2. Profession of Faith facing East

Baptism

Baptism: Special Topics

Right-Hand Thief

Christ did not institute the Sacrament of Baptism until after His Resurrection!

The Right-Hand Thief is a special case - and he is not the only one! But if we generalized and said "no one will enter Heaven without physical baptism" - what of all the prophets and righteous men who lived before the death of the Lord Christ? What of St John the Baptist?

The Thief did not have a chance to be baptized because of his imminent death. Had he survived the Cross, he would have been baptized just like every other Christian mentioned in the Scripture! An exception cannot be taken and made into a general rule!
What about martyrs? Many saints were martyred without baptism (i.e. they experienced the witness of the martyrs and decided in the moment to give their lives to Christ). For example, the martyr Matthew with the 21 Coptic Martyrs of Libya. Such a martyr is baptized in his blood shed.

Infant Baptism

We believe that all (with the exception of Christ, Himself) are born carrying the original sin. And we are concerned for their eternal life. So how can we deprive children from being baptized, and thus expose them to God's judgment?

1. The words "He who believes and is baptized" are meant for adults who are capable of understanding the significance of faith. Thus, we do not baptize capable adults except after they profess their faith. But for children, we apply: "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 19:14)

2. The Scripture talks of baptisms of households:
   - Cornelius the Centurion (Acts 10)
   - Philippian Jailer (Acts 16)
   - Lydia (Acts 16)
   - Stephanas (1 Cor 1:16)
   - On the day of Pentecost, 3000 were baptized! It's unreasonable to believe that children were excluded - "for the promise is to you and your children" (Acts 2:39)

3. Circumcision, which is fulfilled by baptism, was done on the 8th day. (Colossians 2:11-12)

4. Children being saved on the belief (and action) of their parents is not new:
   - Circumcision, a type of baptism, fulfilled by baptism, gave one membership into God's chosen people, and participation in God's covenant with Abraham. Circumcision was done on the 8th day after birth, according to God's command

- The Passover, a type of the Cross and Eucharist, children were saved through the blood of the Passover Lamb on the faith and action of their parents.
- The Crossing of the Red Sea included parents carrying their children - "All were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea" (1 Cor 10:2)
- Even in the modern era, parents decide to vaccinate their child, because they are concerned for their health and want them to be safe.

5. Through baptism, a child is given an opportunity to grow up as a member of the Body of Christ, to enjoy Her divine sacraments, to experience the work of grace, and its effectiveness in his/her life.

6. In Church History, infant baptisms were always done; in fact, there was a 5th Century heresy (Pelagianism) that taught that there was no Original Sin, and that infants are born blameless and thus need not be baptized. The Church condemned this belief at the 418 Council of Carthage, and 431 Ecumenical Council of Ephesus.

> "Have you an infant child? Do not let sin get any opportunity, but let him be sanctified from his childhood; from his very tenderest age let him be consecrated by the Spirit. Do you fear the Seal on account of the weakness of nature? O what a small-souled mother, and of how little faith! Why, Anna even before Samuel was born promised him to God, and after his birth consecrated him at once, and brought him up in the priestly habit, not fearing anything in human nature, but trusting in God. You have no need of amulets or incantations, with which the Devil also comes in, stealing worship from God for himself in the minds of vainer men. Give your child the Trinity, that great and noble Guard.
>
> Be it so, some will say, in the case of those who ask for Baptism; what have you to say about those who are still children and conscious neither of the loss nor of the grace? Are we to baptize them too? Certainly, if any danger presses. For it is better that they should be unconsciously sanctified than that they should depart unsealed and uninitiated.
>
> A proof of this is found in the Circumcision on the eighth day, which was a sort of typical seal, and was conferred on children before they had the use of reason. And so is the anointing of the doorposts, which preserved the firstborn, though applied to things which had no consciousness. But in respect of others I give my advice to wait till the end of the third year, or a little more or less, when they may be able to listen and to answer something about the Sacrament; that, even though they do not perfectly understand it, yet at any rate they may know the outlines; and then to sanctify them in soul and body with the great sacrament of our consecration. For this is how the matter stands; at that time they begin to be responsible for their lives, when reason is matured, and they learn the mystery of life (for of sins of ignorance owing to their tender years they have no account to give), and it is far more profitable on all accounts to be fortified by the Font,

> because of the sudden assaults of danger that befall us, stronger than our helpers.
>
> But, one says, Christ was thirty years old when He was baptized, and that although He was God; and do you bid us hurry our Baptism? - You have solved the difficulty when you say He was God. For He was absolute cleansing; He had no need of cleansing; but it was for you that He was purified, just as it was for you that, thought He had not flesh, yet He is clothed with flesh. Nor was there any danger to Him from putting off Baptism, for He had the ordering of His own Passion as of His own Birth. But in your case the danger is to no small interests, if you were to depart after a birth to corruption alone, and without being clothed with incorruption. And there is this further point for me to consider, that that particular time of baptism was a necessity for Him, but your case is not the same. He manifested Himself in the thirtieth year after His birth and not before: first, in order that He might not appear ostentatious, which is a condition belonging to vulgar minds; and next, because that age tests virtue thoroughly, and is the right time to teach. And since it was needful for Him to undergo the passion which saves the world, it was needful also that all things which belong to the passion should fit into the passion; the Manifestation, the Baptism, the Witness from Heaven, the Proclamation, the concourse of the multitude, the Miracles; and that they should be as it were one body, not torn asunder, nor broken apart by intervals." (St Gregory Nazianzen - Oration 40.17, 28-29)

One Baptism

One of the councils had a thing about who to rebaptize (based on whether or not the faith in the Trinity was intact)

Immersion or Sprinkling

The word "baptism" literally means "immersion"

"Buried" with Christ is only accomplished through complete immersion

The Church has always baptized with complete immersion

Both Philip and the eunuch **went down into the water**, and he baptized him. Now when they **came out of the water**, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away" (Acts 8:38-39)

Baptism is called many times "washing" (Titus 3:5, Acts 22:16, 1 Peter 3:18-21, Ephesians 5:26) - to wash a piece of cloth you need to completely immerse it in water!

For Pastoral Needs, the Church allows baptism by sprinkling (e.g. someone in a wheelchair, newborn in an incubator)

40 and 80 Days

If the one to be baptized is a newborn, the family waits 40 (boy) or 80 Days (girl) to baptize. The Church can baptize any newborn boy or girl at any day without waiting 40 or 80 days. This period is required period before the mother can participate in her child's baptism.

- Leviticus 12
  - Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to the children of Israel, saying: ‘If a woman has conceived, and borne a male child, then she shall be unclean seven days; as in the days of her customary impurity she shall be unclean. And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised. She shall then continue in the blood of *her* purification thirty-three days. She shall not touch any hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary until the days of her purification are fulfilled. ‘But if she bears a female child, then she shall be unclean two weeks, as in her customary impurity, and she shall continue in the blood of *her* purification sixty-six days. ‘When the days of her purification are fulfilled, whether for a son or a daughter, she shall bring to the priest a lamb of the first year as a burnt offering, and a young pigeon or a turtledove as a sin offering, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting. Then he shall offer it before the Lord, and make atonement for her. And she shall be clean from the flow of her blood. This *is* the law for her who has borne a male or a female. 'And if she is not able to bring a lamb, then she may bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons—one as a burnt offering and the other as a sin offering. So the priest shall make atonement for her, and she will be clean.’”
- St Mary fulfilled this commandment (Luke 2:22-24)
  - Now when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present *Him* to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every male who opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord”), and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, “A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.”
- The doubling of the period for a female child reminds us of the fact that the woman was the first to be deceived and fall
  - "And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control." (1 Timothy 2:14-15)
- Why does this Old Testament rule still apply?
  - https://notes.morcous.com/books/leviticus/page/leviticus-15-the-law-concerning-bodily-discharges

04 - Sacrament of Confirmation

- Meaning
- Insititution of the Mystery
- Visible Sign
- Conferred Grace
  - Indwelling of the Holy Spirit
- Confirmation in the Book of Acts

05 - Contemporary Rite of Baptism & Confirmation

Absolution of the Woman

- Only for an already-Orthodox mother who just gave birth

Preparation

- Baptismal font and its symbolism
- Water, oil, materials used in the rite
- Role of the priest, parents, godparents/sponsors
- Preparation of the child and family

Sanctification of the Water

- Object: Water
- Materials: Simple Oil, Oil of Gladness, Holy Myron

Renunciation of Satan & Declaration of Faith

- Object: Baptisee
- Materials: Sanctified Water, Oils...

Baptism

Holy Myron

- Brief History of Holy Myron Oil

Crowning

Commandment

Procession

Loosing the Girdle

Mysteries of Christian Life & Renewal

Eucharist and Repentance & Confession

01 - The Eucharist

https://www.youtube.com/live/Nk6u7yL4gZU?is=BBh4zFwhQ3h4KVhK

One good question to ask... "Can eating or drinking really affect my salvation???" - Ask Adam and Eve! They lost salvation by taking and eating

What is the Eucharist?

- Meaning
- Institution of the Mystery
- Visible Sign
- Conferred Grace

02 - The Eucharist: Prefigured in the Old Testament

03 - Eucharist in the NT and Early Church

- Mystical Real Presence
- Eucharist in the Fathers

04 - The Mystery of Repentance and Confession

Meaning

Institution of the Mystery

Visible Sign

Conferred Grace

05 - The Life of Repentance & Good Works

- Evil works lead to death
- Judgment according to our works/deeds
- Life of Virtue

Resources

Non-Redemptive Mysteries

Resources

Mystery of Matrimony

Scripture Reading:

- Genesis 1-3
- Matthew 19
- Mark 10
- Ephesians 5
- Proverbs 31
- 1 Corinthians 7
- Colossians 3
- 1 Peter 3
- 1 Corinthians 13
- Ephesians 6

Recommended Reading:

- On Marriage and Family Life
  - https://www.amazon.com/John-Chrysostom-Bilingual-Christian-Parenting/dp/0913836869

Recommended Viewing:

- Choose some videos from Fr. Matthias' Couples Meeting
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7rf6Bi8pvnc&list=PLDiWGOQKelb92fgk1DwcjaqR0aH_bSuEt
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Rh24r3hJkM&list=PLDiWGOQKelb8lCOFHTSMmoEtT21mu_jxi
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S0SK-keD3I0&list=PLDiWGOQKelb9Ir7Yr1ZPlENFDxDMuRo_k
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lUPszM8hqoc&list=PLDiWGOQKelb8hjZr9l50fbXiYwNLrD7EM

Comparative Theology

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St Mary in the Orthodox Concept

Our mother St Mary is given many titles in the Church - "the salvation of Adam and Eve" - "the healing of Jeremiah."

Sometimes when people hear a title given to our holy mother, St Mary, they might stumble with it - they might think that we regard her at the same level (or even higher) than the Lord Jesus Christ. God forbid!

So what is St Mary's status in our beloved Orthodox Church? What did St Mary really do, and is the Lord still using her now to accomplish His will?

We will look at it through three points:

- Past
- Present
- Future

St Mary: The Salvation of the Human Race [Past]

- "Hail to you, Mary: the salvation of our father Adam" - "Hail to you Mary: the salvation of Noah" - "Hail to you Mary: the redemption of Saint Isaac" - "Hail to you Mary: the redemption of Isaiah" - "Hail to you Mary: the healing of Jeremiah"
- Who is the one who accomplished our salvation? Was it the Lord Jesus Christ, or St Mary? Of course, our Lord Jesus Christ - He is God and Man, He died on the Cross. It's all Him! But here, we need to focus on a single word that St Mary said, in the last word of today's gospel reading:
- "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." After the angel announced to her that the Lord would be born from her, this was her response. "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." (Luke 1:38)
- The Church has always taken this verse and put it side by side with a verse from Genesis: "So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate." (Genesis 3:6)
- **St. Irenaeus:** "The knot of Eve's disobedience was loosed by the obedience of Mary. For what the virgin Eve had bound fast through unbelief, the Virgin Mary set free through faith." (Against Heresies Book III, Chapter 22:4)
- **St. Ephraim:** "In her virginity, Eve clothed herself with leaves of ignominy. Your mother has clothed herself in virginity with the garment of glory" (On Nativity 35:17)
- https://notes.morcous.com/books/harmony-of-the-gospels/page/luke-1b-hg-bishop-youssef See bottom

St Mary: Our Mother [Present]

"Hail to the saint, the mother of all living, you are the one we entreat, to intercede for us" (Tuesday Theotokia Part 3)

- "And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living." (Genesis 3:20)
- Eve lost the meaning of her name - "mother of all living" because by her disobedience, she obtained only death for her children. But her daughter, St Mary, took her place!
- St Mary became the mother of "Life" Himself.

What does a mother do?

- A mother intercedes for her children (Wedding at Cana)
  - We hear about mothers in the church that when their son gets a bad grade in school, they RUSH to the principal's office and RUSH to the emails and phone calls.
  - Or when the son gets in a fight at school or gets in trouble, mom is ready to go fight the administration
  - This is St Mary with us. She is ALWAYS interceding for us. ALWAYS praying for us.
- A mother gathers her children (Zeitoun)
- A mother comforts and gathers her children
- A mother leads her children to Christ
- A mother teaches by example

St Mary: Intercessor on Judgment Day [Future]

Comparative Theology

Catholic