**Baptism – in the name of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit: the Holy and Undivided Trinity**

Thank you for expressing your interest in having your child Christened.

To be given Christian names is a long and ancient custom. It is in the act of baptism that your child is given names which last for a lifetime, it is a rite of passage and a Sacrament of the Church. In the past heathens and pagans were baptised into the Church, the family of Almighty God and their old names were replaced with Christian names, often from the Bible.

Baptism is a holy and solemn act that Jesus commands his followers to go all over the world and do (Gospel of Matthew 28:19) it is joyful and requires promises to be made. It is a wonderful mixture of faith, repentance, and water. A new beginning, becoming a child of God.

To become a Christian is to share with Jesus Christ in everything, but especially in his death and in his resurrection from the dead, his eternal life and to keep his commandments and to love Almighty God exclusively and our neighbours as ourselves. Some churches put people right underneath the water including babies in the Orthodox churches. We usually only pour water over their heads but are happy to use full immersion if available. The picture of the old dying and the new emerging from the waters of baptism is a powerful image, but the Bible doesn’t specify the amount of water that needs to be used. “Repent and be baptised”, are the words Peter used on the first day of Pentecost in Jerusalem. Christians are to share the Good News of Jesus, to teach what he taught all over the world baptising them in the name of the Holy Trinity of Father, Son & Holy Spirit.

This Sacrament, an outward sign of an invisible grace, requires Godparents to speak for the child which is why they need to have at least been baptised themselves and been confirmed if possible (where they have confirmed their own baptismal promises as adults)

Sometimes a Thanksgiving will be more appropriate, where your child receives a blessing, if you are not sure that you are able to make the promises to follow Jesus as Lord and Saviour; but we can discuss that as necessary.

May the Lord Jesus bless you as you continue being mother and father to your child (or children) and all that means.