

**Holy Trinity Catholic Church**  
**RCIA Class Transcript**  
**Baptism and Confirmation**  
**Lecturer: Father Francis Peffley**  
**Date: Sometime in 1999**

Our topic tonight is on the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation. I'm sure that over the last couple of weeks, you've been learning about the Sacraments in general. Tonight we're going to focus on these two. Just to sum up what a sacrament is, "A sacrament is a channel of God's grace to the world." There are seven of these special channels of God's grace. The definition of a sacrament is that it's "A visible sign that Jesus Christ Himself instituted to give us grace," to give us holiness. The word *sacrament* comes from the Latin word "sacramentum," which means "a holy thing." In the Catholic Church, there are seven very special holy things. The word "sacramentum" is a word that comes from the Greek word "mysterion," which means "a mystery." These really are seven mysteries, seven holy things through which Christ touches our lives.

Sacraments have been called "encounters with Christ." God uses material things to come to us, to affect our lives. First and foremost was the Incarnation itself: the fact that God became man. Jesus Christ was the Son of God who became Incarnate and took on our human nature. We see how God broke into our world and became one of us, when God became man at the Incarnation. While Christ was on Earth, He established His Church; and He established these seven sacraments through which His grace would come to us. God uses material things. For example, in Baptism, He uses water. In the Eucharist, for Holy Communion, He uses bread and wine. In Confirmation and Anointing of the Sick, He uses blessed oil. God can affect our lives through the use of these material things, which we call the sacraments.

Baptism is foreshadowed in the Old Testament. Some of you have seen The Ten Commandments with Charlton Heston. There's a new movie coming out called Prince of Egypt, about how Moses is going to lead the people through the Red Sea to the Promised Land. That's a foreshadowing of Baptism, because we'll be passing through the waters of Baptism in order to obtain eternal life, which is like the Promised Land. Just as Moses led the people through the Red Sea to the Promised Land, so the Church leads us through the waters of Baptism to eternal life in Heaven.

The word *baptism* means to be "bathed, washed, or cleansed." The Sacrament of Baptism is the first sacrament that we receive in the Church. It means "to be reborn as a Child of God." You've heard the expression "being born again." Every Catholic, every Christian, is born again in their Baptism. Baptism is the action of washing with water. Then, the person who's baptizing says the words that Jesus Christ ordered and commanded to be said, "I baptize you in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." Those are the words that have to

be said. If those words are changed or altered, then it would not be a valid Baptism.

When a person is baptized, they're cleansed of all their sins. Original Sin, which is what they inherit by being part of the human race - it's what we receive from Adam. All their other sins are forgiven as well. The person becomes incorporated into the Church, and becomes a member of the Church.

Baptism was also foreshadowed in the Old Testament. In Ezekiel, Chapter 36, God says, "I will pour clean water over you, and you will be cleansed. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you." That's what happens when you're baptized. I know some of you in this class have not yet been baptized. That's something to look forward to: the fact that all your sins will be washed away through water and the Holy Spirit. You will become a new creation in Christ.

The other passage in Scripture you might want to look up is Matthew Chapter 28, Verse 19. This is when Christ commanded his disciples to go out and to baptize. He said, "Go therefore, and make disciples of all the nations. Baptize them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." If you want to see some of the passages in the New Testament that have to do about Baptism, I'd recommend that you look up Acts Chapter 2. This is after Pentecost, after the Apostles go out and preach. It says, "Three thousand people were converted that one day." And they said to St. Peter, "What must we do?" Peter said something very important; he says, "Repent of your sins, and be baptized." To be a Christian, we can't just repent of our sins. Not only do we have to repent of our sins, but to be a Christian, you have to be baptized.

Also, you should write down Acts, Chapter 8. This is an interesting passage. This is when Philip, one of Jesus' Apostles, was on the road and he saw an Ethiopian eunuch in a carriage being driven by. Philip was inspired by God to go up and to talk to this Ethiopian eunuch. The eunuch was reading passages from Isaiah. Philip goes up to him and says, "Do you understand what you're reading?" The fellow says, "No, how can I, unless somebody teaches me?" Then it says Philip explained all about Jesus, and about what Jesus did for us by dying on the Cross, and by rising from the Dead. Then the Ethiopian says, "What must I now do?" It says Philip tells him he must be baptized. They come across some water; immediately, Philip baptizes this Ethiopian. Then, Philip is taken away by God to go do some other kinds of ministry, some other kind of work.

The most important aspect, of becoming a Christian, besides learning about who Jesus is, is getting baptized.

Another passage you might want to look up is Titus, Chapter 3. The letter of Titus says, "Baptism now saves you." This is how God plans on saving us, through Baptism. Baptism means to "be washed, be cleansed, and to receive God's forgiveness for all of our sins."

Anyone can be baptized, provided that they've never been baptized before; that's the one condition. We should baptize children soon after birth, if possible; usually within at least a month.

In Baptism, there are two different kinds of ways primarily in which a person can be baptized. Either they can have water poured over their forehead, or they can be immersed all the way under. You've probably seen this. When I was over in the Holy Land in Jerusalem, we went to the Jordan River, and we saw people being baptized. They put on the long white robes, and the minister led them down into the Jordan River. He said, "I baptize you in the Name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit," and he dunked them, and he brought them back up. That immersion represents going down into the tomb with Christ, and then being raised up from the dead. That's the symbolism of immersion. It also represents the dying with Christ, then being resurrected with Christ. A person, when they're baptized, can either be immersed in water (which was sometimes a common practice in the ancient Church, especially if it was near the Jordan River; they would take them down into the River), but also a kind of Baptism could be done by the pouring of water over the forehead.

This is also evident in Scripture, because in Scripture, not only were people immersed, but in the Acts of the Apostles, it says people were baptized in prison, or in their homes. Obviously, there would not be large amounts of water to do an immersion, so it seems that some of the kinds of Baptism that was done was the pouring of water over the forehead. With either the pouring of water, or the immersion, the person who's doing this, the priest, Bishop, deacon - or in case of emergency, anyone, - the invocation of the Blessed Trinity must be made. The person has to say, "I baptize you in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." If the person changes those words, then it would not be a recognized, valid Christian Baptism.

Notice that the person says, "I baptize you in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." The "I" is Christ. It's really Christ who will perform this sacrament for you, but He'll use a priest, deacon, or Bishop to do that.

What needs to be used in Baptism itself is natural water, or whatever is recognized as water. It could be salt water. It could be lake water. It could be river water. Normally though, it would be blessed. The water would need to be blessed. I remember once asking a little kid, "How does a priest make Holy Water?" The kid says, "He boils the hell out of it." I said, "That's a clever response, boiling the hell out of it."

Normally, the water should be blessed, unless it's in the case of an emergency; then you could use just regular water. You could not use anything except for water to baptize. For example, you couldn't use Coca Cola. You couldn't use gasoline. You couldn't use Kool-Aid. You couldn't use strong coffee, because

that wouldn't be considered water. Whatever's considered water could be used for a valid Baptism.

The Baptism would normally be done in a church. As I mentioned, in the early Church, they would take you out to the River Jordan or some other place by the sea, and they would baptize. Sometimes you might hear of different denominations that will just sprinkle you with water. If all you were was just lightly sprinkled, that would not be considered a valid Baptism. The only way it would be valid is if they really doused you with the water, and there was enough water to have it flow. It has to be the washing movement, because the Baptism represents the cleansing. If there's no washing, no cleansing, it would not be considered a real Baptism, a true Baptism. That's why it's either done by immersion; it's done by the pouring of water over the forehead; or, if it is sprinkling, they really have to douse you very well.

The person who actually does the Baptism has to be the one who says those words as well. It can't be two separate people. One person can't baptize you while the other one says the words. It has to be one in the same person.

Whenever you go to Church, one thing you'll see is that, at the door of the Church, you'll see the *Baptismal Font*. Have you seen that when you walk in? The reason why that's there in the entrance of the Church is to remind you how you entered the Catholic Church through Baptism. It's placed at the doorway of the church, so when you walk by there it reminds you, "Yes, when I was baptized, that was my entranceway into the Church." That's why you'll also see *Holy Water fonts*. You dip your hand in and bless yourself; if you've been baptized, you can bless yourself with Holy Water. That's to remind you of the fact that you have been baptized. You bless yourself when you go into church, and when you leave, to remind yourself of your Baptism. Again, you'll see those at the front of the church, to remind you how you entered the Church as a little child.

What does Baptism do for us? This is important for many of you who have never been baptized. First of all, it makes you a Child of God. It makes you an adopted son or daughter of God. Christ Himself is the only natural Son of God. When we're baptized, we become the adopted sons and daughters of God.

Second, Baptism removes all guilt of sin, and all punishment due to sin. It forgives you of Original Sin, which was the sin of Adam, which all of us inherit; and it also forgives you of all personal sins. Some people say, "Father, maybe I shouldn't have been baptized as a baby. I'd much rather be baptized on my death bed when I'm 97-years old. That way the priest can pour water and all my sins will be forgiven, and I'll go straight to Heaven." That's true. If somebody's baptized, and then dies, they do go straight to Heaven. Remember the Emperor Constantine, back in the 300's? He delayed Baptism. He said, "I'm not going to get baptized yet. I'm going to wait until I'm on my death bed." The only problem

with that is that you could die before you get baptized. That would be called presumption. We should not put off our Baptism to expect, "I'll just get baptized on my death bed." That is not a good recommendation, because somebody could die suddenly in an accident; and it should never be put off for that reason.

Once I was at the bedside of a dying person, and the person, who I believe was in her early nineties, had never been baptized before. When I baptized this particular person, it was amazing because her soul became like the soul of a newly-baptized baby, just as holy, just as innocent, just as pure. One of the nurses standing by said, "Boy, wouldn't that have been great, to be like her."

That's what Confession does. When we go to Confession, it's like getting rebaptized. Anybody who goes to Confession can also have their sins forgiven that have been committed since the time of their Baptism. In a sense, God provides for us who are baptized as babies. For example, if you've been baptized as a baby, when you become a Catholic, you make a confession. When your sins are washed away in Confession, your soul will be very holy and pure and innocent, like the soul that has just been baptized. God has worked it out very well to help us out. If you have been baptized, Confession will wash away our sins as well.

Another thing that happens in Baptism, another effect, is that we receive *Sanctifying Grace*, which is the share of Divine Life within our soul. We were born again; we're given new birth, and God Himself comes to dwell within our soul. The Blessed Trinity – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - becomes present within our soul. For example, you have this cute little baby sitting here on this table. If that baby has been baptized, then the Blessed Trinity dwells within that child's soul: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. When a baby's baptized, when any of us are baptized, we become temples of God, and temples of the Holy Spirit. We become living tabernacles of God. In fact, St. Paul once said, "Christians, do you not realize that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit?" That's what happens to us in Baptism – we become actual temples and dwelling places of God. We become new creations.

Another effect of Baptism is that virtues are infused within our soul. *Virtues* are good habits; they're special graces that God gives us. When we're baptized, we receive Faith, Hope, and Charity within our soul. We also receive Prudence, Justice, Temperance, and Fortitude. These virtues that are infused remain within our soul until we commit a serious sin. If we commit a mortal sin, then we lose the Grace of God; we lose the Holy Spirit within our soul. We also lose these virtues (Faith, Hope, Charity, and the other virtues) that were infused within us. Once we repent, and go to Confession, we receive these graces back into our soul.

The fifth effect of Baptism is that it incorporates us into Christ and into the Church. Before we're baptized, we belong to Adam. After we're baptized, we

belong to Christ. Before we're baptized, we come under the power of Satan, under the dominion of Satan. After we're baptized, Christ breaks that bond with us with Satan, and we become members of Christ. As Scripture says, "We put off the old man of Adam, and we put on the new Man of Jesus Christ." It's like we're being clothed in Christ when we're baptized. We become members of the Body of Christ, which is the Church. We're joined with Christ and become part of His Church. We're united to Christ.

The sixth thing that happens when we're baptized is that we receive a *Sacramental Seal* on our soul. Some of you have seen wax seals. Remember the old rings where you would seal it with wax, and the imprint of the ring remains with that wax? Or, if you've ever been to the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia, or the Franklin Mint in Washington where they make coins. When a coin is made, they take the silver or the bronze, and they imprint the image of Abe Lincoln or George Washington into the coin. When you're baptized, you receive the imprint of Jesus Christ upon your soul. That's the one side of the coin. The image of Christ is imprinted on your soul for all eternity. Even if a person goes to Hell for all eternity, they're still known as a baptized Christian. They always have that imprint of Christ upon their soul. That can never be removed.

Over in France, unfortunately, there's been a movement you might have read about in the newspaper, where some of the Christians have now become atheists. They even went back to the church in which they were baptized and asked the priest or the minister to have their names crossed off the baptismal role. They've turned against God so much; some of them have actually wanted their names removed from the baptismal records. Even if they can do that on paper, they can't do that in their soul. Once they're baptized, they're always baptized. Once you're a Christian, you're always a Christian. Once you're a Catholic, you're always a Catholic. That imprint of Jesus Christ is made upon your soul. It's called the *Seal*, or the *Indelible Mark*, or the *Indelible Character*, that makes you like Christ when you're baptized; and you'll be baptized for all eternity.

Another effect of Baptism is that it restores you to the state in which Adam was created. Remember, when Adam and Eve were created, they were created in a state of Sanctifying Grace, in a state of friendship with God. Baptism brings you back to friendship with God. When Adam sinned, he lost the state of grace. He lost friendship with God. He also lost a lot of the gifts that God had given him, namely:

- He would never suffer
- He would never die
- He would never be sick
- He had a brilliant intellect
- He had a will that was not weakened by Original Sin

Because of Original Sin, not only do we inherit Original Sin, but the effects of Original Sin, which means that you and I will:

- Suffer and die
- Have concupiscence, which is disorderly passions
- Have a weakened will
- Have a darkened intellect

All those things are the effects of Original Sin, the sin of Adam. Baptism takes away Original Sin; and it restores Sanctifying Grace in your soul. It does not give us back those gifts that Adam lost by the Original Sin. We will die; we will suffer; and we will have concupiscence, a darkened intellect, and a weakened will. We unfortunately will still have the effects of Original Sin, even though we're baptized.

Let's move on to what the ceremony of Baptism is like, then about the sponsors, and the ritual itself. The ordinary minister at Baptism is a Bishop, priest, or a deacon. As I mentioned, in case of emergency, anybody could baptize. Any of you could baptize in case of emergency, as long as you had water and said the right words. For example, even a Jewish nurse working in a hospital could baptize. A non-Catholic person could baptize validly, provided they said the right words and they used water, as long as they had the intention of doing what the Church does, and the intention of doing what the Church would want. This has happened many times. There have been many babies that have been born, maybe at Children's Hospital, or some hospital neonatal ICU, and they've been baptized right before death.

Normally, the Baptism would take place in a church. The baptismal ceremony, first of all, consists in the fact that the parents and the godparents present the child for Baptism. The child is too young to profess its own Faith, and to make its own decision. The parents make the decision on behalf of the child. Because Baptism is so important, they feel it's important not to wait until the child is 13 or 14 to make that decision for himself. We see the importance of the parents baptizing the children at a very young age.

During the baptismal ceremony of the child, the parents and the godparents present the child for Baptism, and then they answer questions on behalf of the child, namely, the Baptismal Promises. During the baptismal ceremony, the Scriptures are read, a homily is given, and then, there's something that occurs first in Baptism. That's called the *exorcism*. You might think, "Wow! An exorcism takes place at a Baptism?" It does, believe it or not. That's when the priest blesses the baby, and asks God to protect the child from all evil, from all illness.

After the exorcism, the child is anointed with the *Oil of Catechumen*. There are two anointings in Baptism. One is with the Oil of Catechumen. The other, later on, is with the *Oil of Chrism*. Many of you are *catechumens*. It means, "somebody that's about to enter the Church." That anointing is done on the lower

neck. This represents being close to the heart - on the chest represents the fact that we're now dedicating this child to God. This child is about to become a Christian, and a member of the Catholic Church.

Next, the parents and godparents make the *Baptismal Promises* on behalf of the child, and the Baptism itself is done by the pouring of water. Sometimes, you might go to churches where they actually will immerse the child - not all the way under - but from the feet all the way up to the neck. They dip the child in the water three times. I've never done a Baptism like that. All the ones I've done I've just poured the water over the child's head. Some of my priest friends who have done the Baptism where they dunk the child in say that often times, when the child hits that temperature of water, they leave their mark! You wouldn't want to be the tenth child baptized in that particular font! If they do that kind of Baptism, they usually change the water after each Baptism, which I think is wise and a very good idea.

After the actual Baptism, the priest, deacon, or Bishop would anoint the child's head with chrism oil. Chrism is oil blessed by the Bishop on Holy Thursday. It's a mixture of olive oil and perfume. It represents being chosen by God to be a member of His royal family. The chrism is given on the crown of the head. (This same chrism will be used in Confirmation. At Confirmation, the Bishop anoints the person on the forehead.) The baby is given a white garment to show the innocence and holiness of the soul of a newly-baptized child. The child is given a candle, and the candle is lit. That candle represents the light of Faith, that now the Faith has been passed on to the child. It's the job of the parents and godparents to keep the child's Faith burning bright as the child grows up. Then the "Our Father" is said, and the mother, father, and godparents are blessed.

Sometimes people ask a question about, "What if I've already been baptized in another denomination? Do I have to be rebaptized in the Catholic Faith?" The answer is no. If you've already been baptized in any of the mainstream Christian denominations that use water and said the right words, you do not have to be rebaptized. You can only get baptized once in your life. The question might arise, "What if I'm not sure if I've been baptized? What if we don't have the records? What do you do then?" The answer is that the priest does what's called a *Conditional Baptism*. When he baptizes you, he would say, "If you are not already baptized, I baptize you in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." Some of you might need to receive this. For example, let's say you think you might have been baptized as a baby, or as a teenager, but you don't have any records of it. You might have to be conditionally baptized. Sometimes it's good, because you don't want to think you were baptized and not have been baptized. That's why it's important; perhaps you might need to be conditionally baptized.

If the person is above the age of reason, namely, over seven years of age, there are certain requirements that they're going to need in order to be baptized in the

Faith: first of all, they need to believe basic Christian teachings; they need to be sorry for their sins, and need to desire Baptism. If the child is below that age, maybe if they're five years old, or three years old, or an infant, then the parents make that decision on behalf of the child.

With a Baptism, at least one sponsor or one godparent is required. There's also such a thing as what's called a *Christian Witness*. If you're going to get your baby baptized, as long as one of them is a practicing Catholic, the other one could be a good Christian; that would be what's called a Christian witness. They're like a godparent, but they themselves are not Catholic. They will help to raise the child in the Catholic Faith.

A godparent should be chosen very carefully. They should normally be good, practicing Catholics. Their responsibility is not to raise the children in case something happens to you. The role of the godparent is to help you raise the child in the Catholic Faith. They don't have any legal rights. Theirs is purely a spiritual help, to help you raise the child in the Catholic Faith.

Sometimes in Baptism, people ask, "What about a saint's name? Do you need to have the name of a saint when you're baptized?" It's important that we should try to have a saint's name when we're baptized, but it's not required. It used to be required, back before Vatican II, back in the old days. My sister was baptized in 1961. The priest wouldn't baptize her in the name that my mom and dad had picked out; the name was Edel, named after Edel Quinn, a missionary to Africa. At that point, Edel Quinn was not a saint. Now she is on her way to becoming a saint. The priest said you need some other name. They picked the name Regina, which means queen, after our Blessed Mother. Instead of my sister being named Edel, she was named Regina Edel. That was back then. Today, you'll have all sorts of names, usually whatever the biggest soap opera star is; that's the name of the babies that are chosen today.

Any name is allowed, provided it's not an anti-Christian name. For example, if somebody came up and said, "Father, will you baptize my baby, 'Warlock'?" We couldn't do that. "My baby's name is 'The Devil'. Could you baptize the baby's name 'Devil Jones', or 'Demon Jones'?" We couldn't do that. It has to be a name that is not incompatible with Christianity. Basically, it's best to have a saint's name. That's because then that child will have that saint as a role model and example. For example, if you name your child, let's say, after St. Teresa, St. Francis, St. Peter, or St. Paul, then growing up, that child would have a good role model. If you name it after some soap opera or movie star, then they might not have the same kind of role model, as it would if you had it named after a particular saint. If you do name the baby after a saint, that saint up in Heaven will pray and intercede for that child. In fact, I'm sure most of you have a saint's name, maybe as your first name or your middle name. You should remember to pray and ask for that saint to intercede for you, and to pray for you. That saint becomes a *patron*, *protector*, or *benefactor* in your spiritual life.

It's a serious obligation on the part of parents to make sure that their children are baptized and educated in the Faith. What about Baptism? People say, "Is it necessary to be baptized?" The answer we would give is from John, Chapter 3, Verse 5. It's with Jesus talking to Nicodemus. Jesus says, "Unless a man is born again by water and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God." Those are very strong words from Our Lord. The normal, ordinary way by which God wants us to be saved is through Baptism. Baptism is necessary for salvation.

However, there are those that might not have received actual Baptism by water who can still be saved. We call that *Baptism by Desire*. What this means is that implicitly, in a person's heart: they desire to love God; and they make an act of perfect love of God based upon the Faith that they have; they're sorry for their sins; and they have a desire to do what God would want them to do. If they thought that God would want them to be baptized, then they would be baptized. That's called Baptism by Desire. This is how people of other denominations, other religions who are not baptized, can be saved. Baptism of Desire is not the Sacrament of Baptism. It does not imprint the baptismal seal upon the soul, but it does give Sanctifying Grace, which is necessary to be saved. Those that are saved are those that die in the state of Sanctifying Grace.

Bishop Sheen has a story of when he was instructing a woman from New York. He was describing this Baptism by Desire. The woman said, "Bishop Sheen, what would happen to me if I died tonight?" She was only halfway through her instructions in the Catholic Faith. Bishop Sheen said, "Do you desire to be baptized?" She said, "Yes, of course, with all my heart! I want to be baptized. I'm going to, God willing, finish my series of instructions." Bishop Sheen said, "You have Baptism of Desire. If anything were to happen to you, you would be taken care of by God. You are a catechumen. You're studying for the Faith. You desire Baptism. If something were to happen to you, you would be saved." That very night, the woman died. Bishop Sheen tells this story in one of the tapes, and it really struck him a great deal, because he had just been talking that very day about the Desire for Baptism. I'm sure that some of you who are not yet baptized, as long as you have that intention to be baptized, and to follow the will of God, then you are taken care of. You're considered a catechumen, and you're considered joined to the Church in that way.

There's another kind of Baptism which is probably less common than that. It's called *Baptism of Blood*. That means a person is studying for the Faith, and they're martyred for their Faith; they're killed because of their belief in Jesus Christ. This has happened in Africa and in other parts of the world. You actually have people studying for the Faith, and they're killed in a persecution. Even though they were not baptized by water, because they shed their blood for Christ, Jesus considered them baptized. That's called Baptism of Blood. So remember *Baptism of Water*, *Baptism of Desire*, and *Baptism of Blood*.

The reason why Baptism is so important is because of what Jesus said. That's why we baptize babies. A lot of Churches say, "I'm going to let my 14-year old wait until he or she is old enough to make their own decision." We believe that Baptism is so important, we want to give that great gift of Baptism to little children as well, to infants. It should be done as soon after birth as possible, usually within the first month. I was baptized nine days after I was born. Many of you, I'm sure, were baptized within a week. That used to be the custom. A lot of times, the mom wouldn't take the kids out of the house, or take them on a long trip, until they had the baby baptized.

This has its teaching even in Scripture. For example, it says in the Acts of the Apostles, that entire households were baptized. Households would include children. Also, if you read some of the early Christian writers, like Origen and Tertullian, they say that baptizing infants was a practice that they received, even from the Apostolic times, from the Apostles. The majority of Christians do baptize babies. It's not just Catholics that will baptize babies.

The question comes up, "What happens to a baby that dies before Baptism?" I want to take a moment to explain the Church's teaching about this. First of all, we know that any baptized baby goes straight to Heaven, and becomes a great saint. Make sure you realize that; any baby that dies after Baptism is a great saint. You can pray to that baby, because that baby is now seeing God face-to-face. We call that the *Beatific Vision*, when we see God face-to-face.

What about a baby that dies before Baptism, maybe that dies through a miscarriage, abortion, SIDS, or some other very difficult tragedy? What happens then? The Catechism teaches that God loves the little children, and that Jesus even said, "Let the little children come unto Me. Do not hinder them, for the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these." We also know that the children who die before Baptism would not suffer in any way. They would not go to any kind of place of suffering. The Catechism says, "All we know is that we entrust them to the love and to the mercy of God." We basically don't know the answer to what happens to them. We know that they would go to at least a place of perfect, natural happiness. We know that they'd be perfectly happy in the next life, if they died before Baptism.

That's the teaching of the Church, that they go to a place at least of perfect happiness. Whether they see God face-to-face in the Beatific Vision, we don't actually have that absolute guarantee like we do with a baptized baby. We entrust the child to God's love, God's care, and God's mercy. We know that the child would not suffer, because the child never committed any personal sins, obviously. If they did die with Original Sin on their soul, without Sanctifying Grace in their soul, the Church teaches that perhaps they go to a place of perfect natural happiness. Whether or not it's the Beatific Vision, we leave that up to the mercy of God. We know that baptized babies go directly to the Beatific Vision, and to see the Blessed Trinity. That's why it's so important to have children

baptized immediately after, or soon after birth, in case something would happen to them, God forbid. During the Question and Answer Period, you might want to ask a more about that.

(A question). The question was, "Jesus sent out the Apostles, and wanted them to baptize in the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit." One of the other priests said that nowhere in the Bible was the phrase 'Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,' all said at the same time. Am I right or am I wrong?" I think what the priest said is that you'll never find the word "Trinity" in the Bible. I wasn't here when the other priest was there, but being a priest for almost nine years, we start to think alike. I've heard priests say that, for example, you won't find the word "Purgatory" in the Bible; but the truth is there. You won't find the word "Trinity" in the Bible, but the truth is there. In the Old Testament, you'll never find "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit," but you will find evidence of the Trinity in the New Testament. For example, at the Annunciation, it says, "The Angel Gabriel said, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you. The power of the Most High will overshadow you' (namely, the Father), 'And the child to be born will be called the Son of God.'" Also, at the Baptism of Our Lord, when Jesus came up out of the water, it said the Holy Spirit came in the form of a dove and a voice from Heaven said, "This is My Beloved Son." There you have the Blessed Trinity revealed: Jesus the Son, the voice of God the Father speaking, and the Holy Spirit coming down in the form of a dove.

I'm glad you brought this up. In Matthew 28, Jesus says, "Go out and baptize in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." That is the clearest New Testament indication of the Blessed Trinity. Notice, it doesn't say, "In the Names of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." That would be three Gods. There's only One God - "In the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but Three Persons.

(A question). The question was, "For sponsors or godparents, do they have to be a certain age? My friend's sister had a baby, and her son, who was 16, was the godparent. Is there an age limit that you're supposed to have?" I believe it's age 16 to be a godparent. I'd have to double check what Canon Law says, but off the top of my head without looking it up, I think it's 16 to be a godparent. They would need to be a confirmed Catholic who practices their Faith, and who is over the age of 16, I believe.

(A question). The question was, "You mentioned that if a baby dies, and they're not baptized - I know when I was baptized, I think I was 12 or 13, and in our religion, you had to be old enough to make the choice yourself - what happens to a child, who's say seven or eight, who obviously has committed sin, and they would die before they were baptized?" Usually, if they're that age, they would not have committed a serious sin, so they would still be saved. Remember that in Baptism by Desire, we never want to limit the mercy and love of God, but that God can directly give people graces. That child who dies at that particular age, or

the young teenager as well, most likely, they have not committed any serious sins at that age, so they would certainly be saved. Remember, that in order to be saved, you need to be in the state of grace. God Himself can directly forgive you of your sins.

(At this point, the first side of the tape ended. The class resumes below).

If a person was baptized in any of the major Christian denominations, like Baptist, Methodist, Episcopalian, Lutheran, Presbyterian - any of the major denominations - almost all, 99%, do have valid Baptisms. You do not need to be rebaptized. If, for example, you're not sure if you were baptized, you'd be conditionally baptized; that's when the priest says, "In case you are not already baptized, I baptize you in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." That would be something that you would talk to the person in charge of RCIA, or the local priest. If there wasn't enough evidence that you're baptized, he could conditionally baptize you.

(A question). You would not have to be rebaptized. In fact, you can only be baptized once in your life. For example, let's say if you were baptized as another denomination, and then you felt God calling you to become a Catholic, then when you became a Catholic, what you would do, instead of being baptized? You would renew your Baptismal vows and promises. The priest would ask you:

- "Do you reject Satan?" You say, "I do."
- "And all his works?" "I do."
- "And all his empty promises?" "I do."
- "Do you believe in God the Father, the Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth?" "I do."

So, he takes you through the basics of the Faith. If you profess your Faith, then you're received into the Church through the Profession of Faith. Then you're confirmed after you've gone to Confession. If you're already baptized, the way you enter the Church is through Profession of Faith, Confession, and Confirmation; then you receive Holy Communion. If you've never been baptized, you're brought into the Church through Baptism. Then you're confirmed, and you make your First Communion.

(A question). The question was, "Let's say you're coming into the Church, and you haven't been baptized, but you're going to get baptized and all. Do you still have to go to Confession?" No. If you've never been baptized, when you enter the Church, you don't have to go to Confession (lucky you, right?), because all your sins are washed away in the Baptism. What's recommended is that after you get baptized, is that, they give you a couple of months to give you some time to commit some sins - actually I'm sort of teasing about that! If you've never gone to Confession, it's good to meet with a priest maybe a month after you've been baptized and brought into the Faith. That way, he can help you go through and make your First Confession. There have been people that have come into the

Church through other RCIA programs that were baptized, and had never made a First Confession. They'd been a Catholic for five or ten years, and still had never made their First Confession, because they never were taught how. If you've never been baptized, and you come into the Church through Baptism, make sure you talk to the priest about hearing your Confession a week later, or a month later.

(A question). The question was, "If you're baptized, and you're not a very good person after you're baptized, and something happens to you, do you go to Heaven, or what happens?" It's possible. It depends if you still have Sanctifying Grace in your soul. If you are in the state of grace, which you would be after being baptized, you still have the Holy Spirit, the life of the Trinity, in your soul. If you died, you would go to Heaven; you would be saved.

Let's say you committed all sorts of terrible mortal sins after your Baptism, and you're not Catholic. Can you still be saved? The answer is yes; God could directly give you grace on your deathbed or before you die, to be sorry for your sins. If a person was truly sorry for their sins, and loved God; then God would directly forgive them of their sins, and they could be saved.

God's grace, what we call giving *Actual Graces*, which is special strength and help, God can directly give those to individuals in other denominations. That's how a person is forgiven of their sins if they're of a different denomination. If they tell God they're sorry; they repent of their sins; and God directly forgives them.

One last thing I just thought of, as far as Baptism, was a story that happened to St. Patrick. Remember St. Patrick, we celebrated his feast day on March 17<sup>th</sup>. He was the first Bishop of Ireland. He had just converted a pagan king, just baptized this pagan king. After the ceremony, when St. Patrick had baptized this king, St. Patrick was holding his staff as a Bishop. You've seen the Bishop's mitre and crook - it's called a staff. He baptized the king, and after the ceremony, he looked down and saw the king had a hole in his foot; the king's foot was bleeding. He said to the king, "What happened to you?" The king said, "During the baptismal ceremony, you stuck your staff right through my foot." St. Patrick said, "Why didn't you tell me?" The king said, "I thought it was part of the ceremony." So now you know what the ceremony consists of!

I just want to conclude tonight with talking about Confirmation, because this is another sacrament that all of you will be receiving. The word *confirmation* means a "strengthening, or an out pouring of the Holy Spirit." Confirmation was foreshadowed in the Old Testament when it talks about the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Jesus promised that he would send the Holy Spirit to the Apostles, which He did on Pentecost. Pentecost was like the Confirmation of the Catholic Church; it's when the Holy Spirit came down upon Mary and the Apostles. The Church received Confirmation.

Jesus Himself received the Holy Spirit in a very special way, when He was baptized at the River Jordan. Remember I mentioned the clouds opened up, and the Holy Spirit descended like a dove? And a voice from Heaven said, "This is My Beloved Son." Then, after Jesus received this outpouring of the Holy Spirit, He went into the desert where He fasted and prayed for 40 days. Jesus Himself received a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

If you want to look up in the New Testament, if you're interested in finding where in the Bible it talks about the laying on of hands, and the coming of the Holy Spirit on a person, look up Acts, Chapter 8. It says, "The Apostles came, and they imposed hands," like they laid hands upon the heads of individuals. It says, "The Holy Spirit came down upon these people," because the Apostles had prayed over them and imposed hands on them.

Also, in Acts, Chapter 19, St. Paul talks about the Holy Spirit being given to Christians in Ephesus. In Hebrews, Chapter 6, it talks about Baptism and the laying on of hands. So Confirmation, as all the other sacraments, is in the Bible in the New Testament. Again, Confirmation is a sacrament of spiritual strengthening, and it's done through the anointing with oil. This oil, as I mentioned, is called chrism. You're anointed with chrism on the forehead. Remember, the baby is anointed on the crown of the head; in Confirmation, they're anointed on the forehead. There's also the *imposition of hands*, like the praying when the priest or Bishop prays over a person. When the person is anointed, the proper words have to be said. Those words are, "Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Anybody can be confirmed who is baptized. You have to be baptized to receive any of the other sacraments. You can't receive the Eucharist. You can't receive Confession, or Confirmation, unless you're already baptized. Baptism is like your spiritual birth, that's when you're born spiritually. Confirmation is when you become considered a mature adult in the Catholic Church. When a person is confirmed, they receive an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. They also receive a release of the Holy Spirit within them. Anybody that is already baptized and has not committed a mortal sin is in the state of grace, and the Holy Spirit is already dwelling within their soul. Confirmation helps to release that Holy Spirit that they have in their soul, which is present through Sanctifying Grace. It also strengthens them.

When a person is confirmed, they also receive another seal or another imprint of the image of Christ upon their soul. In Baptism they receive one imprint. If you look at a quarter, on one side you see George Washington. On the other side you have maybe an eagle. That's what Baptism and Confirmation do. They're like opposite sides of the same coin. Baptism gives you an imprint of Christ upon your soul, and Confirmation does the same thing. When you're confirmed, it's like the other side of the coin is given its mark. You become a complete Christian when you're confirmed. If the person is only baptized and not confirmed, then it's

like a quarter with only one side with the imprint; the other side is still blank. When you're confirmed, you get the other imprint on the other side. You get another imprint of Jesus upon your soul.

What's interesting about Baptism and Confirmation is that they parallel the Old Testament Jewish ceremonies. For example, Baptism replaces circumcision. This is mentioned in Colossians, Chapter 2. St. Paul says that Baptism has now replaced circumcision. Circumcision was given on the eighth day. That's why Baptism is also done early in the child's life, because it parallels circumcision.

Confirmation parallels bar mitzvah. Your bar mitzvah is when you become a mature adult in the Jewish Faith. Confirmation is given about the same time the Jews would do their bar mitzvah.

The Eucharist, which is the Body and Blood of Christ, parallels the Passover supper of the Jews. Catholics are fulfilled Jews; Christians are completed Jews. We accept what the Jews believe as far as the One God, and as far as the Ten Commandments. We also accept the fact that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God.

The usual minister for Confirmation is the Bishop. Normally, it's the Bishop that confirms people and gives them the sacrament. Priests can also confirm under certain circumstances. For example, at the Easter Vigil, where most of you, I imagine, will be received into the Church or confirmed, a priest has the authority to confirm. Also, when a priest brings somebody into the Church and baptizes them, he also has permission automatically to confirm them. In cases of emergency, a priest can confirm as well. For example, there have been cases where a little baby might be dying at Fairfax Hospital, and the priest there can baptize the baby. If they know that the child is not going to live, the priest could also confirm that little infant as well at the same time. In case of emergency, a priest can give the Sacrament of Confirmation; also on Holy Saturday; and when he receives a convert into the Church. If somebody was baptized as a Catholic, they would need to be confirmed by the Bishop, unless it's done at the Holy Saturday Easter Vigil ceremony.

How is the sacrament done? As I mentioned, it's done with the anointing of chrism. In the Old Testament, chrism was used to anoint the kings and queens, the prophets of the Old Testament. Oil represents strength and healing, like athletes that use oil to limber up before a big match. It represents the anointing of God, the anointing of the Holy Spirit. In the Old Testament, the prophets were anointed with oil. For Confirmation, we're anointed on the forehead.

There is also the imposition of hands; the laying on of hands. What I think is really interesting about that is that the power of the Holy Spirit is passed on to you when you're confirmed, through the transmission of the laying on of hands and the anointing with oil. What's neat about that is that we can trace our

Confirmation back to the Apostles. For example, when they confirmed people, their priests, and their successors the other Bishops, they did this by laying on of hands, by the Confirmation.

That there's an unbroken link of imposition of hands from when you get confirmed all the way back to those Apostles. The priest or the Bishop that confirms you was confirmed and received that sacrament from another Bishop or another priest, all the way back to those Apostles. In a sense, you are given a share in the very first Confirmation, which is Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit came down upon the Apostles. When that priest or Bishop touches your head, you're being touched by the Holy Spirit that was poured upon the Church and Pentecost that was then passed down through the laying on of hands, and unbroken over the last 2,000 years. That's something really interesting to think about: an unbroken outpouring of the Holy Spirit, from the Apostles down to when you're confirmed. It becomes your own little Pentecost, your own share in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Before Vatican II, when you were confirmed, afterward, the Bishop would slap you on the cheek *gently*. Did you know about that? How many of you remember that? Did he slap you pretty hard, is that why you remember? I'm just teasing!

(A question). The question was, "Why do we kiss his ring?" That's been customary if you meet the Pope or a Bishop, that you would kiss their ring out of respect, because they're successors of the Apostles. Every Bishop has been ordained by a previous Bishop all the way back to Christ and the Twelve Apostles.

In the Old Rite, before Vatican II, after he anointed you with oil, he would then say, "Peace be with you," and he'd give you a little slap on the cheek. That represented the fact that you had to be willing to suffer for Jesus Christ. That's what that meant, that little symbol. Today, because of lawsuits and things like that, you just shake the Bishop's hand. They say that the Bishop never really hit you too hard, but it was just the idea that you have to be willing to suffer for Christ. Now that you're confirmed, you're considered a soldier, an adult in the Church; and you have to be willing to witness and to share in your Faith, in the Gospel. That might require you undergoing some sort of people criticizing you for being Christian, people make fun of you, or persecuting you. Confirmation will give you that strength to deal with that. Nowadays, the Bishop just says, "Peace be with you," and he shakes your hand. When you get confirmed by the priest he'll say, "Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit," and then he'll say, "Peace be with you," and you just shake his hand.

People say, "Who can be confirmed?" Any validly baptized person who has not yet been confirmed can be confirmed. You can only be confirmed once in the Catholic Church. If you were confirmed in another denomination, you can still be confirmed in the Catholic Church.

To receive the full effects of Confirmation, you have to be in the state of grace, which is the state of friendship with God. Normally, kids get confirmed when they're in the Eighth Grade. Let's say a kid was not in the state of grace. Maybe they had gone out and committed all sorts of sins, and they got confirmed. They would still be validly confirmed, but they would not have received all the graces that Confirmation would give. Later on, let's say they go to Confession a month later. If they were then repentant of their sins, at that point, they would receive the graces of their Confirmation. Do you see how that works? If a person received Confirmation in a state of mortal sin, they're still validly confirmed, but they don't receive all the graces of Confirmation until they repent and go to Confession. Then they receive the graces that they should have received in their Confirmation.

What are the effects of Confirmation? Let me just mention these eight effects.

Number one, it increases Sanctifying Grace in your soul, which is the very life of God, the possession of Divine Life within your soul.

Second, it gives you *Actual Graces*, which are special impulses of God's strength that He gives you to illuminate your mind, to strengthen your will, to help you live a good, Christian life.

Third, you receive special *Sacramental Graces* to overcome fear, to give you courage, to help defend your Faith, and to help you to spread your Faith.

Fourth, you're given that special seal, as I mentioned, that stamp of Christ upon your soul, which also lasts for all eternity. Once you're confirmed, you're always confirmed for all eternity. In Heaven, you'll be able to tell who's been confirmed, and who's not been confirmed.

Fifth, you'll be given special strength to witness to your Faith.

Sixth, you'll be given an increase in the virtue of Courage.

Seventh, you'll have an increase in the infused virtues, the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Eighth, you'll be given an increase in the virtue of Faith, which helps you to believe, and Fortitude, which helps you to remain strong in your will.

When you're confirmed, you're given a special assimilation to Christ. You become more united to Christ.

First of all, to Christ the Priest. You'll be given the grace to bear sufferings patiently, and to sacrifice for Christ.

Second, you'll be given an assimilation to Christ the Teacher. Confirmation will help you to keep your Faith, to spread the Faith, and to share it.

Third, you'll be given a special relationship with Christ the King. You'll be given special leadership qualities to help build up the Kingdom of God, which is the Church.

This sacrament has also been called the *Sacrament of Martyrdom*. The word *martyr* is someone who sheds their blood for Christ. The word martyr actually means "to witness." The witnesses, when Jesus says, "You will be given the grace to witness to Me," He's saying you'll even be given the grace to be a martyr, to lay down your life for Christ.

Martyrdom is the ultimate witness to Jesus Christ, the ultimate public testimony of your Faith in Christ and in the Church. Confirmation will give you the grace to suffer well for Christ, if you are ever in a situation where your Faith is persecuted. For example, let's say you are at work, and people make fun of you for being a Christian, for being a Catholic. Confirmation will give you the grace to bear that, and to courageously profess your Faith, to effectively preach the Gospel, and to spread the Faith.

Lastly with Confirmation comes the special grace to evangelize and to spread the Faith, and to be a witness to bring Christ to other people. You're called to become a *leaven* in the world. Leaven is like yeast. When it's put into dough, it makes the whole dough rise. That's what you're called to be when you get confirmed; it's like you're called to be like that yeast, that leaven, that will make the world a better place. The whole community will be better because of you. Confirmation will give you that grace to be zealous in spreading your Faith, and helping to bring people to the Catholic Faith, to Christianity, to help convert unbelievers, to bring back fallen-away Catholics, and to help make you a good Apostle. Baptism made you a Child of God; Confirmation makes you an adult in the Church. It makes you a soldier of God, and an Apostle in spreading the Catholic Faith.

(A question). The question was, "Baptism replaces circumcision. Confirmation replaces bar mitzvah. Does anything replace the Seder?" Yes, the Passover Meal, like the Seder Meal, or the Passover Meal. In the Passover Meal, they would take their unleavened bread, and they would have their lamb. In the Eucharist, Christ Himself is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. We still use unleavened bread at the Mass. The Mass is really the fulfillment of the Passover Scriptures.

(A question). The question was, "You said that you could use even tap water in an emergency Baptism, and say the right words. Those words again are?" You might want to write this down, if you ever get in a situation where you have to baptize somebody, in case of emergency. You could use any ordinary water. It

could be spring water, mineral water, or distilled water, as long as it's water. You say, "I baptize you in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," while at the same time, pouring the water (or dunking them!)

(A question). The question was, "My mother brought me up, as a young boy, saying that if somebody was in a car accident, and you came upon them, if they haven't died yet, you should baptize them. Earlier in the evening, you mentioned that you can only be baptized once. So, you're not doing any harm, correct?" If you're not sure if the person's been baptized, you could use our special words, "If you are not already baptized, I baptize you in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." That would be the way to do it if you weren't sure if the person was baptized.

(A question). The question was, "On my dog tag, it says, "I am a Catholic. Please call a priest." Good! That's excellent. On mine it says, "I am a Catholic priest. Please call a Bishop." I'm just kidding! Somebody once said that would be a good one to get. I have the same one too, which is nice, because that way, if you're in an accident, you'll have one of these medals that distinguish you as a member of the Church. They would get a priest for you.

(A question). The question was, "Last year, my sister and my niece were confirmed and both baptized at the Easter Vigil. Right after that, they took their First Communion. What happens if you go through Confirmation, and you have mortal sin? Should you refuse, or ask to wait, to take Communion?" If a person knows they're in mortal sin, let's say, then they shouldn't even receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. That would be a sacrilege to receive Confirmation in the state of mortal sin. Again, it doesn't affect the validity of that Sacrament of Confirmation; you still would receive that sacrament. They wouldn't receive the graces until they would later go to Confession and repent. What they should do is just catch a priest a couple of minutes before the ceremony, and say, "Father, do you have a couple of minutes?" Then they should go to Confession.

Most likely, if they were brought into the Church at the Easter Vigil, if they had never been baptized, when they're baptized, all their sins are forgiven, so they can and should receive Confirmation and Communion. If they were baptized as an infant, the Confessions are held Saturday morning. For example, like last year, when I and others were here, we had 40 people. We had all the people make their First Confession Saturday morning, and their Confirmation and First Communion was Saturday night. They "Profess the Faith" in the morning, and then they make their Confession. The only other way you could do that would be during the Mass; shoo all those people out, have them go to Confession for a couple of hours, and then bring them back in. It really doesn't make sense to do that, because everybody would be waiting. We do the Confessions in the morning, and that way, they can receive all the sacraments that night.

(A question). The question was, "Let's say you have an adult child who is old enough, but doesn't want to be baptized. Then, they get involved in a car accident, and you're there with them. Can you baptize them without them giving you their consent?" That's a good question, like the \$64,000 question as they used to call it. You're saying that's your child, or somebody else's child? And how old is the child, more or less? An adult? Okay. Are they conscious or unconscious? Are they awake or not? Awake? If they're awake, you would ask them, "Do you want to be baptized?" Hope that they would say yes. If they're unconscious, then you could baptize them, because you're their mother, and you have that responsibility. You could do that, if they're unconscious. If they're conscious, you would need to get their agreement.

For example, you wouldn't just go to the hospital and go down all the wards, and while everybody is sleeping, baptize them. For an adult, first of all, you'd get kicked out. Second, for an adult, they should at least have a Desire for Baptism. Let's say somebody was in the RCIA course, and you knew that they wanted to be baptized. They had told you, "If anything happens to me, make sure you baptize me." Obviously, you could go ahead and baptize them.

(A question). The question was, "My son is six, and he was just baptized a few months ago with the school-aged children. I have a two and a half year old who needs to be baptized. What do I do? Do I make an appointment with the Church, or is he baptized like an infant, or how does that work?" He could be baptized like an infant on any Sunday. You could do that just like a normal Baptism. If they're above a certain age, such as seven, eight, or nine, they need to go to classes, so they know what's going on. If they're young, like four, five, and under, they could easily be baptized just like a regular infant. It would be just yourselves and the godparents that really profess the Faith on their behalf.

(A question). The question was, "Those that are going through this class for Confirmation, what steps are involved in the actual Confirmation, and do you pick a name or something?" When you get confirmed, all of you should pick a name, like a saint's name. Start thinking of what saint you really like. There are all sorts of wonderful saints, like St. Bernadette, St. Teresa, St. Catherine, the Blessed Mother. The reason why we take a saint's name at Confirmation is again, to have a special patron; a special protector and benefactor, that will watch over you and do that. We will bring you books about the saints, and you can take them home, read them, and pick out the saints that you like.

There's one kid out in Chicago. He had hair way down to here. He wore leather with the big spikes on. He had earrings. He took the name of St. Wolfgang as his patron. St. Wolfgang is a real saint. There are all sorts of saints you can take. Let's say they're the same job as you. If you're a lawyer, you could take St. Thomas More. If you're a doctor or a nurse, you could take St. Luke. There are different patron saints for different professions. Carpenters would be St. Joseph. Athletes would be St. Sebastian. There are saints for any situation you find

yourself in; there's a patron saint. There are saints who had difficult husbands, like St. Monica, for example. There are saints that had nagging wives, such as St. Thomas More. There are particular saints that you might relate to.

If you're to be confirmed, you should finish out these classes. Then you'd be confirmed at the Easter Vigil. Most likely, you'd go to Confession Saturday morning, and then at the Easter Vigil you'd be confirmed. That's when you take your saint's name.

(A question). The question was, "Can a female choose a male saint's name?" For example, if you're a lady, and you really like St. Michael, you could take the name Michael. Now, if you're a guy, and you take the name Suzy, you might get beat up! That's up to you! Then you'd be a martyr and go straight to Heaven!