

this Holy Mystery, one continues on the path of repentance, conversion, cleansing from sin, and strengthening in the virtues.

5) The Necessity of Faith

416 As he sends his disciples to preach, Christ assures them: "The one who believes and is baptized will be saved" (Mk 16:16). In order to receive the salvific gift of Baptism, faith is essential—faith in Christ, the Son of God, "in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins" (Col 1:14) and the gift of divine filiation: "If you believe with all your heart, you may [be baptized]" (Acts 8:37). "In Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ" (Gal 3:26-27).

417 "Faith and baptism are two kindred and inseparable ways of salvation: faith is perfected through baptism, and baptism is grounded on faith ... First comes the confession [of faith], introducing us to salvation, and baptism follows, setting the seal on our assent."³¹³ Having received the gift of Baptism as a kind of seed, we are called to work together with the Holy Spirit in order to bear abundant fruit: "For though the remission of sins is granted to all alike the communication of the Holy Spirit is granted in proportion to the faith of each ... You are running for yourself, so look to your own advantage."³¹⁴

6) The Baptism of Children

418 The Church baptizes both adults and children in order to lead them into the new life of Christ. The Church baptizes children, bearers of the image of God, so that they can receive the grace of divine likeness. Together with the gift of life, the most precious gift that parents can give is to bring their child to the Mystery of Baptism. When children are baptized, the Church community, represented by the Godparents, expresses faith in Christ on their behalf. Together with the father and mother they accept responsibility before God and the Church for the Christian upbringing of the child. The child is to grow within the Church community in faith, as well as with a Christian lifestyle and in knowledge of God. To become a Godparent, whether of children or adults, it is necessary to be a believer, so that the person's faith and way of life become models for the future Godchild. The spiritual relationship between Godparents and Godchildren endures throughout their lives. The Baptism of a child cannot be considered a violation of its

³¹³ BASIL THE GREAT, *On the Holy Spirit*, 12, 28: PG 32,117.

³¹⁴ CYRIL OF JERUSALEM, *The Catechetical Lectures*, 1, 5: PG 33, 377.

rights or freedom, because just as parents or guardians feed a child and teach it for its own good, so also believing parents, in bringing their child to the Mystery of Baptism, open them to life in God.

7) *The Rite of Baptism*

419 The Rite of Baptism begins with the Making of a Catechumen—the preparation of the person for Baptism. In an introductory prayer the priest lays his hand on the catechumen. The Church thus takes the catechumen under her care so that he or she may be "found worthy to flee to [God's] holy name and find shelter under [his] wings."³¹⁵ Then, through prayers and exorcisms, the Church safeguards the catechumen from the influence of Satan. Subsequently the catechumen, either personally or through the Godparents, renounces Satan and his works and joins to Christ the Saviour. As a sign of this joining to Christ, the catechumen passes from the narthex of the church (symbol of the world) to the centre of the nave (symbol of Christ's Church).

420 Immediately before the immersion (or the pouring) the priest anoints the catechumen with holy oil. This anointing is a sign of the power of the Holy Spirit received in Baptism. It is given to the catechumen as a "weapon of justice" against "all the action of the devil" and for the "restoration of body and soul."³¹⁶ The priest anoints the forehead, the breast, the shoulders, the ears, and the hands and feet.³¹⁷ He anoints the forehead so that "the mind might be opened to understand and receive the mysteries of faith." He anoints the breast so that the baptized "would love the Lord with all his/her heart." The shoulders are anointed so that he/she "would accept Christ's yoke." The ears are anointed "for the reception of the voice of the divine Gospel." Finally, the baptizand's hands and feet are anointed so that he/she would "raise his/her hands towards the holy place and always act justly," and "walk in the ways of Christ's commandments." The anointing of the body indicates that in Baptism the entire nature of the person is renewed, along with all its senses.

421 Baptism is performed with water, which is a symbol of life but also of death ("the waters of the flood," see Gn 6-9). The passing through the waters of the Red Sea symbolizes salvation (see Ex 14), while the washing with water is a symbol of healing (e.g., the curing of Naaman of leprosy; see 2 Kgs 5:10-14). Immersing the person three times into

³¹⁵ Trebnyk, Rite of Baptism, the Prayer over the Catechumen.

³¹⁶ Trebnyk, Rite of Baptism, the Prayer for the Blessing of the Oil.

³¹⁷ Trebnyk, Rite of Baptism, the Prayer for the Blessing of the Oil.