

why the Church prays for the newly-baptized during Chrismation with these words: "That he (or she) may become firm, strong, and steady in the orthodox faith, and in love and hope; and that he (or she) might always desire to confess the name of Christ our God boldly before everyone, without fear and without timidity."³²¹

426 Through Chrismation the gift of the Holy Spirit is sealed so that the Christian can "become Christ our God's courageous and victorious competitor," ready "to suffer and die out of love for him." Through "growth in virtue" he or she can attain full maturity "to the measure of the full stature of Christ" (Eph 4:13). This is accomplished in the Christian "through the power, action, grace, and descent of the Most Holy Spirit."³²²

427 Just as after Christ's baptism in the Jordan the Holy Spirit led Christ in his salvific mission, and just as the Spirit leads the Church community since the descent on the apostles at Pentecost, so also in the Mystery of Chrismation the Holy Spirit grants to every Christian the capacity to discern and realize the foundational calling (vocation) of his or her life for the salvation and transfiguration of the world.

3) The Rite of Chrismation

428 The Rite of Chrismation is performed immediately after Baptism because where there is life, there is breath. Holy Chrism, a fragrant mixture of oils and other aromatic components, symbolizes the richness and diversity of the spiritual gifts which the Holy Spirit grants to the newborn in Christ.

Beware of supposing that this oil [i.e., Chrism] is mere ointment. Just as after the invocation of the Holy Spirit the Eucharistic bread is no longer ordinary bread but the Body of Christ, so this holy oil, in conjunction with the invocation, is no longer simple or common oil but becomes the gracious gift of Christ and the Holy Spirit, producing the advent of his divinity.³²³

Holy Chrism is consecrated on Holy Thursday by the head of a self-governing Church for use by priests, which evidences the unity of the Church.

429 During the Rite of Chrismation, the priest anoints the newly baptized on the forehead, eyes, nostrils, lips, ears, breast, hands, and feet. He pro-

³²¹ Trebnyk, Rite of Chrismation, The Litany of Peace.

³²² Trebnyk, Rite of Chrismation, The Litany of Peace.

³²³ CYRIL OF JERUSALEM, The Mystagogical Lectures, 3, 3: PG 33, 1090.

claims: "the seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit." thus, "in every word and deed" the newly baptized is to please God and become "a son (daughter) and heir" of his kingdom. The Holy Spirit transfigures the thoughts, feelings, and deeds of those who are members of the kingdom.

430 the words "The seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit" witness to the fact that the Christian belongs to God. Christians are his possession because we "were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory" (*Eph 1:13-14*). It is through the power and the action of the Holy Spirit that the Christian lives in Christ: "The anointing that you received from him abides in you, and so you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, abide in him" (*1 Jn 2:27*).

c. The Mystery of the Eucharist

431 The Mystery of the Eucharist (Holy Communion) is the third of the Mysteries of Christian initiation. In the Eucharist the newly baptized, who was born in Christ and filled with the Holy Spirit, receives the communion of the Body and Blood of Christ at the holy Eucharistic table. But unlike Baptism and Chrismation, which we receive only once, we receive the Mystery of the Eucharist throughout our lives, since it is through this Mystery that we grow in the grace received in Baptism and Chrismation—the grace to be sons and daughters of God. For this reason, our Church offers Communion to the newly baptized³²⁴

432 In the Mystery of Holy Communion, Christ gives us his very self, his Body and Blood, as nourishment for our growth in the new life. At the Mystical Supper (Last Supper) Christ offered himself for us so that we might be able to offer our lives for our neighbour, as he offered his life (*see Jn 13:34*). Receiving Communion in the Lord's Body and Blood, we receive a pledge of life eternal: "Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day" (*Jn 6:54*). Partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ, we already have eternal life, the fullness of which will be revealed in the glorious second coming of Christ. "For since he bestowed on us his own image and his own spirit and we did not guard them, he took himself a share in our poor and weak nature, in order that he might cleanse us and make us incorruptible, and establish us once more as partakers of his divinity"³²⁵

³²⁴ See CONGREGATION FOR THE EASTERN CHURCHES, *Instruction for Applying the Liturgical Prescriptions of the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches*, 51.

³²⁵ JOHN OF DAMASCUS, *An Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*, 4, 13: PG 94, 1137.