

# Welcome to the Church!

## Allelu!

*Growing and Celebrating with Jesus*

### Lesson 6, ages 3-4

#### Lesson 6 Goal

- Your child will learn about the Sacrament of Baptism, and about his or her own baptism.

#### Key Points

- Baptism is a special celebration that welcomes people into the Church.
- Baptism includes the pouring of water (or immersion in water).



#### Parent Reflection

When we are baptized, God adopts us as his daughters and sons (see Galatians 4:5). The signs of Baptism include water, Sacred Chrism, a white garment, and light. The individual being baptized is immersed in water (or water is poured over his or her head) with the words, “I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” The baptized is then anointed with consecrated oil, called Sacred Chrism. This signifies the gift of the Holy Spirit and the reality that all of us who have put on Christ in baptism share in his work as Priest, Prophet, and King. A white garment is placed on the newly baptized, signifying the truth that he or she has put on Christ and is now free from the stain of sin. A baptismal candle is lit from the Easter candle (which represents Christ), showing that the newly baptized has received the light of Christ and is welcomed into the Church to participate with her in being the “light of the world.”

Those who are part of the Church are connected to one another in a special, mysterious way. Saint Paul speaks about this mystical Body of Christ in I Corinthians 12:26, writing, “If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.” We are not only mysteriously connected with the Church on Earth, but also with those who have gone before us (including the saints and our deceased loved ones). Not even death can separate God’s family from one another!

#### Reflection Question

What do I remember (or what have I been told) about my baptism?  
What does my baptism mean to me today?

## Lesson Preparation

Before inviting your child to sit with you for lesson time, prepare all materials.

### Materials

- Family Activity Sheet
- crayons, colored pencils, or markers, including one yellow and one blue
- plastic tub or sink filled with water
- baby doll
- Lesson 6 Activity Master – Saint Page (in-

cluded with this lesson)

(Keep the saint page from each lesson to gather together a Communion of Saints Book created by your child.)

### Preparation

- Partially fill a plastic baby or play tub or sink with water.

## Gathering

Create a prayerful space. You might place a candle on the table, or set a cross in front of you. Invite your child to join you in quietly preparing for prayer.

### Begin in prayer:

Make the Sign of the Cross together or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead: “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

Pray together: *“Dear God, thank you for the Sacrament of Baptism. Thank you for the welcome into the Church community. Amen.”*

## Discovering

**John’s Special Day.** Turn to the first page of the Activity Sheet and read about baby John’s baptism.

Ask your child, “What do you think it feels like to be baptized?”

Turn to the second page of the Activity Sheet. Ask your child the “Ask Me!” questions and review the answers.

## Exploring

Use the following activities to enrich your child’s understanding of the lesson and of our Catholic

faith.

**1. A Baby Is Baptized.** Turn to the drawing in the main activity of the Activity Sheet (center pages) and invite your child to describe what he or she sees. Give your child a blue and yellow crayon or colored pencil. Explain the activity and have your child complete it.

**2. Baptism Water Play.** Invite your child to explore the tub or sink filled with water. Include a baby doll into this play area and allow dramatic play of a baptism to freely occur. Encourage and model new vocabulary and concepts, such as: *welcome to the church family, baptized, honor God, you are a gift, and we say “YES” to God.*

**3. The Communion of Saints: Saint John the Baptist.** Show your child the picture of Saint John the Baptist on the Family Activity page and read about him. Then read more about Saint John the Baptist to your child (see page 3).

Ask your child, “Do you think it was hard for John to stop being the leader—and to let Jesus lead?”

Have your child draw about Saint John the Baptist using the Lesson 6 Activity Master.

## Sending

**Pray with your child.** Begin by making the Sign of the Cross together, or bless your child by tracing a cross on his or her forehead. Pray aloud

with your child:

*“Thank you, Jesus for welcoming us to your Church.  
Keep us close to you always. Amen.”*

## **Saint John the Baptist**

### **Jesus Is Baptized**

Shortly before Jesus was born, his Aunt Elizabeth learned that she was going to have a baby. How joyous! Elizabeth was a cousin to Jesus’ mother, Mary. That means that Elizabeth’s son, John, and Jesus were also cousins.

John’s father, Zechariah, was a priest in the Temple. He also felt joyous when John was born because he had hoped for a son to help him in the Temple. God gave him a son who helped him serve in the Temple! When John grew up, he thought of another way to serve God. John decided to convince people to try to live the way that God wanted. John asked them to think about their lives, and to feel sorry for the mistakes they had made. He also offered to help them become better people. He would pray for

them as they stood in the waters of the nearby Jordan River. This was called “baptizing.” The people who went to John could expect to be “reborn” into a better life. After the baptism they would try hard to behave as better people.

John knew that his cousin Jesus was special—God’s own Son! He tried to explain this to the people who came to him for Baptism. One day, Jesus himself came to the Jordan River for Baptism. What a surprise! “I don’t need to baptize you!” he told Jesus. “Please baptize me instead!” But Jesus wanted to honor God. He insisted that John pray for him as he stood in the water. Suddenly, John saw the Holy Spirit come down from Heaven and join with Jesus. From that point on, he asked people to listen to Jesus instead.

**DRAW**



**Saint  
John the  
Baptist,  
pray for us!**