

detail so that you will know what to expect and what is expected of you. We would encourage you to attend services prior to the baptism date to give us all the opportunity to get to know one another better.

What do I do next?

Do not make any arrangements for a party until you have attended the Baptism Preparation Evening and, at that, made a firm Baptism booking... we are often booked up for several months ahead.

PLEASE NOTE that photographs are **NOT** allowed during the service but the Clergy will be happy to be photographed with your child after the service.

St Nicholas Parish Church, Thorne

INTRODUCTION TO BAPTISM

What is Baptism?



Please read this leaflet carefully before you make any family arrangements.

Thank you for asking about having your child baptised. We are pleased that you have thought about this as it is right that you should acknowledge that your child is God's gift to you. So why have you decided to have your child baptised?

Well, there are as many answers to this as there are children but the main reason ought to be that you yourself have a belief in God and that you want to bring up your child within the family of the Church.

During the Baptism Service you will be asked to make some declarations about what you believe and some promises about your intentions for the future. It is important that you think about these promises and whether or not you intend to try to live up to them before you bring your child to be baptised.

The parents and godparents will be asked the following questions:

*Do you turn to Christ?
I turn to Christ.*

*Do you repent of your sins?
I repent of my sins.*

*Do you renounce evil?
I renounce evil.*

These are very clear statements about your Christian commitment which you have to be sure about.

Baptism celebrates the fact that God loves your child and has a place for him or her in his Church. At the same time because the child is too young to answer for themselves, parents and godparents speak on their behalf.

These are not easy promises to make, nor should they be just empty words. You wouldn't dream of neglecting your child's physical needs food, clothing, etc. - so neither should you neglect

his or her spiritual needs. As your child grows he or she needs to be brought regularly to Church to be fed spiritually.

What if we don't feel we can answer these questions honestly – and with a real intention of keeping them?

If you don't feel that you could answer honestly and with the intention of following them through, **then you should think seriously about simply attending a “Service of Thanksgiving” as the occasion for your family celebration instead of baptism.** This involves no commitment on your part, gives thanks to God for your child, asks for his blessing on you as a family, and you will be given a copy of one of the gospels for your child. These services will be arranged to take place in our main Sunday service on the Fourth Sunday of the Month at 10.30am.

When does baptism take place?

If you decide to proceed to Baptism at St Nicholas, the services usually take place on the First, Third and where there is one, Fifth Sundays of each month (except December) at 12.30pm.

What about God-parents?

You should normally have three – we suggest two of the same sex as the child and one of the opposite sex - who will have to make exactly the same declarations and promises as the parents. It is important that you think carefully about who you ask to take on this very important role Just because someone was your bridesmaid or best man doesn't mean they will make good God-parents - they need to have some faith themselves. **PLEASE NOTE: God-parents MUST be baptised themselves and must be over 16 years of age.** (It is possible to baptise God-parents prior to the child's baptism so long as they understand the commitment they are making).

The meaning of Baptism will be explained to you at a Baptism Preparation Evening and you will be taken through the service in