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### ABSTRACT

In this thesis the author examines the recent rites of initiation within the Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Church of England, and Methodist Churches. The object is two-fold: (1) to see whether there has been convergence in the recent liturgical practice and theological understanding of initiation; and (2) to see the extent to which the rites of the present-day mark a deliberate return to the pool of symbolic actions and words that were current in the post-apostolic period (and maybe even earlier).

From the witness of Scripture it is felt that no established practice was being set before us at that time, particularly as the primary role of Scripture is as a witness to Christ rather than as a manual of devotion. The establishing of normative procedures for initiation would seem to be a post-apostolic development which took distinctive eastern and western lines of development.

The Orthodox Church continues to employ the ancient rites which extend back for over twelve hundred years, and its insistence on the unity of baptism, chrismation and eucharist in theological thought and administration is characteristic. The other denominations express in their recent rites the desire to return to an archetypal service, but at the same time wishing to maintain the validity of a fragmented initiation practice. The Church of England, and Methodism which grew from it, show increasing use of ceremonial. Most of this had been removed from the Church of England's liturgy at the Reformation.

Taking note of recent work by the World Council of Churches the author concludes that convergence in liturgy and theology, though incomplete, has taken place; and further, that faithful witness is borne to the practice and understanding of the early Church of the post-apostolic period. Some aspects may date from the New Testament times.

RECENT CHANGES IN THE INITIATION LITURGIES : A COMPARATIVE STUDY

By

Revd. J. H. Davis

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Bibliography

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Revd. John H. Davis  
Team Vicar in the Pocklington  
Team Ministry.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A.S.B.	Alternative Service Book, 1980
B.C.P.	Book of Common Prayer, 1662
C.I.O.	Church Information Office (Publisher)
C.S.L.	Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy
C.U.P.	Cambridge University Press (Publisher)
G.S.	General Synod Report
H.C.	Holy Communion
I.V.P.	Inter-Varsity Press (Publisher)
Moffatt	Moffatt New Testament Commentary
N.T.	New Testament
O.T.	Old Testament
O.U.P.	Oxford University Press (Publisher)
Peake	Peake's Commentary on the Bible, edited by Black and Rowley
S.C.M.	Student Christian Movement Press (Publisher)
S.P.C.K.	The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge
W.C.C.	World Council of Churches

The quotations from Scripture are taken from the Revised Standard Version; the various books are, in some places, abbreviated in the usual manner.

## INTRODUCTION

When I began this piece of research I hoped that the initial chapter would furnish a 'normative' rite of Christian initiation against which present-day liturgical usage could be measured. My hope has been somewhat dashed as I am unable to illustrate a usage which I can confidently describe as 'normative'. My dilemma may best be shown by quoting from a series of rhetorical questions asked by Wainwright (Stud. Lit., vol.10, p.21f): "How far does the New Testament practice of Christian baptism constitute a norm for us? And in what sense? What are we to do in the face of controversial questions to which contemporary New Testament scholarship gives no unanimous answers? (For example: Did the apostolic Church baptize infants? Did the baptismal rite normally include imposition of hand and/or anointing? Was baptism performed by complete submersion?). Are we to take the post-Scriptural Tradition as an interpretative guide? But which stream of tradition? And subject to what doctrinal checks? What difference, if any, is made by variations in historical circumstance as between the apostolic age, any later period in the Christian tradition, and our own times?" In his survey of New Testament passages, K.W.Noakes (p.81) comments: "If we look at the writings of the New Testament we shall find much about the significance of baptism, but little liturgical detail". I share that view. What we now call 'Scripture' cannot be approached as if it was originally intended as a manual of devotion and pastoral practices for future generations. Scholarship has revealed to us that these writings emanated from different localities, at different times, and with different recipients and situations in mind. We must, therefore, exercise caution if we are seeking to derive





principles against which to compare present-day practices and beliefs. If we widen our field of view to include early Church evidence, once again there is no one common usage. Very early in the Church's history western and eastern traditions became established, elements of which can be traced back to scriptural warrant. However, as Kretschmar has shown, if we regard the venerable western pattern of baptismal bath, imposition of hands and eucharist as the sole normative pattern of Christian initiation we are disregarding the evidence available to us. Kretschmar himself says (p.103): "The plurality of possibilities is itself apostolic. On the other hand, however, there is no apostolic norm in a bare immersion, without accompanying rites (nor is it probable that any such thing ever existed) nor is a portrayal of the meaning of the gift given in baptism in a series of ritual acts of itself a process of disintegration". To be fair to the evidence I must, therefore, declare that I have not found a 'normative' rite of Christian initiation in the New Testament or early Church, and I doubt if one is available to us from those times. What I have found is a collection of symbolic actions and words associated with Christian initiation placed in different relative positions by different traditions and sometimes conveying different meanings.

The object of this thesis is to examine the recent changes in the rites of four denominations to see: (1) whether there has been convergence in the recent liturgical practice and theological understanding of initiation; and (2) the extent to which the rites of the present-day mark a deliberate return to the pool of symbolic actions and words that were current in the post-apostolic period (and maybe even earlier).

The selection of denominations for study was not an arbitrary

choice. For reasons of space this M.A. thesis has been restricted to rites in use in England and also to denominations who practice the baptism of infants. I acknowledge that the suitability of infant baptism as a viable expression of Christian initiation is a matter of debate and dispute but, without doubt, the practice of infant baptism can be traced with certainty back to Tertullian (*De Baptismo*, c.200AD) and Hippolytus (*Apostolic Tradition*, c.215AD). Aland and Jeremias came to different conclusions as to whether the practice of infant baptism took place in biblical times, and unambiguous evidence seems unavailable to us. The four denominations chosen represent major traditions present in England: Orthodoxy represents, arguably, the oldest tradition and is by no means a small denomination; Roman Catholicism comes next, followed by the reformed traditions of the Church of England and Methodism (as a representative of the Free Churches).

What do I understand by the term 'Christian initiation'? To initiate something means to begin something, to set something going, or to originate something. To initiate someone means to admit a person into something, be that a society or an office. Both of these elements are covered by the term. Christian initiation is the beginning of a relationship - a vital, developing relationship between an individual and God. Nevertheless, this relationship is also seen in terms of the individual being admitted into the Church, the people among whom the Holy Spirit is seen to be the "Lord and Giver of Life" (*Nicene Creed*).

The terms 'initiation' and 'baptism' are not synonymous. In its narrowest sense baptism denotes the water rite, whereas initiation embraces catechetical preparation, water rite and post-baptismal rites leading to the eucharist itself. I shall try to maintain this distinction in this work.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INITIATION IN THE NEW TESTAMENT AND THE EARLY CHURCH

#### THE NEW TESTAMENT

Wainwright (p.2) has said: "The New Testament scarcely gives a full description of the performance of Christian baptism in the apostolic Church. The Lord's command to baptize, as recorded in Matt.28:16-20, is rather insufficient from the rubrical point of view. Narrative accounts of baptism in the Acts of the Apostles do not provide us with all the details we would wish. Nor do theological references or allusions to baptism in the Epistles allow the practical rite behind them to be unambiguously deduced from them. The New Testament evidence has largely to be interpreted in the light of later practice". This first chapter, then, presents evidence from the New Testament and looks to the developments that took place in the early Church.

Traditionally it is to the end of Matt.ch.28 that the Church has looked for the institution of baptism; however, the issue is not so clear as it may at first seem. There are two poles of thought with regard to this passage. One opinion sees this as the explicit authority for Christian baptism - if Christ had not commanded the practice it would not have been seen so soon after Pentecost (cf Acts 2:38-41). The other sees this command of Jesus as the "language of the Church" (Stendahl, p.798) - there is no such formula elsewhere in the New Testament; rather, baptism is in the name of Jesus alone. The evidence would seem to favour the latter view: Eusebius quotes a shortened form of the verse twenty-one out of twenty-five times; Literary Criticism suggests that the verse is not early; and Historical Criticism suggests that Christ did not institute baptism in the threefold Name, given that

the 'name of Jesus only formula' is the usual form present in the New Testament. Arguments from silence may not be taken as reliable, but perhaps there is a case for believing that if such an important teaching as this had been genuinely delivered to the eleven apostles it would have been used by St. Peter as a reply to those who desired to limit the reception of the Gospel to those who were Jews (Acts 15). We might also expect to hear of it in St. Paul's letters.

The standard editions of St. Mark's Gospel end at v.8 with the words 'ephobounto gar' - a rather strange ending. This has led many people to believe that the original gospel did not end here. The oldest extant manuscript ends at v.8, but some younger ones have a 'long ending' (vv.9-20). With regard to the 'long ending', a tenth century Armenian manuscript ascribes the passage to Aristion, the presbyter named by Papias. There is no strong ground for accepting that the 'long ending' comes to us as a direct quotation of the words of Christ.

Paul is probably the earliest stratum of evidence and his concern is to make clear the tremendous change that takes place within the individual when baptism is received. Noakes sees baptism, for Paul, as "the frontier between two worlds, between two entirely different modes of life, or, rather, between death and life" (p.82). Hence the Christian's lifestyle is contrasted with the 'old Adam' (Rms.5:12ff; 1Cor.15:20ff) and is described as being life 'in the Spirit' rather than 'according to the flesh' (Gals.5:16ff). Paul uses different motifs to express the significance of baptism: it is a burial and resurrection experience (Rms.6:3ff); it is an act of solidarity with Christ (Rms.6:5); and it is an act of 'putting on Christ' as one might put on a garment (Gals.3:27; Col.3:9f).

The letter to the Hebrews contains possible allusions to baptism. At 6:2 occurs the word 'baptismo!', possibly contrasting baptism with other lustrations. If it is such a reference then baptism is here viewed as an 'elementary doctrine' (v.l). At 10:22 we read: "let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water". This may be an expression of outward and inward aspects of baptism.

The first letter of Peter is thought, by some, to contain material from a baptismal homily and alludes to the quality of Christian life. An analogy is made between the Flood and Christian baptism (3:21), baptism being the Christian counterpart of the Deluge.narrative of Gen.ch.6-8. "The water was at once the means of destruction and the agent of salvation" (Moffatt, General Epistles, p.142). Carrington sees evidence in this epistle for a catechism with its morals based on Judaism ('The Primitive Catechism', 1940).

The Acts of the Apostles is generally considered to be the second of a two-part work by the physician, Luke; the gospel which bears his name being the first part. A question-mark has been put against the historical value of Acts. Some scholars (eg Lampe) wish to see Luke as rather more of a theologian than a historian and believe there to be a pre-occupation with presenting the Gentile mission as the climax of the gospel. The passages which refer to baptism do not support the existence of a hard and fast liturgical order. There is particular difficulty in establishing the relationship between the gift of the Spirit and baptism in water. At 2:38 and 19:5f the gift of the Spirit is seen as following upon baptism and the laying on of apostolic hands; at 10:44-48 (and perhaps also 9:17f) the reception of the Spirit

precedes the act of baptism; and at 8:17 and 18:25 there is no apparent connection between the gift of the Spirit and baptism. Noakes claims that while repentance and baptism are necessary (cf 2:38) "it is the reception of the gift of the Spirit which is the decisive mark of the Christian" (p.85). The Samaritans (8:4ff) and the Ephesians (19:1ff) are, therefore, "not really Christians until the Spirit comes upon them at the laying on of the apostles' hands" (p.85). Other interpretations here include that of F.F.Bruce who, referring to the Samaritans, does not see in this incident a sacramental act apart from baptism but rather an "act of recognition and incorporation of the new community of Samaritan believers into the larger community of the apostolic Church, the imposition of apostolic hands being an act of fellowship, which was attended by manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the new converts" (Acts, p.982). Lampe (p.916) sees both these incidents almost as an ordination, as a conferring upon these people the same gifts as received by the Twelve for the purpose of carrying forward the mission.

Pauline authorship of Ephesians is disputed but Eph.1:13f, 4:30 and 2 Cor.1:21f have in common the word 'sphragizomai', which means 'to seal'. Sphragis was a synonym for baptism by the second century (cf 2 Clement 7:6, 8:6). The word was originally used of circumcision but was at some time previously transferred to the Christian counterpart of circumcision. With regard to the Corinthian passage, R.H.Strachan (2 Corinthians, p.59) sees here a commercial analogy. The word translated by 'establishes', bebaion, is a guarantee given by the vendor; goods were sealed for security during transit and a portion of the purchase price, arrabon, was given in advance. Paul and his converts were made over to God through Christ, consecrated, marked with his seal in baptism and

given his Spirit as pledge of the blessing to come. The Ephesian passages again bring out the meaning of the 'seal of the Spirit' as the guarantee of our inheritance, the first installment which promises future payment in full.

The representation of baptism as a 'new birth' in the Johannine Gospel (3:1-15) outwardly differs from the Pauline imagery of 'dying and rising'. However, the basis of the doctrine of rebirth is in the death of Jesus; it is in him that men receive eternal life (vv.14-15). As Barrett (p.82) has said: "Baptism as a life-giving rite arises out of and depends upon the incarnation and death of the Son of Man". One may therefore conclude that there is no absolute division between the Johannine and the Pauline traditions. Some critics have doubted the authenticity of 'hudatos kai' (v.5). Some manuscripts have inserted the words before the pneumatos of v.8; thus it could be argued that they have been inserted into v.5. However, there is no manuscript evidence for their omission and no patristic citation without them. They are, therefore, probably original. With regard to the association of 'water and Spirit', Odeberg (pp.48-71) claims that it is Rabbinic, with water being taken as the 'seed' of the spiritual life (cf Gen. 1:2). Strachan (Fourth Gospel, p.135) argues that a Rabbinic view does not preclude a reference to Christian baptism. If Christian baptism is referred to here, then there is a warning that mere submission to an outward water-rite does not guarantee entry into God's Kingdom; there must be the accompanying inward activity of the Holy Spirit.

There is possible allusion to baptism in the Johannine epistles. T.W.Manson (pp.25-33) suggests that the Spirit, the water and the blood (1 Jn.5:5-8) refer to three stages of initiation corresponding to reception of the Spirit, baptism and eucharist. A different

interpretation takes account of the anti-Docetic tone of 1 John: "it seems best to interpret the water and the blood as referring to key events (baptism, death) in the incarnate ministry of Jesus; as such they join with the Spirit in bearing witness to the reality of that earthly ministry" (Noakes, p.84). Wainwright (p.7) and Whitaker (Docs. of the Baptismal Liturgy, p.xiiiiff) also are dismissive of Manson's suggestion.

Clearly, on the evidence given above, the retrieval of a New Testament liturgical order of initiation 'in toto' is impossible. The best we can hope to achieve is the recognition of at least some of the elements which are more definitely attested in the succeeding century or so. Wainwright (p.2f) states the problem: "On the one hand, one must beware of importing too easily into apostolic practice those features of initiation ritual whose certain attestation dates only from the second or third centuries; on the other hand, one must give due weight to the possibility that the New Testament Church already gave ritual or ceremonial expression to some of the multifarious theological imagery it associated with baptism". Noakes (p.87) is aware of a further difficulty: "It is always difficult to assess to what extent contemporary liturgical practice affected the shape of an incident in the Gospels". In spite of the reservations indicated above there are conclusions to be drawn from the New Testament, and these are given below.

It seems certain that the act of Christian baptism was administered by one person upon another (1 Cor.1:14-17; Acts 8:38) rather than being a self-baptism as was probably the case with Jewish proselyte baptisms. Although at Acts 22:16 the baptismal verb is in the middle voice the predominance of the passive voice elsewhere in the New Testament would, more naturally, suggest



an act administered by another person. It cannot be said for certain that, at this early stage, baptism was by total immersion. Wainwright, however, comments (p.1) that "the primary meaning of 'baptize' suggests that immersion, whether total or less than total, may well have been customary, and the New Testament teaching that in baptism we are united with Christ in his death is better symbolized by immersion than by a simple act of pouring a little water or sprinkling it".

Establishing whether or not a form of words accompanied the baptism in water is difficult. There might be an indication in Eph.5:26 that an order of words did exist in New Testament times, where Christ is said to have cleansed the Church "by the washing of water with the word". The word used for 'word' is rēma, which means 'a spoken word'. There are texts in Acts (2:38, 8:16, 10:48, 19:5) which say that baptism took place in the name of Jesus; whereas Matt.28:19 suggests that baptism ought to be performed in the full Trinitarian name. With regard to the latter many now believe Matthew's gospel to have been written in Syria, and there are documents from the same region and of an early date which witness to a threefold formula (Didache 7; Acts of Xanthippe and Polyxena; History of John the Son of Zebedee). By the late fourth century the Syrian Church had abandoned the active form (I/We baptize....) in favour of the passive form (N. is baptized....). The West probably adopted the active form from Syria before the changeover took place (Whitaker, Baptismal Liturgy, p.7f). However, prior to the West incorporating this formula into its tradition it was characterized by a triple interrogation on the faith accompanied by immersion (Apostolic Tradition 21). The origins of this credal interrogation may well be traceable back to apostolic times. Acts 8:37, probably an early addition to

the original Western text from Irenaeus onwards, suggests an interrogation between Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch; also there may be evidence from 1 Tim.6:12; 1 Pt.3:21. Also, Cullman (pp.71-80) has noted: "how regularly the verb kōluein appears when baptism is referred to". His suggestion is that the formula 'me kōluete auta' (forbid them not) is a technical term used in connection with baptism and perhaps implying the existence of an early liturgical form of words. He quotes Acts 8:36-37, 10:47, 11:17; the Gospel of the Ebionites; and also the synoptic parallels (Matt.19:13-15; Mk.10:13-16; Lk.18:15-17). In the synoptic parallels the situation is one of blessing rather than baptismal. While it may be possible to trace a statement of faith at baptism back into the New Testament, there is nothing to suggest a formal act of renunciation prior to baptism in the apostolic age.

The Acts of the Apostles appear to bear witness to the laying on of hands as a normal and integral part of the initiation procedure, esp. 8:14-17, 19:5-6. Indeed, from the late second century onwards, the former passage has been used to support the belief that the gift of the Holy Spirit is received by the laying on of apostolic hands. However, many modern Protestant scholars (eg Lampe, Beasley-Murray, Dunn) do not follow this view and explain these passages in other ways. Lampe's interpretation has already been mentioned. Beasley-Murray (Baptism in the New Testament, 1962, pp.104-125) regards it as a theological impossibility that the Samaritans could be baptized in Jesus' name and not receive the Spirit (viz. Rms.8:1-2; 1 Cor.12:13; Eph.4:4). Dunn (Baptism in the Holy Spirit, 1970, pp.55-68) sees the Samaritans' state as being due to defective faith, perhaps such as was that of Simon Magus. Whitaker's opinion

(Baptismal Liturgy, p.16) is that "the most we can safely conclude from the New Testament is that the apostles may sometimes have laid hands on the newly-baptized, but not invariably and not of necessity".

Some see evidence for an anointing with oil and signation in oil; this is particularly important to those who hold a two-stage view of sacramental initiation (ie water-baptism followed by imposition of hands and/or anointing for the reception of the Holy Spirit). Wainwright (p.6) asks: "Is the 'anointing' of 2 Cor.1:21 and 1 Jn.2:20.27 a metaphor, or was there an actual anointing? Granted that in Patristic writings the 'seal' commonly means the post-baptismal consignation in oil, are we to take it that 2Cor.1:22 and Eph.1:13 and 4:30 already refer to this ceremony?"

Mitchell (p.16), writing earlier than Wainwright, believes that most writers do not see the references to chrisas and chrisma as actual external rites of anointing. Lampe (Seal of the Spirit, p.81) sees them as metaphorical references to our participation in the Messianic work of Christ through membership in him in baptism. Thornton (p.21) took the opposite view: "the 'chrism' here referred to is definitely a concrete object (as in the Greek version of Ex.30:25). Moreover, in typical Hebrew fashion, this holy oil is personified and actually identified in function with the Holy Spirit". Manson also sees the Johannine references as evidence for the existence of a liturgical anointing; but he believes them to be pre-baptismal, after the Syrian tradition (JTS, vol.48, p.25ff). Manson's position may receive support with fresh work being done on the Syrian baptismal tradition. Holeyton (p.73) comments: "The conclusion of those who have worked on this material is that the primary liturgical image of the Holy Spirit in baptism was originally eschatological. The Spirit

marked the Christian as God's own, conferring sonship, daughterhood, and the royal priesthood. As the eschatological expectation of the Church waned, the primary liturgical image for baptism became that of death and burial. With that basic shift in the primary image of baptism the anointing took place after the baptism and was interpreted as an anointing conferring particular gifts, the water-rite assuming the images of sonship and priesthood formerly associated with the Spirit".

With regard to 'sphragis', seal, we should add to the references mentioned above by Wainwright, Rev.7:3. On this verse Mitchell comments (p.19): "This seal was the mark by which the elect of God could be identified, and it was frequently interpreted as the sign of the cross made in baptism on the forehead of the believers. There is no indication in Revelation that the seal was made with oil, nor that it was in the form of a cross, although the parallel with Ezek.9:4 where the mark of the taw was in the shape of a X would lead to the assumption that a cross (or chi for christos) was made. The identification of this sign with the mark borne by the Christian is already found in Tertullian (Adversus Marcionem III.22; De Corona,3), and, considering the liturgical character of Revelation, it is not impossible that this sealing reflected an existing practice".

#### THE EARLY CHURCH

By the time four centuries had passed distinctive eastern and western rites of initiation were clearly in evidence. These may be portrayed as followed (after Whitaker, Baptismal Liturgy, p.3):

#### Eastern

#### :...Renunciation

1. Apotaxis - renunciation, facing West.
2. Syntaxis - adherence, facing East.

- : Pre-baptismal anointing
  1. of the forehead.
  2. of the whole body.
- : Baptism....."I baptize you in the name...."  
dipping at each Person of the Trinity.

Western

- : Renunciation - no syntaxis.
- : Baptism.....with triple interrogation on the faith, dipping at each question/answer, but no form "I baptize you.....".
- : Post-baptismal ceremonies
  1. prayer for the Holy Spirit.
  2. anointing of the forehead.
  3. imposition of the hand.

Certain features are characteristic of the eastern and western Churches in these early centuries. The syntaxis, the two-part pre-baptismal anointing, and the active baptismal formula characterize the early eastern Church; the Baptismal Instructions of John Chrysostom provide the earliest complete picture (late fourth century). By this time the eastern Church was adopting the passive form, "N. is baptized....", in place of the active. The triple interrogation on the faith and the post-baptismal ceremonies characterize the west; the Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus (c.215) provides the earliest clear picture.

From the late fourth century onwards the exchanging of rites between east and west began to take place. The west adopted the early practice of the east with regard to baptismal formula. They did, however, retain the interrogation on the faith in a position immediately before the baptismal act and so "continued to bear witness to the central importance of faith in the baptized person" (Whitaker, Baptismal Liturgy, p.11). The east adopted western post-baptismal ceremonies. There is a reference in a letter by Grenadius (patriarch from 458 onwards) to the form 'the Seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit'; these are the words which later accompanied the post-baptismal anointing in the Byzantine Church (Barberini Euchologion, c.790). Work by Ratcliff (Studies in

Church History, vol.2,p.32) suggests that the eastern post-baptismal anointing originated with Cyril and is attributable to western influence. Botte (in the above work, p.63ff) suggests that the post-baptismal anointing was adopted by the east as a means of reconciling heretics, who did not need rebaptism, into the Church.

With regard to post-baptismal anointing, imposition of hands, and consignation in the early centuries of the Church the major evidence is as follows: The Didache (c.100) and the First Apology of Justin Martyr (c.160) makes no mention of these things. In the very early third century Tertullian (*De Resurrectione Carnis*) bears witness to the sequence: water-baptism, anointing, signing, imposition of hands and communion. He (*De Baptismo*, 8) believes the Holy Spirit to be conferred at the laying on of the Bishop's hand: "Next follows the imposition of the hand in benediction, inviting and welcoming the Holy Spirit.....". The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus (c.215) knew the sequence: water-baptism, anointing with the oil of Thanksgiving (this, together with the pre-baptismal anointing with the oil of Exorcism, may be performed by presbyters), imposition of hands with prayer, anointing of the head or forehead, and signation of the forehead (these being performed by the Bishop). The locating of the "filling with the Holy Spirit" is uncertain due to there being two version of the prayer which accompanies the laying on of hands. Mitchell (p.4) gives both texts. One text has: "O Lord God, who hast made them worthy to obtain remission of sins through the laver of regeneration of the Holy Spirit, send into them thy grace....."; here the Holy Spirit is associated with the "laver of regeneration", the baptismal bath. The other text has: "O Lord God, who didst count these worthy of deserving the forgiveness of sins by the laver of

regeneration, make them worthy to be filled with thy Holy Spirit and send upon them thy grace....."; here the Holy Spirit is associated with the rites performed by the Bishop. In the following centuries the Byzantine and other eastern rites (excluding East Syrian) make a single post-baptismal anointing the "pneumatological focus" (Wainwright, p.9). This may be performed by a presbyter with episcopally consecrated myron.

Neither the Didache nor Justin Martyr tell us who was expected to administer baptism, but they do indicate where it was to take place. It was to take place preferably outdoors, the Didache specifies running, cold water; if this wasn't available then other water, even warm water, would be acceptable. Tertullian saw it appropriate that the Bishop should be the normal minister, though it may be delegated to presbyters, deacons, and even laymen (De Baptismo, 17). Hippolytus saw the baptismal washing as being the task of the presbyter assisted by the deacon (Apostolic Tradition, XXI:ii) and then the Bishop would perform the imposition of hands and anointing and signation. He, too, specifies that the water should be "pure and flowing" (Apostolic Tradition, XXI:2). In Hippolytus' day immersion was seen to be the preferable mode of baptism; however, from the early third century the dimensions of many baptisteries would not permit total immersion. Cyprian (Letter, 69) allowed the sprinkling of water to be used at the baptism of the infirm; and the Didache allows for pouring if there is not enough water available for immersion.

The earliest witness to the prayer of blessing over the water is Tertullian (De Baptismo, 4): "Therefore, in consequence of that ancient original privilege, all waters, when God is invoked, acquire the sacred significance of conveying sanctity: for at once the Spirit comes down from heaven and stays upon the waters,

sanctifying them from within himself, and when thus sanctified they absorb the power of sanctifying.....". Also, the Apostolic Tradition (XXI:1): "And at the hour when the cock crows they shall first (of all) pray over the water". We don't have texts of the above prayers, but the prayers in later rites took the rich symbolism of water from the Old Testament: the creation narrative associates water and Spirit; the rivers flowing from Eden refreshed the earth; the Flood cleansed and gave a new beginning; the Exodus water was the cause of both life and death; and the water from the rock was a source of life. "By such means the prayers explained the power of water in Christian baptism to convey the refreshment of the Holy Spirit, cleansing from sin, death to past evil, and resurrection to new life. But these benefits do not proceed from the water itself, but from the Passion and Resurrection of our Lord. This is why the prayers often identify the water of baptism with the water which was shed with his blood from the side of Christ, and why the administration of baptism came to be associated with Easter" (Whitaker, Baptismal Liturgy, p.5).

We have already noticed that Hippolytus in the western Church had a pre-baptismal anointing (Apostolic Tradition, XXI:10) with the 'Oil of Exorcism'. The pre-baptismal anointings which characterize the early east were for a different purpose, rather one of protection. From the Baptismal Instructions of John Chrysostom we read: "After these words, after the renunciation of the devil and the covenant with Christ inasmuch as you have henceforth become his very own and have nothing in common with that evil one, he straightway bids you to be marked and places on your forehead the sign of the cross.....In this way does God hold in check all the frenzy of the Evil One.....After he anoints all your limbs with this ointment, you will be secure and able to hold



the serpent in check; you will suffer no harm".

The earliest evidence in the west for an act of renunciation is in the Apostolic Tradition where the devil is addressed by the candidate before entering the baptismal water: "I renounce thee, Satan, and all thy service and all thy works" (XXI:9). In the east the earliest evidence is from Cyril and the Apostolic Constitutions (mid-fourth century). In Cyril's writings the renunciation took place in the 'outer chamber' prior to entering the 'Holy of Holies' for baptism: "I renounce thee, Satan, and all thy works, and all thy pomp, and all thy service" (Mystagogical Catecheses, 1). Invariably in the east the act of renunciation is followed by an act of adherence to Christ, or to the Trinity; the two are known as the Apotaxis and Syntaxis respectively. In the Apostolic Constitutions the wording of the syntaxis begins with: "And I adhere to Christ, And believe and am baptized into one unbegotten Being, the only true God Almighty, the Father of Christ, the Creator and maker of all things....."; it continues in credal form. The western Church did not have a syntaxis; "it had no need of it since a profession of faith was from the beginning closely interwoven with the triple washing of baptism" (Whitaker, Baptismal Liturgy, p.21).

Before baptism could take place preparation was necessary. From the second century we have only scant evidence: the Didache speaks of "the precepts regarding the ways of life and death" and of fasting. By the third century the evidence is greater for a more developed catechumenate. The Apostolic Tradition gives considerable information. There is an initial inquiry: "Let them be examined as to the reason why they have come forward to the faith. And those who bring them shall be witnesses for them, whether they are able to hear" (XVI:2). Certain occupations

were forbidden to Christians, among <sup>them</sup> was magic. Instruction could take up to three years before baptism took place, though "if a man be earnest and persevere well in the matter, let him be received, because it is not the time that is judged, but the conduct" (XVII:2). The catechumens were dismissed prior to the eucharist being celebrated. Further examination of conduct takes place before final preparation for baptism begins. This final preparation included daily exorcism, instruction, fasting, and insufflation (XX). The tradition grew up of postponing baptism until later life; Yarnold notes (p.96): "In the second half of the fourth century, as baptism was deferred, admission to the catechumenate was advanced, and seems sometimes to have been regarded less as a first preparation for baptism than as admission to a second-class membership of the Church".

By the fifth century a catechumen could expect to go through three stages, each one with at least some of the following rites: (1) Admission to the catechumenate with: signation on the forehead, imposition of salt on the tongue, laying on of hands, and exorcism. He could attend the eucharistic assembly, hear the sermon, but be dismissed after the "Prayer of the Faithful". (2) Enrolment as a candidate and preparation for baptism. This would be forty days prior to baptism, for an Easter baptism enrolment would be at the beginning of Lent. The candidate would have scrutinies, exorcisms, instructions, the giving and receiving of the Creed and fasting. (3) Final rites of initiation which might include: the effeta, stripping off of clothes, pre-baptismal anointing, renunciation (and adhesion in the east), baptism, post-baptismal anointing, imposition of hands, consignation, foot-washing, kiss of peace, white garment, lighted candle and entry into the Eucharist carrying milk and honey. This last feature perhaps

recalls the 'promised land', or maybe it is the last vestiges of "the meal in which the Eucharist originated and from which it was soon detached" (Whitaker, Documents of the Baptismal Liturgy, p.7).

Mention of the eucharist is an appropriate note on which to end this material on the early development of the initiation liturgies. It was fully expected that newly-baptized people would proceed immediately to the eucharist to partake of spiritual food and drink. This is true of both the eastern and western Church.

## CHAPTER TWO

### INITIATION IN THE ORTHODOX CHURCH

#### INTRODUCTION

Within the Orthodox Church it is now generally accepted that there are seven sacraments; including Baptism and Chrismation (the equivalent of Confirmation in the western Church). The list has varied considerably during the centuries: John of Damascus speaks of two; Dionysius the Areopagite, of six; and Joasaph, Metropolitan of Ephesus in the fifteenth century, of ten. There is a certain hierarchy recognized among the sacraments; the Joint Committee of Romanian and Anglican theologians at Bucharest, 1935, saw the Eucharist and Baptism to be "pre-eminent among the divine mysteries". Also, as Ware (p.283) tells us, it is not only their pre-eminence which is important but also the close links between them: "An Orthodox who becomes a member of Christ is admitted at once to the full privileges of such membership. Orthodox children are not only baptized in infancy, they are also confirmed in infancy, and given communion in infancy".

The rites which are now used in Orthodox initiation services are a conflation of a number of shorter services, which originally extended from Lent to baptism at the Easter Vigil. However, they are now celebrated together. The following descriptions refer to the Byzantine rite. The oldest surviving liturgical document of the Byzantine rite is a Greek manuscript, the 'Barberini Euchologion', which dates from c.790. This manuscript contains two sets of texts relating to the liturgy of initiation. The first set comprises: two catechetical exhortations or homilies, the renunciation, the profession of faith, and the declaration of adhesion to Christ, which marked the conclusion of the preparation of adult catechumens

to be baptized at Easter. This rite took place on Good Friday under the presidency of the archbishop. Whitaker (Documents, p.69) comments that the literary connection between the above material and the baptismal instructions of St. John Chrysostom is so close as to compel the conclusion that it was written by Chrysostom. The second set comprises: two prayers to be used with infants, the prayer for the making of a catechumen, the pre-baptismal exorcisms, the renunciation, the profession of faith and the adhesion, and then the order of baptism itself. The two prayers for use with infants are one for the sealing of an infant when he receives his name on the eighth day after birth, and one for when the infant comes into church on the fortieth day after his birth.

W.Jardine Grisbrooke (Study of Liturgy, p.118) notes that: "a comparison of the content of this second set of texts with the modern Byzantine baptismal rite reveals that there has been little change for the last eleven hundred years - and probably, from such indications as we have, since long before that". I give two outlines below. The ancient usage is represented by the second set of texts from the Barberini Euchologion, taken from Whitaker's 'Documents of the Baptismal Liturgy', p.73ff. The modern usage is represented by the text given in 'The Sacrament of Holy Baptism - the Greek text with a rendering in English' (Williams and Norgate, London, 1948). The differences between the two rites are not such as to require separate sections for each rite.

## THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY BAPTISM

### Range of the Services

There is no separate rite of infant baptism in the Orthodox Church, the same rite of baptism and chrismation is used for both adults and infants. It is true, however, that although the majority of initiations have been of infants the rubrics presuppose it is adults who are the candidates.

Traditionally, an Eastern Orthodox service of infant baptism and chrismation would be preceded by three other services: Prayers on the first day after a woman has given birth to a child; Naming of the child on the eighth day after birth; and Churching of the mother and child on the fortieth day after the child's birth. Schmemmann (p.131ff) notes that these services are now not always used. The immediately pre-baptismal rite, "The Order for the Making of a Catechumen", is used for both adult and infant candidates before proceeding to "The Order of Holy Baptism" (which includes the sacrament of chrismation). However, both orders take place as part of the same ceremony but the distinction between the two orders is maintained in the modern service-books as the two are printed separately with their own titles.

In the case where a whole family wishes to receive baptism and chrismation this may be accommodated within a single celebration. When converts are to be received into the Orthodox Church, the sacrament of chrismation, understood as a sacrament of reconciliation, is used to receive them (Ware, p.285).

## Form of the Services

In both cases the headings have been provided by me.

### Barberini Euchologion

#### Opening Rubrics

- candidate removes his clothes and shoes, priest turns him east and breathes on him three times, seals his forehead, mouth and breast.

Prayer for making a catechumen.

#### Exorcisms

- threefold (third is in two parts).
- threefold insufflation and sealing during third exorcism.

#### Renunciation of Satan

- rubrics: candidate is stripped and shoes removed, priest turns him to the west, candidate raises his hands.
- threefold renunciation of Satan, all his works, all his service, and all his pomp.
- confirmation of renunciation.
- candidate blows upon Satan.

#### Declaration of Adhesion and Profession of Faith

- rubric: priest turns candidate to the east, candidate lowers his hands.
- adhesion and recitation of Creed (threefold).
- confirmation of adhesion.
- worship of Christ.
- prayer for enlightening, baptismal grace, filling with the Spirit.

at this point an eleventh century manuscript has rubrics including: the patriarch comes from his throne to the baptistery, robes in white vestments and shoes, censes the font and prays while the deacon says the litany and signs thrice with candles.

#### Blessing of the Baptismal Water

- litany (said by deacon) during which the priest prays silently.
- blessing and consecration of the water.
- insufflation and threefold signing of the water with the cross.

#### Pre-Baptismal Anointing with the Oil of Gladness

- threefold insufflation on oil.
- threefold sealing on oil.
- blessing of oil of gladness.
- anointing of the baptismal water in the sign of the cross.
- anointing of the baptizand on forehead, breast, and back by priest.
- anointing of the whole body by the deacon.

#### Baptism

- baptism.
- Ps.32:1.

#### Sacrament of the Chrism

- prayer for the gift of the seal of the Spirit.
- Gals.3:27.

- anointing with Chrism on forehead, eyes, nostrils, mouth, and ears.
- Ps.32:1.

## Eucharist

### The Modern Rite (pub. Williams & Norgate)

#### THE ORDER FOR THE MAKING OF A CATECHUMEN

##### Opening Rubrics

- loosening of girdle, removal of outer garment, head and feet bare, hands down, facing east.
- threefold insufflation on face.
- threefold signing with the cross on forehead and chest.
- laying on of hands on head, saying the following.....

##### Prayer for admission of catechumens (enrolment).

##### Exorcisms

- threefold.
- insufflation on mouth, forehead, and chest during third exorcism.

##### Renunciation of Satan

- turns west, arms upraised, unclad, barefoot.
- threefold renunciation.
- confirmation of renunciation.
- candidate blows and spits at Satan.

##### Declaration of Allegiance to Christ and Profession of Faith

- turns east, hands lowered.
- declaration of allegiance.
  - threefold acknowledgement of Christ.
  - confirmation of acknowledgement.
  - declaration of belief in Christ as King and God.
- profession of faith.
  - recitation of Creed.
- declaration of allegiance.
  - threefold acknowledgement of Christ.
  - catechumen bows in worship.
- prayer for the grace of baptismal renewal and enlightenment.

#### THE ORDER OF HOLY BAPTISM

##### Opening Rubrics

- priest puts on white vestments and cuffs.
- candles are lit.
- font is censed.

##### Blessing of the Baptismal Water

- solemn doxology.
- Greater Litany, during which the priest prays for himself.
- blessing and consecration of the water.
- insufflation and threefold signing of water with the cross.

##### Pre-Baptismal Anointing with Oil of Gladness

- threefold insufflation on the oil.
- signing of the oil with the cross, threefold.



- blessing of the oil of gladness.
- anointing of the baptismal water in sign of the cross,  
threefold.
- anointing of the baptizand on forehead, chest, back in sign  
of the cross, then on ears, feet, and hands.

#### Baptism

- upright, facing east.
- total immersion at each person of the Trinity.
- Ps.32.
- clothing with the white garment.

#### The Sacrament of the Chrism

- prayer for the gift of the seal of the Spirit.
- ascription of glory.
- anointing with Chrism on forehead, eyes, nostrils, mouth,  
ears, breast, hands and feet.

#### Tonsure

##### Procession around the Font

- singing of Gals.3:24.

#### Synaxis

- Epistle: Rms.6:3ff.
- Gospel: Matt.28:16ff.

#### Litany

##### Blessing

- of newly-baptized.
- of congregation.

Prickett and Schmemmann both show the Tonsure and an additional ceremony, the Washing off of the Chrism, succeeding the synaxis rather than preceding it as shown above.

Probably the most marked change in the modern service, when viewed against the ancient Barberini Euchologion, is the presence of a synaxis, litany and blessing rather than a rubric directing the celebration of the holy eucharist. However, W.Jardine Grisbrooke (Dict. of Liturgy and Worship, p.47) informs us that, unless the eucharist is soon to be celebrated, it is still the custom in many Greek churches to give the newly-initiated adults or infants their first communion from the reserved sacrament at the end of the order of holy baptism.

The other major change is that in the older form the

chrismation was more directly juxtaposed to the baptismal immersion than is the case in the modern service. In the latter service the post-baptismal clothing with the white garment intervenes.

Apparently this may not be a universal practice; Argenti (p.65), an Orthodox priest in Marseilles, speaking of the celebration of chrismation today, relates how the prayer of chrismation and anointing "immediately follows triple immersion". W.Jardine Grisbrooke suggests that this, and the placing of the profession of faith in the order for the making of a catechumen rather than in the order of holy baptism, may be due to accidental transpositions in the arrangement of the books (Study of Liturgy, p.119; Dict. of Liturgy and Worship, p.46; respectively).

#### Initiation Discipline

The usual discipline of the Orthodox Church is to require the baptism of infants soon after they have been born. Having said that, we must be quick to note that the Orthodox Church does not follow a practice of indiscriminate baptism. Those who are brought for baptism, or who come as adults, must already 'belong' to the church through Christian parents or sponsors ( a sponsor is required for both infants and adults). As Schmemmann puts it (p.69): "she baptizes only those whose belonging to her is explicit and can be ascertained: it is the 'personal faith' and its confession in the case of the catechumen; it is, in the case of children, the promise and the confession of those members of the Church - parents or sponsors - who have the power to offer their child to God and to be responsible for his growth in the 'newness of life'". Hence there is no sense in which a baptism can be judged to be indiscriminate because the baptism is seen to be coming from within the community of faith. The Orthodox Church sees no inconsistency in the baptizing of infants as well

as adults because it does not adopt a 'rationalistic' approach to baptism. Far from requiring 'understanding' as a condition upon which a baptism may take place, it would rather place 'understanding' as a result of baptism.

The discipline of the Orthodox Church requires administration of the sacrament of baptism to take place by total immersion, or at least by pouring water over the whole of the body; except in emergencies when it suffices to pour water over the forehead alone. Baptism must normally be administered by a bishop or a priest, but, in the event of an emergency, a deacon or any layman or woman (provided they are Christian) may perform holy baptism. However, whoever performs the baptism in such a case must have been baptized himself. Although there is no specified formula for use in emergencies, the established practice is to invoke the threefold name of the Trinity with a triple pouring of water where immersion is inadvisable. If there is no water then the invocation and a 'tossing' of the child in the air will suffice.

Administration of the sacrament of holy chrism must take place with oil blessed by the bishop, though the actual administration may be performed by a priest. This allows the sacrament of holy chrism to follow on immediately from baptism, even in the bishop's absence; whilst still allowing the bishop to be involved through the blessing of the oil. Because of the unavailability of bishops, the western Church fragmented the rites of initiation; confirmation being postponed until a bishop could be present.

The newly-baptized and chrismated should be brought to receive communion as soon as possible; in the case of an infant, communion would be given in both kinds from a silver spoon. This is important to Orthodoxy because the child's "earliest memories of the Church will centre on the act of receiving the

Holy Gifts of Christ's Body and Blood. Communion is not something to which he comes at the age of six or seven (as in the Roman Catholic Church) or in adolescence (as in Anglicanism), but something from which he has never been excluded" (Ware, p.286). We have already noted earlier that the ancient practice of initiation, as evidenced in the Barberini Euchologion, culminated in the eucharistic celebration; whereas the modern rite ends with a synaxis. W.Jardine Grisbrooke has this to say: "With the spread of liturgical reform it is reasonable to suppose that before long the restoration of the baptismal eucharist will be achieved at least in some places, in which case the Byzantine baptismal liturgy will again manifest the integrity of the rites of Christian initiation as they were celebrated in the early Church; as it is, it has for many centuries done so more fully than any of its Western counterparts" (Dict. of Liturgy and Worship, p.47).

#### Theology of the Services

The theological understanding of initiation takes as its starting point a person alienated from God and very much 'of this world' and finishes with the same person reconciled to God, a member of the laos (people of God), and as such one who has become a prophet and a partner in the royal priesthood of Christ with a vocation to act as a conscious witness to the Truth of God: "But you have been anointed (chrisma echete) by the Holy One, and you know everything" (1 Jn.2.20). The rites, whose forms are shown above, begin from the point of conversion - the person has already decided to seek baptism, Christ is already at work in that person's life. It would be nonsensical to speak of personal conversion when the candidate is an infant merely a few days old; and so we face the question at the outset - what faith

or whose faith is the ground for the initiation to take place? Schmemmann answers this as follows: "it is Christ's faith, given to us, becoming our faith and our desire....Baptism does not and cannot 'depend' for its reality (i.e. for truly being our death, our resurrection with Christ) on personal faith, however 'adult' or 'mature' it may be. This is not because of any deficiencies or limitations of that personal faith, but only because Baptism depends - totally and exclusively - on Christ's faith; it is the very gift of His faith, its true grace" (p.67f). Beginning with the ceremonies of the catechumenate and moving through the rite we see the theology of initiation expressed through the liturgy.

The catechumenate would have begun with the enrolment at the beginning of Lent in John Chrysostom's time; now, however, the enrolment opens the baptismal liturgy: "Inscribe him in Thy book of life and unite him with the flock of Thine inheritance". This, together with the fulfilling of the opening rubrics, begins the <sup>ra</sup> transformation of the person. Then follows the ceremonies of exorcism which beseech the Lord to drive from the catechumen all evil spirits and their influence. John Chrysostom calls these words: "awesome and wonderful invocations" (Baptismal Instructions, 2:14). Schmemmann (p.23) writes: "In the baptismal rite, which is an act of liberation and victory, the exorcisms come first because on our path to the baptismal font we unavoidably 'hit' the dark and powerful figure that obstructs this path". In the third exorcism it is asked: "Yoke with his life a shining angel who will protect him against every suggestion of the adversary, against contact with evil, against the hostile powers of the noonday, and against all phantasies". This is followed by an insufflation on the mouth, forehead, and chest; the purity of God is being 'instilled' into the catechumen, even the air that he breathes must be pure.

After the exorcisms the catechumen is now free to renounce Satan and declare his allegiance to Christ and profess the Christian faith.

The renunciations and profession of faith and declaration of allegiance would have taken place either on Good Friday or Holy Saturday, i.e. just before actual baptism. Now they follow on immediately from the exorcisms. "To renounce Satan thus is not to reject a mythological being in whose existence one does not even believe. It is to reject an entire 'worldview' made up of pride and self-affirmation, of that pride which has truly taken human life from God and made it into darkness, death and hell" (Schmemmann, p.30). The catechumen is faced to the west (the symbol of darkness) and is unclad, barefoot (the marks of slavery) but with arms upraised; he "knows from what evil he is being delivered and to what good he is hurrying....." (Baptismal Instructions; 10:15). The catechumen renounces Satan, all his works, all his angels, all adoration of him, and all his pomp - he does this three times and then confirms his decision. He then blows and spits as an expression of his contempt for all that he has renounced. The act of allegiance (adhesion) follows, with the catechumen facing east (the symbol of light) with his hands lowered (an act of submission to God). The Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed (adopted at the Council of Nicea, 325, and completed in Constantinople, 381) is recited as the profession of faith. Originally this was the teaching given daily to the baptizands during Lent (*traditio symboli*) which the candidates recited themselves (*redditio symboli*) on Good Friday after declaring their allegiance to Christ. As the catechumen blew and spat in contempt of Satan, so he now bows in reverence to Christ. The final prayer of the order for making a catechumen seeks the grace of baptismal renewal and enlightenment.

The catechumen is now ready to go forwards to the sacramental act of baptism itself.

The order of baptism begins with the blessing of the water which reveals the true meaning of baptism as "a cosmical, ecclesiological, and eschatological act: cosmical, because it is the sacrament of the New Creation; ecclesiological, because it is the sacrament of the Church; eschatological, because it is the sacrament of the kingdom" (Schmemmann, p.40). The Greater Litany has petitions for the hallowing of the water by the coming of the Holy Spirit; for the descent upon it of the grace of redemption; for illumination by the power of the Holy Spirit; for the averting of every device of evil spirits; and also petitions (in the modern rite) for the baptizand to attain the benefits of baptism: i.e. worthiness of the incorruptible Kingdom; illumination and salvation; inheritance of eternal blessings; membership and partaking of Christ's death and resurrection; regeneration, forgiveness and putting on "incorruption"; and "his and our deliverance from all tribulation, wrath, danger, and necessity...". This latter petition shows that baptism is not a private 'deal' between God and the baptizand, but to do with the whole Church - it is his and our deliverance. While this takes place the priest prays for himself: "lest when I promise freedom to others and also offer it to the faith which has been raised up by Thine ineffable mercy, I myself may become an ignoble servant of sins....".

The blessing and consecration of the water contains five elements as follows: (1) the preface recalls the greatness of God as revealed in creation, and is similar to the eucharistic prayer; (2) the anamnesis recapitulates the saving events by which God has restored human nature, saved the world, and manifested his Kingdom; (3) the epiclesis invokes the descent of the Holy

Spirit; (4) the water is then exorcised by word, insufflation, and signing with the cross. The water, like the person, is exorcised because matter is never neutral and is in need of purification; (5) finally, the water is consecrated, set apart as "a water of redemption, a water of sanctification, a purification of body and soul, a loosening of bonds, a forgiveness of transgressions, an illumination of soul, a washing of regeneration, a renewal of spirit, a gift of sonship, a garment of incorruption, a fountain of life" (these latter words are from the modern rite but are paralleled in the Barberini Euchologion).

After the water has been blessed there follows the pre-baptismal anointing with the 'oil of gladness' of both the baptismal water and the baptizand. The oil is first blessed in a form similar to that of the water and, in the modern service, includes the words: "Do Thou Thyself hallow also this oil with the power and virtue and coming of Thy Holy Spirit so that it become a chrism of incorruption, a weapon of justice, a renewal of soul and body, a defence against all the works of the Devil, and for the release from all evils to those who in faith are anointed with it or who are partakers of it.....". This is the eastern equivalent of the western 'Oil of Catechumens' and reflects the symbol of oil as: medicine; a source of light and therefore joy; and also of peace and reconciliation (it was an olive branch which was brought back to the Ark after the Flood).

The climax, the administration of the sacrament of baptism itself, follows, with the baptizand facing east and being totally immersed at each name of the Trinity with the words: "The Servant of God, N, is baptized in the Name of the Father, Amen; and of the Son, Amen; and of the Holy Ghost, Amen". "If there is no immersion the correspondence between outward sign and inward



meaning is lost, and the symbolism of the sacrament is overthrown" (Ware, p.284). Baptism signifies a mystical burial and resurrection with Christ (cf Rms.6:4-5; Col.2:12), and the outward sign of this is the plunging of the baptizand into the font followed by his emergence from the water. The baptism is both intensely personal and corporate: "In Baptism, the Death and Resurrection of Christ are truly fulfilled as His Death for me, his Resurrection for me, and therefore my death in Christ and my resurrection in Him. The 'Amen' with which the entire Church 'seals' each of the three immersions is the testimony that we have seen and experienced once more that Christ truly died and truly rose again from the dead so that in Him we may die to our mortal life and be partakers - here and now - of the 'day without evening'" (Schmemmann, p.70). The baptizand coming to his baptism desires a radical liberation from 'this world', from its self-sufficiency, and the spiritual death reigning in it. Death has both spiritual and physical components to it; we may be alive physically but dead spiritually - this is, indeed, a 'living death', life separated from God. However, Christ abolished death as a "spiritual reality" (Schmemmann, p.64) and brought about reconciliation between man and his Creator. In baptism we appropriate for ourselves this reconciliation.

In the modern rite the administration of baptism is followed by the putting on of a white garment (cf the unvesting with which the service began). Schmemmann sees this ceremony not merely as a symbol of purity and righteousness, but rather "the radical newness of that purity and righteousness, of that new spiritual life for which the neophyte was regenerated in the baptismal immersion and which will now be bestowed upon him through the 'seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit'" (p.72).

What of the relationship of chrismation to baptism? "The connection between the immersion of Jesus in the Jordan and the manifestation of the Spirit under the appearance of the Dove, between burial in the water and the gift of the Spirit, between Cross and resurrection, on the one hand, and Pentecost on the other, between baptism and chrismation, is so evident that the two sacraments - if one insists on distinguishing them - are habitually administered together even today in the Orthodox Church in the course of the same celebration. It is accordingly by the same prayer that the Church, just before the immersion of the catechumen, asks that he may receive the benefits of baptism and those of chrismation.....This prayer underlines both the close connection and the distinction between the paschal mystery in which we share by baptism, and the mystery of Pentecost, in which we share by chrismation" (Argenti, p.64). Ware (p.285) expresses it thus: "the child, who has been incorporated into Christ at Baptism, now receives in chrismation the gift of the Spirit, thereby becoming a laikos (layman), a full-member of the people (laos) of God. Chrismation is an extension of Pentecost: the same Spirit who descended visibly on the Apostles in tongues of fire now descends invisibly on the newly-baptized". Although chrismation is 'different' from baptism, it is best understood as fulfilling the baptism that has taken place; then both baptism and chrismation find fulfilment in the eucharist as the person shares in the 'Body and Blood of Christ' and has his spiritual life sustained.

The administration of the sacrament of chrismation is by the anointing with Chrism of the forehead, eyes, nostrils, mouth, ears, breast, hands and feet accompanied by the words: "The seal of the Gift of the Holy Spirit". The anointing does not bestow any

particular gift or gifts of the Holy Spirit but "the Holy Spirit Himself as gift (dōrea)" (Schmemmann, p.79). The anointing is described as a 'seal' (cf 2Cor.1:21f); it is the imprint of God upon us to preserve our 'new life'. Schmemmann does not see the meaning as just 'preservation'; it is also our calling to priestly, kingly, and prophetic roles because: "the Holy Spirit is the gift to us of Christ Himself: the King, the Priest and the Prophet" (p.103). Restored man once again has authority over creation in the sense that he is liberated from all that makes man self-sufficient and inward looking. However, the authority is matched by responsibility; while free from 'this world' we must minister to it to bring about its transformation. This can only happen because man has been given the power to discern God's will.

The ceremonies which follow the anointing with Chrism (in the modern service) reflect our going into 'the world' from the baptismal celebrations. Some rites have the removal of the white garment and the washing off of the Holy Chrism; as the newly-baptized and chrismated person goes out, nothing merely external will aid him. The tonsure, the shaving off of hair in the form of a cross, is an act of obedience and sacrifice to God with whom he must stay close by if he is to survive as God would wish.

The meaning of the baptismal procession is largely lost now, as it is reduced to a circular procession around the font and re-interpreted as a symbol of eternity and spiritual rejoicing. It was, originally, the procession of the newly-baptized from the baptistery into the Church led by the bishop to share the eucharist for the first time at the beginning of their 'new life'. Schmemmann explains the link between baptism and eucharist as: "Baptism.... integrates us into the Church. But if the Church's ultimate

being and essence are revealed in and through the Eucharist, if the Eucharist is truly the sacrament of the Church and not only one of the Church's sacraments, then of necessity to enter the Church is to enter into the Eucharist, then Eucharist is indeed the fulfilment of Baptism" (p.117).

In the early Church baptism and Easter were closely linked. Easter provided the 'natural' time of the Church's year during which the symbolism of baptism would be most clearly appreciated. Baptism at cockcrow, followed immediately by the eucharist, "took place at the point where the sternness of the fast and vigil yielded to the rejoicing of that hour in which, according to tradition, the Lord rose triumphant over death, and into the joy of which the sorrow of the cross was merged" (M<sup>C</sup>Arthur, p.167). Tertullian (De Baptismo, 19) shows baptism as usually taking place at Easter, but he does mention the possibility of its celebration at other times. Now, however, the link in time has been severed and all that remains of the Paschal celebration of baptism is the opening rubric of the order of baptism, according to Schmemmann (p.164), where: "The priest entereth and assumeth the white priestly vestments and cuffs, and when all the candles are lighted, he taketh the censer and goeth to the font and censeth around; he then giveth up the censer and worshippingeth".

CHAPTER THREEINITIATION IN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCHINTRODUCTION

The Roman Catholic Church, in common with the Church of England, has undergone a period of liturgical reform after a long period of what could be termed 'liturgical stability'. Because of the different exercising of authority in the Roman Catholic Church when compared with the Church of England, the reforms took place without the series of experiments as seen in the latter Church.

The Latin edition of the Baptism of Children was published by the Vatican in 1969, this was soon followed by the official English translation; the orders for Confirmation and Adult Initiation followed in 1971 and 1972 respectively. Until these dates the official standard text was the *Rituale Romanum* promulgated by Pope Pius V. in 1614.

RITUALE ROMANUM, PIUS V (1614)

Range of the Services

J.D.Chrichton (p.48) wrote of the Rituale Romanum: "Unfortunately it was no more than a work of compilation...The compiler merely took two orders found in the tradition, one longer and one shorter: the longer, which comprises all the ancient rites of the catechumenate in one service, was destined for adults and the other, shorter, for infants". E.C.Whitaker (Bapt. Liturgy, p.83) sees the 1614 rites as broadly comparable with the earlier Sarum rite: the gift of salt, exorcisms, anointing, delivery and return of the Creed, and the insufflation being retained; but he does note that these ceremonies "had originated in a very different world centuries earlier". From the 10th century onwards the custom was to baptize infants as soon after birth as possible with the result that the catechumenate as a separate ceremony finally disappeared, though the ritual observance was retained and compressed into a short space of time. Earlier rites show infants receiving both baptism and confirmation (eg Gelasian Sacramentary, 8th century) and even baptism, confirmation and communion (eg Ordo Romanus XI, late 6th century). By the time of the Rituale Romanum of Pius V the rites of initiation had been fragmented; baptism and confirmation being separate celebrations.

Form of the Services

The services outlined below would be celebrated in Latin; the orders given here are taken from "The Small Ritual - being extracts from Ordo Administrandi Sacramenta with an authorised English version" (Burns & Oates, 1956, London). Note V of the introduction states that: "This extract from the Rituale Romanum is intended to fulfil a twofold purpose: to provide the prayers and formulas of those ceremonies and sacraments which priests perform and administer most frequently,

and to furnish layfolk with a book with which they may follow them in their own language". As infant baptism was the norm it is that rite which I give below; it is followed by the rite of confirmation from the Pontificale Romanum.

### The Rite of Infant Baptism

#### Notes

- (1) - rubric for interrogation.  
- introductory interrogation seeking motive for initiation.
- (2) - exhortation and summary of commandments.
- (3) - exorcism.
- (4) - signing with the Cross.  
- intercession for child.
- (5) - rubric to lay hand on child's head.  
- exorcism.
- (6) - exorcism and blessing of salt.
- (7) - reception of salt.  
- intercession for child.  
- rubric.  
- exorcism.
- (8) - signing with the Cross.
- (9) - rubric to lay hand on child's head.  
- intercession for child.
- (10) - entry into Church.
- (11) - procession to font.
- (12) - exorcism before entering baptistery.
- (13) - insufflation
- (14) - renunciation: threefold form.
- (15) - anointing with the oil of catechumens.
- (16) - cleanse with cotton wool.
- (17) - entry into baptistery.  
- affirmation of faith: threefold form.
- (18) - rubric "calling child by name".  
- interrogation on willingness to be baptized.

- (19) - Baptism: in threefold Name, poured in the form of the Cross.
- (20) - anointing with the oil of chrism.
- (21) - cleansing with cotton wool.
  - the Peace.
  - giving of the white garment.
- (22) - giving of the lighted candle.
- (23) - dismissal.

The Ritual provides for occasions when there are several infants presented: "If there are more children than one to be baptized the boys are placed on the right hand, the girls on the left, and all the prayers are in the plural number. But the interrogations, and all the actions directed the individual, are done to each child in turn and in the singular, first to the boys and then to the girls".

#### The Rite of Confirmation

Confession as part of candidate's preparation.

.....

Bishop prays at altar rail, washes his hands, turns to the kneeling candidates and says: "The Holy Spirit shall come upon you and the power of the Most High shall guard you from sin".

Responses.

Confirmation Prayer: based on Is.11:2, with hands extended towards the candidates.

Name requested by Bishop.

Candidate presented by sponsor.

Anointing with chrism.

The Peace.

Anthem, during which Bishop cleanses his hands.

Responses.

Prayer of Thanksgiving.

Blessing.

#### Initiation Discipline

As mentioned above, from the 10th century onwards, infant baptism



had become the 'usual' method of entry into the Church, with the baptism of adults becoming correspondingly rare. In fact, infants were baptized so soon after birth that the ceremonies of the catechumenate were compressed into a short space of time. This compares with the 8th century when there were two assemblies in Church prior to the baptism taking place. In the *Rituale* the stages of the catechumenate are marked by taking the service at different places in the Church, beginning at the door. If an infant, for serious reasons, had to be baptized privately then the ceremonies of the catechumenate must be celebrated in Church "as soon as this can be done conveniently".

At the outset of the service the priest must check the suitability of the name of the child: "He should make sure that the name chosen for the child is not frivolous and unworthy of a Christian". He must also make sure that the godparents are clear about how to respond during the service. At the baptism there should be one godparent for each candidate, or two at most (one godfather and one godmother); and they must be at least 14 years of age and know the rudiments of the faith.

The ordinary minister at confirmation is the bishop, although he may delegate this to a priest in cases of serious illness. With regard to the age at which a person may be confirmed, the Council of Trent (1545-63) put forward ages from 7-12 years, but indicated a preference for the latter.

With regard to the reception of the holy communion, some ancient rites show infants receiving baptism, confirmation and holy communion at one time. With the fragmentation of the rites the traditional sequence became infant baptism and then confirmation and communion following later. However, as C. J. Walsh comments (p.184), the 'normal' situation is for reception of holy communion to precede confirmation.

Since 1956, members of the Roman Catholic Church have been able to renew their baptismal vows at the Easter Vigil.

#### Theology of the Services

The theology of initiation seen in the Ritual is expressed in two stages corresponding to baptism and confirmation. At both stages the Holy Spirit is deemed to have been given: at baptism for the restoration of innocence and new birth; and at confirmation for strength to live a Christian life and witness to others. Whitaker sees the distinction between the gift of the Holy Spirit at baptism and at confirmation as a rationalization of the situation where baptism takes place in infancy but confirmation at a later date.

Throughout the baptism the godparents speak as proxies for the infant; one of the opening rubrics has: "the priest addresses the child by name" - but it is the godparent who answers. In the confirmation service the godparent must place his/her right hand on the right shoulder of the candidate (cf. at baptism where the godparent must be in contact with the infant at the actual moment of baptism) affirming continuing support as the candidate speaks for himself.

The baptism service begins at the Church door with the priest vested in a purple stole, both features are significant - this is a time of preparation. The opening interrogation reveals that the infant seeks faith which will lead to everlasting life. The first stage in the restoration of innocence is achieved by the driving out of evil and replacement by the Holy Spirit. This is achieved by several exorcisms involving breathing into the child's face, the use of the sign of the Cross, laying on of hands and the use of salt (which is exorcised, then blessed, and a little being placed in the infant's mouth as a sign of wisdom).

The child is then led into the Church with the words: "Come into the temple of God, that your lot may be with Christ in life eternal". There is further exorcism and the insufflation (cf Mk,7:34) followed by the renunciation of Satan, all his works, and all his pomp. The restoration of innocence is completed by the anointing with the oil of catechumens on the breast and between the shoulders in the form of a Cross with the words: "I anoint you with this saving oil in Christ Jesus our Lord, that you may have eternal life". This follows an ancient tradition: St. Ambrose was the first to associate this anointing with the one athletes received centuries ago. The anointing with the oil of catechumens is to aid them in the struggle to live as Christians. It is a token of divine help.

The priest changes his stole for a white one and they enter the baptistery where the infant affirms his faith (through the godparents) in the words of the Creed. A final interrogation ensures that the child is willing to be baptized. The child's name is used at this point thus showing that baptism is not a 'naming' ceremony. The actual baptismal act is administered by the pouring of water three times in the form of a cross at each person of the Trinity. This is followed by anointing with the oil of chrism and accompanied by the words: "May Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has given you new life through water and the Holy Ghost, and forgiven you all your sins himself anoint you with saving Chrism in the same Jesus Christ our Lord, that you may have eternal life. Amen". Other ceremonies after baptism are the Peace, the Giving of the White Garment (with the command: "See that you carry it without stain before the judgment seat of our Lord Jesus Christ"), and the Giving of the Lighted Candle.

The work of grace begun in baptism is continued in confirmation, which the Council of Trent acknowledged as one of the seven sacraments

instituted by Christ. At the heart of the service is the confirmation prayer and associated responses; the prayer includes the words: "Send down upon them from heaven the Holy Spirit" - these being based on Isaiah 11:2. These are said with the bishop's (or his delegate's) hands stretched out towards the candidates. There is also the anointing with chrism with the accompanying words: "N, I sign thee with the sign of the Cross and I confirm thee with the Chrism of salvation. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen". This formula can be traced to the Roman Pontifical of the 12th century. One ceremony after the confirmation is the striking of the cheek of the candidate by the bishop with the accompanying words: "Pax tecum". This is symbolic of the suffering which the candidate will undergo for Christ.

It is noticeable that nowhere during the confirmation service do the candidates make a renewal of the vows they made by proxy at baptism.

In these rites we have, very clearly, a two-stage initiation procedure. Baptism does not hold out to the infant complete sacramental initiation, the special gift of the Holy Spirit given at confirmation is also required. However, as noted above, reception of communion often precedes the sacrament of confirmation.

## THE POST-VATICAN II RITES

Hinchliff sees the Roman Catholic process of revision as much more systematic than in the Anglican Church in that theological issues preceded revision of liturgy; this, he says, "has considerable advantages over a system which allows the revising liturgical committee to deal with the theology in passing" (p.140). The Second Vatican Council (1962-5) was called by Pope John XXIII, who died after the first session, with the intention of renewing the life of the Church and bringing up to date its teachings, discipline and organization. The unity of all Christians was the ultimate goal. Pope Paul VI continued the Council, and the second session (Sept. - Dec. 1963) promulgated the 'Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy' (C.S.L.). This endorsed the use of the vernacular in place of Latin and set out the lines which revision should take: the faithful should understand the liturgy; language and ceremonies should be understandable; the catechumenate should be restored; the infant baptism rite should be revised and "adapted to the circumstance that the baptized are in fact infants" (Whitaker, Bapt. Liturgy, p.84); the roles and duties of parents and godparents should be more clearly shown in the services; and the rite of confirmation should be revised so that "the intimate connection which this sacrament has with the whole process of Christian initiation is to be more clearly set forth" (C.S.L., III, 21).

### Range of the Services

The new services are of wider scope than the old and take into account varying pastoral situations.

There are five services of adult initiation: (1) Rite of the Catechumenate received in stages; (2) Simple rite of adult initiation; (3) Short rite of adult initiation in proximate danger of death or at the point of death; (4) Preparing uncatechized adults for confirmation and the eucharist; (5) Rite of initiation for children of catechetical age.

There are six services for child baptism: (1) Rite of Baptism for several children; (2) Rite of Baptism for one child; (3) Rite of Baptism for a large number of children; (4) Rite of Baptism administered by a catechist when no priest or deacon is available; (5) Rite of Baptism for children in danger of death when no priest or deacon is available; (6) Rite of bringing a baptized child to the Church.

There are two services of confirmation, one inside and one outside Mass.

### Form of the Services

The rite of adult initiation given below is the archetypal rite.

#### Rite of the Catechumenate received in stages

##### FIRST STAGE: RITE OF BECOMING CATECHUMENS

#### Introductory Rite

- rubrics.

#### First instruction

- greeting to candidates.

#### Opening dialogue

- interrogation for name and motive.

#### First Promise

- willingness to be led by Christ.
- willingness of godparents and congregation to assist candidates.

#### Exorcism and Renunciation of Non-Christian Worship

- exorcism.
- insufflation.
- renunciation.
- congregational response.
- prayer of praise/thanksgiving.

#### Signing of the Forehead and Senses

- signing with the Cross on the forehead.
- signing with the Cross on the Senses.
- prayer of intercession for candidates.

#### Giving the New Name

#### Additional Rites

#### Entry into the Church

- welcome.

#### Celebration of the Word of God

- address on the dignity of the Word.

#### Readings and Homily

Presentation of the Gospels

Prayer for the Catechumens

Concluding Prayer

Dismissal of the Catechumens

Celebration of Eucharist (after dismissal)

SECOND STAGE: RITE OF ELECTION OR ENROLMENT OF NAMES

- notes.

Presentation of Candidates

- rubric.
- interrogation.

Examination of Candidates

- request to receive sacraments of entry.
- enrolment.

Admission or Election

- exhortation to godparents.

Prayer for Elect

Dismissal of Elect

Celebration of Eucharist (after dismissal).

Between this and the next stage is "The Period of Purification and Enlightenment or Illumination" consisting of three Scrutinies, the Presentations, and the Preparatory Rites.

THIRD STAGE: CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION

Celebration of Baptism

Instruction by the Celebrant

Litany

Blessing of the Water

Renunciations: threefold form (three orders available).

Anointing with the oil of catechumens

Profession of faith: threefold form.

Baptism: by immersion, infusion, or pouring in threefold Name.

Explanatory Rites

Anointing with Chrism (if no confirmation following).

Clothing with the White Garment

Presentation of the Lighted Candle

Celebration of Confirmation

- notes.

Address

Exhortation to pray

Confirmation prayer: based on Is. 11:2, with hands laid on candidates.

Confirmation; by anointing with Chrism.

Peace

Celebration of the Eucharist

- notes.

The Period of Post-Baptismal Catechesis or Mystagogia

- meet together, take part in community, be prayed for.

The short rite is similar to the rite of child baptism with the addition of confirmation and communion. The rite for use in emergencies consists of a dialogue, prayer, renunciation of sin and profession of faith, Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Communion.

The form given for the baptism of children is that where only one child is presented for the sacrament.

Rite of Baptism for One Child

Reception of the Child

- notes.
- interrogation.
- signing with the Cross.
- procession.

Celebration of God's Word

Scriptural Reading and Homily

- readings (various).
- homily.
- \*- silence (or later)

\* this denotes optional use if appropriate.

Intercessions (Prayers of the faithful)

- various intercessory prayers.
- invocation of saints.
- \*- silence (if not earlier).



Prayer of Exorcism and Anointing before Baptism

- prayer of exorcism
- \*- anointing with the oil of catechumens.
- procession to baptistery or sanctuary.

Celebration of the Sacrament

- introduction.

Blessing and Invocation of God over Baptismal Water.

- prayer of blessing and invocation (various).

Renunciation of Sin and Profession of Faith

- introduction.
- renunciation: threefold form (two orders available).
- profession of faith: threefold form.
- congregation and priest affirm their faith.

Baptism

- rubric.
- final interrogation.
- Baptism: in threefold Name by triple pouring or immersion.

Anointing with Chrism

Clothing with the White Garment

Giving of the Lighted Candle

\*Ephphatha, or Prayers over Ears and Mouth

- continue with Mass at offertory, or ....

Conclusion of the Rite

- baptismal song, procession to altar.

Lord's Prayer

- address.
- Lord's Prayer.

Blessing (various).

In an emergency when no priest or deacon is available, the minister (who may be any suitable congregation member) uses the Prayers of the Faithful, Profession of Faith, Baptism, \*White Garment, and concluding with the Lord's Prayer. In extremity, water is poured onto the child with the baptismal formula.

The confirmation rite given below is that within the Mass.

Rite of Confirmation within Mass

Liturgy of the Word

- lessons for the Mass of the day, or special lessons.

Sacrament of Confirmation

Presentation of the Candidates

Homily or Instruction

Renewal of Baptismal Promises

- renunciation: single form.
- affirmation of faith: fourfold form.
- proclamation of the faith of the Church.

The Laying on of Hands

- prayer of intercession for candidates.
- silence.
- rubric to extend hands over all the candidates.
- confirmation prayer: based on Is. 11:2.

The Anointing with Chrism

- rubric giving candidate's name to Bishop.
- anointing.
- Peace.

General Intercessions

Liturgy of the Eucharist

- follows usual order but with reference to the newly-confirmed.
- adult candidates and those concerned with them receive communion in both kinds.

Blessing, or Prayer over the People

Sagovsky writes: "Infant baptism may still be the more frequent practice in England, but the situation is changing rapidly, and there has arisen in Western society a need for a restored catechumenate" (p.16). In fact, there has been a working catechumenate for adults in the French Roman Catholic Church since 1953. The fulfilling of this need has been one of the biggest changes in the form of initiation, together with a corresponding simplification of the child rite. Hence,

there are now available for use in the preparation of adults the ceremonies that had been evolved by the 5th century. These are to be used as what Sagovsky calls "a quarry and a framework within which there may be substantial local variation" (p.16). Indeed, authority has been granted to the Episcopal Conferences to order their own form of service based on the Roman model (subject to review by the Apostolic see) but taking into account the needs and customs of their own people. So some ceremonies may be omitted (such as some of the exorcisms, the anointing with the oil of catechumens, the effeta) or the alternative formula used. The restoration of the catechumenate to take place over a substantial period of time and the celebration of baptism, confirmation, and eucharist as a unity is to be seen as archetypal. Also, it is possible for whole families to be baptized together.

In both the adult- and the child-only service, water is now blessed at each celebration rather than at the Easter vigil only. The renunciation of Satan and profession of faith now occur together, a departure from the old order, where the renunciation took place along with the exorcism. In the pre-baptismal rites of the adult service, however, there is still a renunciation for use "wherever false worship flourishes".

As noted earlier, the service for the baptism of children is now adapted to the situation where the baptizands are actually children. The pre-baptismal ceremonies have been drastically reduced, with a signing of the Cross during the 'Reception of the Child' and a single exorcism and optional anointing with the oil of catechumens during the 'Celebration of God's Word'. The new services allow for the provision of a creche so that the liturgy of the Word may be heard uninterrupted. A feature of this part of the service is the wide range (21) of lessons

to choose from, and the parents may choose their own lessons. The service has a longer conclusion than in the past; after the Giving of the White Garment, and Lighted Candle, there is now an address to the parents and godparents, the Lord's Prayer, and Blessings for mother, father, and congregation.

The striking feature of the confirmation-only service is the addition of the renewal of baptismal vows; and also the form of words for confirmation has changed, now following the Byzantine form. In common with the other services there is now a wider choice of readings (29) that may be used.

#### Initiation Discipline

It is in the area of the archetypal adult initiation that the greatest change is seen: there being three stages to pass through - which may take a number of years. The first stage is that of becoming a catechumen and receiving instruction; this stage continues "until they have matured sufficiently in their conversion or faith. If necessary, it may last for several years" (Note 98). The second stage begins at the start of Lent (preferably the first Sunday in Lent) with the rite of election or enrolment of names. During Lent are the Times of Purification and Enlightenment which include: Scrutinies (on the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Suns. in Lent), Blessings, Exorcisms, Presentations (at weekday Masses during the week following the first and third scrutiny). This stage culminates in the Preparatory Rites of Holy Saturday. The third stage is the actual sacramental initiation during the Mass of the Easter Vigil. These stages are not hoops to be 'got through' but a flexible schema for various situations and takes special account of where conversion is from a heathen background. After Easter there is post-baptismal catechesis where the new members are encouraged to take part in community life, to meet together on the

anniversary of their baptism, to meet the bishop once a year, and to celebrate Pentecost.

Walsh (p.167) comments: "Many will be tempted to dismiss the entire liturgy as impractical, unnecessary, artificial, and excessively complex, something which could only have been devised by academics and romantics quite out of touch with pastoral realities. But they should be reminded that the catechumenate was successfully restored in France as long ago as 1953, and that the leader of the group which produced the new rite has had twenty year's experience of running such catechumenates. Organized catechumenates exist in every diocese in France and are staffed by qualified personnel". The simple rite of adult initiation is to be used where all concerned are convinced of the candidate's maturity and sincerity.

The congregation are now recognized as taking an important part in the initiation of new members, both of adults and infants. The rites are public and the congregation must encourage the new members in their new life. With regard to children, the rite states that: "before and after the celebration of the sacrament, the child has a right to the love and help of the community" (Note 4, Introduction to the Baptism of Children).

The baptism of children should take place on a Sunday, even during Mass "though this should not be done too often" (Note 9, Introduction to the Baptism of Children). The celebration should involve the community; if the congregation cannot be there then the relatives, friends and neighbours should attend.

The baptism of a child as soon as possible after birth is now not the only consideration in arriving at the time for baptism. The appropriate time is worked out by considering: "the health of the child (is there any danger in waiting?), the health of the mother

(the Ordo is emphatic that parents must be present at the rite), time to prepare parents so that they understand their obligations, and time to organize the celebration (family and community should be present). The Ordo also discusses the situation of parents who do not have adequate faith to make the promises, or who have shown that they do not bring up their children as Christians. There is no question of baptism being refused, but delay is advocated until such time as the priest sees fit to proceed" (Sagovsky, p.11). Baptism makes children the "responsibility of the community as a whole and the parents in particular" (Prickett, p.57), and so parents are asked to make a genuine commitment; at the beginning of the service the opening interrogation includes: "You have asked to have your child baptized. In doing so you are accepting the responsibility of training them in the practice of the faith. It will be your duty to bring them up to keep God's commandments as Christ taught us, by loving God and our neighbour. Do you clearly understand what you are undertaking?". Also the godparents are asked if they are ready to help the parents in their duty.

Baptism is to be administered by pouring or immersion, but immersion is to be preferred as a more suitable symbol of participation in the death and resurrection of Christ. In cases of emergency anyone may perform the baptism, and instruction should be given on how to do this. In more normal circumstances, the ordinary minister should be the bishop, or those to whom he has delegated the task.

Those who have been baptized as children may be confirmed at about the age of 7 years, though this may be varied and especially where there is danger of death. During the rite, candidates are now required to make a renewal of their baptismal vows in the presence of

the congregation, minister, and their sponsor (who must be a mature Catholic). As with baptism, the provision exists for bishops to delegate administration of confirmation to priests.

#### Theology of the Services

Although there have been many ritual changes in the recent Roman Catholic Rites, these do not imply a substantial change in theology. Notes 1 and 2 from the general introduction to Christian initiation in "The Rites" (p.314) explain succinctly the Roman Catholic understanding of initiation:

"(1) Through the sacraments of Christian initiation men and women are freed from the power of darkness. With Christ they die, are buried and rise again. They receive the Spirit of adoption which makes them God's sons and daughters and, with the entire people of God, they celebrate the memorial of the Lord's death and resurrection.

"(2) Through baptism men and women are incorporated into Christ. They are formed into God's People, and they obtain forgiveness of all their sins. They are raised from their natural human condition to the dignity of adopted children. They become a new creation through water and the Holy Spirit. Hence they are called, and are indeed, the children of God.

"Signed with the gift of the Spirit in confirmation, Christians more perfectly become the image of their Lord and are filled with the Holy Spirit. They bear witness to him before all the world and eagerly work for the building up of the body of Christ.

"Finally they come to the table of the eucharist, to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man so that they may have eternal life and show forth the unity of God's people. By offering themselves with Christ, they share in his universal sacrifice: the entire community of the redeemed is offered to God by their high priest. They pray for a greater outpouring of the Holy Spirit so that

the whole human race may be brought into the unity of God's family.

Thus the three sacraments of Christian initiation closely combine to bring the faithful to the full stature of Christ and to enable them to carry out the mission of the entire people of God in the Church and in the world".

For adult converts, baptism, confirmation, and communion should be celebrated as a unity; but this is not the case for infants or children. With the fragmentation of the initiation rites Walsh (p.178) sees confirmation, in particular, left as "something of an orphan, ritually insignificant, pastorally unstable, theologically uncertain and seemingly superfluous"; he goes on to say: "What must be stressed is that this separation of the sacraments in the West owed nothing to theological considerations, and their 'theologies' were only subsequently elaborated to explain an established pastoral practice".

As noted earlier the confirmation formula was changed; on 15th August 1971 Pope Paul VI decreed and laid down that in the future: "The sacrament of confirmation is conferred through the anointing with chrism on the forehead, which is done by the laying on of the hand, and through the words, 'Receive the seal of the Gift of the Holy Spirit'" (Apostolic Constitution on the Sacrament of Confirmation). The words, "Receive the seal . . .", and the content of the renewal of baptismal vows, and the declaration that the Holy Spirit "who came upon the apostles at Pentecost and today is given to you sacramentally in confirmation", suggests that the Holy Spirit is indeed given in the administration of the rite. Hardon (p.517) comments: "What the Church wishes clearly to manifest is the transmission of the Holy Spirit, by apostolic genealogy going back to Pentecost, through the symbolism of consecrated hands being laid on the head of the one receiving the Gift of God. Pope Paul VI saw that the most important ritual



action of anointing with chrism "in a certain way represents the apostolic laying on of hands" (Apostolic Constitution on the Sacrament of Confirmation). There is, therefore, a distinction to be made between the laying on of hands preceding the sacrament and the laying on of the hand which is essential to it. Walsh finds the use of symbols in this rite confusing (p.178f).

While the theology ascribed to confirmation would seem to be clear, Whitaker notes (Bapt. Liturgy, p.88) that "some commentators point out that the meaning attributed to baptism is so full and rich that confirmation can add nothing to it, but can serve only to make explicit what has already been done in baptism". It is possible, too, to use the same readings at confirmation that were used at the baptism of children.

Walsh suggests (p.178f) that the term "renewal of vows" in the confirmation service is a misnomer - the grounds for this being that baptismal vows are no longer taken by a child through proxy, but are the expression of the parents'/godparents' own faith; hence the vows taken in confirmation are really 'first-time' vows. Another anomaly that Walsh points to is the practice of receiving holy communion prior to confirmation - the point being the question of what further gift of strengthening is required when a person receives his communion.

For adults the beginning of the initiation procedure ( in the full rite) is seen as a 'pre-catechumenate' when the person hears the Gospel and responds to it. This response leads on to the catechumenate itself when he receives a complete catechesis; then comes the period of purification and enlightenment in Lent for a more profound spiritual preparation. This is followed by the celebration of the sacraments and a post-baptismal catechesis which is marked both with the new experience of receiving communion and of living within the Christian community. The understanding behind this procedure is seen in

Note (1) of the introduction to adult initiation where the candidates are said to "hear the preaching of the mystery of Christ, the Holy Spirit opens their hearts, and they freely and knowingly seek the living God and enter the path of faith and conversion. By God's help they will be strengthened spiritually in their preparation and at the proper time they will receive the sacraments fruitfully".

Kavanagh (p.47) believes that the new Roman rites of adult initiation may emerge as "one of if not the most important results of the Second Vatican Council. I think this not because of its ceremonial details, but because of the fundamental vision it projects of the Church as a community of faith lived in common". His appraisal of the new provisions is expressed thus (p.47): "The Ordo's concern lies not with providing recipes to counteract immediate problems in the short term. Its concern seems rather to be with the 'lebensprobleme' that lie at the heart of Christian life in all its aspects - liturgical, ethical, doctrinal, ministerial and ecclesial. Its purpose is to reinforce where possible and recreate where necessary insights and structures that may integrate once more facets of that life which have wandered away from each other for a variety of reasons. Re-integration of these facets again into an economy of unique and practical richness in which the divine initiative and faithful human response can meet and be sustained to a degree not attainable for centuries would alone mark this document as a major event in the lives of all Churches and all Christians everywhere".

It has been noted above that the congregation has a fuller and more responsible role to play in initiation by training and encouragement of candidates. This is true in the case of both adults and children; but with children more responsibility still lies with parents and godparents, and in particular the parents. It is the parents who ask for baptism for their child, it is they who sign

their child with the Cross after the priest ( the godparents may also), it is they (with the godparents) who renounce Satan and profess their own faith, it is they who carry the child to the font, it is they who hold the lighted candle, and it is they who receive a blessing at the end of the service. The congregation show their responsibility by professing their faith as the faith of the Church: "This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church. We are proud to profess it, in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen". The responsibility of all concerned to see that the child grows in the faith is explained in Note (3) introducing the Baptism for Children: "To fulfil the true meaning of the sacrament, children must be later formed in the faith in which they have been baptized. The foundation of this formation will be the sacrament itself, which they have already received".

In both the adult and infant situations baptismal exorcism is retained as having an important part to play. Fischer, B. (p.55) notes: "Catholic liturgical reform has sought a middle way between a traditionalist taking over of archaic and no longer practical formulae, on one side, and on the other a modernistic reduction to meaninglessness of religious convictions which, in the judgment of the revisors, are basic to the New Testament understanding of the Cross and of baptism".

The post-baptismal ceremonies are the same in both the adult and child situations: the anointing with chrism in the words: "As Christ was anointed Priest, Prophet, and King, so may you live always as a member of his body"; the giving of a white garment as a sign of Christian dignity and duty; and the giving of a lighted candle as sign of enlightenment.

As in the older rites the name of the child is required at the outset of the service, thus avoiding any confusion of baptism with that of naming the child. In the more recent rites there is greater flexibility as to where the different parts of the service take place;

the point would seem to<sup>be</sup> that of deciding between the 'right place' and the suitability of that place given the numbers present and other local factors. For example, the baptism itself should take place in the baptistery if it is big enough, or at another suitable place in Church if not.

Given that the emphasis on immediate baptism after birth has lessened, the question remains as to what happens to the child who dies unbaptized. It may be implied from the Second Vatican Council's Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, II 16, that if a person dies unbaptized "through no fault of their own" then that person will have the opportunity of reaching heaven. However, Harden (p.510) points out that the teaching of two ecumenical Councils (Lyons, 1274; Florence, 1439) is that "even those who die with only original sin on their souls cannot reach the beatific vision". Ambiguity over this issue would seem to be a guarantee for the continuance of infant baptism for the time being.

CHAPTER FOURINITIATION IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLANDINTRODUCTION

Until 1st May, 1966, the only services which were lawful for use were those of the 1662 Book of Common Prayer (B.C.P.), plus certain parts of the 1928 Deposited Book. From that date the Prayer Book (Alternative and Other Services) Measure, 1965 came into force which gave authority for the sanctioning of alternative services for experimental use. The outcome of the period of experiment is the initiation services contained within the Alternative Service Book 1980 (A.S.B.). The roots of these revisions, however, reach back to a series of reports from the 1940s and 1950s: "Confirmation Today", 1944; "Baptism Today", 1949; "Baptism and Confirmation Today", 1954. When the Liturgical Commission was appointed in 1955, its first major task was to examine the initiation services; the result of which was the report, "Baptism and Confirmation - a report submitted by the Church of England Liturgical Commission to the Archbishops of Canterbury and York in November, 1958". The services proposed in this report were not acted upon until 1966, when a revised version of them was completed in December of that year. In the meantime, the 1928 initiation services had been authorized as the Series I experiment, with the exception of the confirmation rite. This service could not be legally used as its authorization failed in the House of Laity. September 1967 and February 1968 saw the authorization of the Liturgical Commission's revised services as the Series II experiment.

Before the publication of the Series III services in 1979, there was a period of debate based upon two reports: the Ely Report (1971), and the Cornwell Report (1974). These recommended that the Church should make explicit its recognition of baptism as the full and complete

rite of Christian initiation, and that confirmation be retained as a service of commitment and commissioning for use at a suitable age in adult life. Also recommended was that it be made possible for someone to receive holy communion without having first been confirmed. These, and other recommendations, were quashed in the General Synod of November, 1976. As a result, the Series III (and the later A.S.B.) services were prepared with little reference to these reports.

THE RITES OF 1662

## Range of the Services

Infant Baptism was certainly the norm at this time, and two of the three baptism services relate to infants: one being for public use in Church, the other for private use in time of need. The other baptism service is for adults. This was provided primarily because of the growth of Anabaptism; secondary reasons being that English colonial activity resulted in children growing up unbaptized, and also that adult converts were being won through missionary work. The other service is an order of confirmation.

## Form of the Services

The Ministration of Public Baptism of Infants: to be used in Church

- rubrics.
- invitation to intercede for child.
- 2 prayers for child.
- reading: Mk.10:13ff.
- exhortation upon reading.
- prayer: thanksgiving and supplication for congregation, intercession for child.
  
- rubric for interrogation.
- introduction to interrogation.
- renunciations: single form.
- affirmation of belief: Apostles' Creed, single form.
- affirmation of willingness to be baptized in this faith.
- promise of obedience.
- prayer of intercession for child.
  
- prayer for Blessing of the Water.
  
- rubric for naming child, administration by dipping or pouring.
  
- Baptism: threefold Name.
- formula for reception/signing with the Cross.
- introduction to thanksgiving.
- Lord's Prayer.
- prayer of thanksgiving and intercession for child.
  
- rubric for exhortation to godparents.
- exhortation on duties of godparents.
- instruction to bring to confirmation.
  
- rubrics.

When the order for private baptism is administered, such elements of the public service are used as time will allow; the essential item of the service is baptism in the Trinity. If the child survives, then the promises and exhortations are required to be made when the child is brought to the Church to be "received into the Congregation of Christ's flock" and to have the baptism certified.

When the adult service is being used, the only major differences are that the promises are made personally, and a different reading (Jn.3:1ff) is used.

The Order of Confirmation: or laying on of hands upon those that are baptized and come to years of discretion

- preface: based on Catechism.
- renewal of vows.
- responses.
  
- Confirmation prayer: based on Is.11:2.
- rubric to lay hand on candidates.
- Confirmation.
- response.
  
- Lord's Prayer.
- collect.
- prayer of supplication for congregation.
- Blessing.
  
- rubric for admittance to Holy Communion.

Initiation Discipline

The rubrics at the beginning of the baptism services provide the main elements of the discipline. Infant baptism is seen to be the normal initiation procedure. This must take place on Sundays or Holy Days, the only exception being "if necessity so require". It must take place in the vernacular and when the largest congregation is present to act as witnesses to the baptism. Godparents must be appointed and notice given to the Curate. The length of notice is small; "the parents shall give knowledge thereof overnight, or in the morning before the beginning of Morning Prayer, to the Curate".

Any baptism must normally take place in Church, except where there



is "great cause and necessity"; it must also be administered within a fortnight of birth "unless upon a great and reasonable cause, to be approved by the Curate". If the baptism has to take place at home, then the local minister will normally be the officiant; in dire need "any other lawful Minister that can be procured" may perform a shortened service, with the child being named by someone present. This emphasizes that private baptisms were meant to be in emergencies only. Whenever a private baptism in the home has taken place, if the child survives this must be certified in Church in front of the congregation.

In the case of adult baptism, at least a week's notice must be given to the Bishop (or to whom he delegates the task) to allow for examination of the candidate and for preparation by prayer and fasting. If at any time there is doubt as to whether or not a person has been baptized, then a conditional form of baptism may be used; i.e. "If thou art not already baptized, N, I baptize thee in the Name of the Father, and of ...".

Cranmer never intended baptism to be isolated from the rest of the Christian community, though Harrison (p.100) notes: "The practice of indiscriminate Baptism has lowered a sacrament of the Gospel to a semi-magical rite, and the almost universal disregard of the opening rubrics has converted it into a private service.

If Cranmer was explicit about the time and place of a baptism, he also laid down strict instructions concerning what should happen after a baptism. He exhorted the Godparents of infants thus: "Ye must remember that it is your parts and duties to see that this infant be taught, so soon as he shall be able to learn, what a solemn vow, promise and profession he hath here made by you". They bear responsibility for the child's faith and upbringing, and were to bring the child to confirmation by the Bishop "so soon as he can say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments in the vulgar tongue, ...". This is

achieved by learning the Catechism. This was intended to be a public affair, the rubrics at the end of the Catechism state: "The Curate of every parish shall diligently upon Sundays and Holy Days, after the second lesson at Evening Prayer, openly in the Church instruct and examine so many Children of his Parish sent unto him, as he shall think convenient, in some part of this Catechism".

In the case of adults, the godparents are exhorted to put the newly-baptized in mind of the "solemn vow, promise and profession they have now made before this Congregation, and especially before you their chosen witnesses". The newly-baptized themselves are exhorted to "walk answerably to your Christian calling". An adult, too, is required to be confirmed as soon as possible after baptism, "so that he may be admitted to the holy communion". The only time that an unconfirmed person may be admitted to holy communion is shown by the final rubric of the confirmation service: "And there shall none be admitted to the holy Communion, until such time as he be confirmed, or be ready and desirous to be confirmed".

#### Theology of the 1662 Rites

The purpose of the baptism services is to effect change from a state of sinfulness to one of sinlessness and membership of the Church: "Dearly beloved, forasmuch as all men are conceived and born in sin, and that our Saviour Christ saith, none can enter into the Kingdom of God, except he be regenerate and born anew of Water and the Holy Ghost ". In the case of adults, actual sin is taken into account as well as original sin. Baptism effects the "mystical washing away of sin" by spiritual regeneration and the infant (or adult) is given the Holy Spirit: "Give thy Holy Spirit to this Infant, that he may be born again, and be made an heir of everlasting salvation,...".

Baptism is not seen only in terms of an act taking place today; it is set within the context of the revelation of God's plan of

salvation throughout history. The service looks back to the days of Noah and Moses at the Red Sea, and sees there the hand of God stretched out to rescue his people. Also, the service looks into Jesus' own baptism and sees there the example for Christian baptism to follow. Yet again, the service looks to the future when the infant's earthly life will be over, and anticipates life in God's nearer presence. So the sacrament of baptism sets a person in mind of all that has gone before, and points forward to the hope to which that person has become entitled.

We might well ask the question: how can this be, since the child has taken no active part in the service? In fact, the child has taken a major part in the service, but it has been expressed by the appointed godparents. Godparents stand as "sureties" who speak "in the name of this child"; they are made responsible for the child. It is as though the child is speaking through them. In the case of adults, godparents are still required but only act as witnesses. The reading from Scripture in the infant baptism service is Mk.10:13ff. At v.15 we see Jesus justifying the reception of little children; the Church used this passage with its 'membership language' as justification for the practice of infant baptism. Later commentators have been less happy to so use this passage.

Immediately before the administration of baptism takes place, there is a request to the godparents for the candidate's name; unfortunately this has allowed ambiguity with regard to the meaning of baptism. This confusion resulted from the abolishing of the service at the church door with its consignation and naming at the introduction of the 1552 B.C.P. (Fischer, J.D.C., p.157). The essence of baptism is concerned with the giving of a new life, not the giving of a name. Buchanan (Grove Book 65, p.18) comments: "At the very most the use of the name makes an existent first name to be now a Christian name.

But the actual reason for using the name is a solemn identification of each candidate as an individual".

After the infant has been baptized, there follows the formula for incorporation into the Church and the token signing with the Cross. The signing with the Cross was a most important sign at the beginning of the pre-Reformation ceremony "For the making of a Catechumen". It had a two-fold symbolism: a mark to drive away the devil; and a mark of belonging to a particular flock. In time, the ceremonies of the catechumenate were conflated, but the signing with the Cross remained at the beginning. At the Reformation, Cranmer kept the ceremony though moved it to a new position and gave it a new meaning - as a welcome.

At the Reformation only two sacraments of the Gospel were recognized, baptism and holy communion; but confirmation was retained. The 1662 rite of confirmation is a service for the renewing of baptismal vows made in infancy by their godparents "in their name". As Buchanan (Grove Book 65, p.5) says: "the prayers before and at the laying on of hands were simple prayers for 'strength', with no character as 'sacramental formulae'; they could have been used as prayers by any baptized Christians for any baptized Christians at any point in their lives". The prayers include the words: "Strengthen them, we beseech thee, O Lord, with the Holy Ghost the Comforter, and daily increase in them thy manifold gifts of grace", and also, "Defend, O Lord, this thy Child with thy heavenly grace, that he may continue thine forever; and daily increase in thy Holy Spirit, more and more, until he comes to thy everlasting kingdom. Amen". This understanding of confirmation as simply an act of 'strengthening' may well date back at least to Alcuin of the ninth century (Fischer, J.D.C., p.148).

It makes sound sense for a person to 'confirm' the vows made in

his name in infancy; but confirmation is required, too, of those baptized as adults. The relationship between baptism and confirmation then becomes confusing. In passing, it is worth noting that their unintentional ambiguity was later to become an intended part of initiation doctrine. Again Buchanan (Grove Book 65, p.6) says: "The Church of England thus inherited a disciplinary pattern requiring all, whenever they are baptized to undergo both rites, but it also inherited a set of doctrinal and liturgical statements such as to assert that sacramental initiation is complete in baptism, and to make the confirmation of those baptized as adults virtually meaningless". It may well be the case that the reason for requiring all to be confirmed was inspired by political rather than theological motives. The monarchy had been restored in 1660, and had settled on an episcopal basis; confirmation for all provided for submission by all to the bishops. However, it may be, as Hinchliff (p.134) says of the Church as a whole: "Rigid and separate theologies of baptism developed in the Churches and the rites used did not always directly reflect the theologies".

## THE RITES OF SERIES I

### Range of the Services

The range of the services is the same as in the 1662 rites. The services were authorized for use in May and June 1966.. with the exception of the order for confirmation.

### Form of the Services

The services of Series I were printed with divisional headings as below:

#### An Alternative Order of the Ministration of Public Baptism of Infants

- Question: "Hath this child been already baptized or no?"
- invitation to pray for child.
- two alternative intercessions for child.
- reading: Mk.10:13ff, preceded and followed by responses.
- exhortation upon reading.
- prayer of thanksgiving and supplication for congregation and intercession for child.

### The Promises

- rubric for interrogation.
- introduction to interrogation.
- renunciation: single form.
- affirmation of belief: single form.
- Apostles' Creed.
- promise of obedience.
- affirmation of willingness to be baptized in this faith.
- prayer of intercession for child.

### The Blessing of the Water

- eucharistic form of prayer.

### The Baptism

- "Name this child".
- rubric for dipping or pouring.
- Baptism: threefold Name.
- formula for reception/signing with the Cross.

### The Thanksgiving

- introduction.
- Lord's Prayer.
- prayer of thanksgiving.
- prayer of intercession for child.
- prayer for home.

### The Duties of the Godfathers and Godmothers

- exhortation with response.

- Blessing.

The order for the private baptism of children is derived from the public rite in the same way as in the B.C.P.; as before, a surviving child must be received into the Church and have the baptism certified. Similarly, the adult order is derived from the infant rite in the same way as in the B.C.P.

#### An Alternative Order of Confirmation

- rubrics.
- preface: based on Acts 8.

#### The Renewal of Baptismal Vows

- alternative interrogations: single form  
or threefold form - renunciation.
  - affirmation of faith.
  - promise of obedience.

#### The Confirmation

- responses.
- Confirmation prayer: based on Is.11:2.
- rubric to lay hands on candidates.
- Confirmation
- responses.
- Lord's Prayer.
- intercession for candidates.

#### The Conclusion

- supplication for congregation.
- Blessing.

Broadly speaking, the '1662 structure' has been retained in these services.

In the rite of infant baptism certain material, which was contained in the 1662 rubrics, is here presented in the main text: "Hath this child been already baptized or no?", and "Name this Child".

However, the form of the promises is somewhat different from the B.C.P., though their relative position is unchanged. A new feature, common to infant and adult services, is the eucharistic form of the Blessing of the Water.

Additional material includes responses, reflecting the growing role played by the congregation; an extra prayer for the home in the infant service; a Blessing; an alternative to the B.C.P. form of interrogation in the confirmation service. Another change is that only one prayer of intercession need be used at the beginning of the baptism services, where previously there had been two.

#### Initiation Discipline

In these services the discipline set out in the B.C.P. still applies, though with one exception: lay persons are given authority to baptize in cases of extreme urgency when no lawful minister can be found. Those concerned are assured that "the child thus privately baptized either by the Minister of the Parish, or by some other Minister, or by one of them that be present, is lawfully and sufficiently baptized, and ought not to be baptized again".

#### Theology of the Series I Services

As in the B.C.P. services, we still have the process of changing from a state of sinfulness to one of sinlessness and membership of the Church with all its privileges. Whereas the former rites spoke emphatically of the deeply ingrained sinfulness of everyone even from conception, here the language is different: "seeing that all men are from their birth prone to sin"; the Augustinian language about original sin has been softened. Also, all references to the O.T. have been removed; the example for initiation is seen in Jesus' own baptism, and in our dying to sin and rising to new life.

Godparents are no longer referred to as "sureties", but nevertheless speak "on behalf of" and "in the name of" infants. They and the priest now together say the Apostles' Creed, this being a more explicit statement of belief by the godparents.



The additional prayer for the child's home in the 'Thanksgiving' section carries with it the realization that the home is vitally important in the child's upbringing, and that support is needed for all the family.

The exhortation to the godparents in the infant service sets the scene for a controversial rite of confirmation; it includes: "see also that he be brought to the Bishop to be confirmed by him; so that, strengthened with the gift of the Holy Spirit ....". However, the service of baptism has previously asked: "Give thy Holy Spirit to this Infant ...". The ambiguity noted in the B.C.P. services is still reflected here. The confirmation service opens with a new Preface based on Acts Ch.8, speaking of Peter and John's laying on of hands upon Samaritans previously baptized by Philip; but it goes on to say: "The Scripture here teacheth us that a special gift of the Holy Spirit is bestowed through laying on of hands with prayer". The content of this "special gift of the Holy Spirit" is not revealed in the service, and what follows faithfully retains the 1662 concept of 'strengthening with the Holy Spirit'. The controversy over this "special gift of the Holy Spirit" in confirmation was so fierce that the House of Laity decided not to authorize the service's use as a Series I experiment.

THE RITES OF SERIES II (Part One)

The roots of the Series II rites reach back to before the authorization of the Series I rites in that the Liturgical Commission produced a set of services (1958 Report) which were referred back by the Convocations. E. C. Whitaker (Proposed Services Re-considered, p.7) said that the report "has been received with a heavy barrage of criticism, most of which is devoted to the thesis that the proposed rites, although possibly they may have many technical excellences, are nevertheless unsatisfactory from the point of view of the pastor". Harrison (p.102) comments that "The Main objections were to the service for the Baptism of Infants, which was judged to be too complex in structure and not sufficiently simple in language". So it was that this report was not acted upon. However, as these services are the foundation for the later rites, they will be treated in detail.

Range of Services

As opposed to the earlier services, the baptism and confirmation of adults is seen as archetypal; therefore the first service is for the baptism and confirmation of adults, followed by notes as to how the baptism of adults may be conducted as a separate service. Infant baptism is set out as a separate service; followed by adult confirmation as a corollary to infant baptism. There are then provisions for emergency and conditional baptisms.

The services are designed to be flexible, and provision is made for administering these sacraments within the context of holy communion or the daily office. "It is this flexibility which at first may give a deceptive impression that the series of services is complicated". (1958 Report, p.X).

## Form of the Services

The Ministration of Baptism and Confirmation to those who are of age  
to answer for Themselves

- rubrics.
- I The Ministry of the Word
  - Ps.34:1-8 (or hynn).
  - response.
  - Collect.
  - O.T. Lesson: Ezek.36:24-8 and response.
  - responsive psalmody: 107:2,3,8,6,20,21.
  - Epistle: 1Cor.12:12-3 and response.
  - responsive psalmody: 97:1, 11, 12, 10, 12.
  - Gospel: Mk.1:1-22 with preceding and succeeding response.
  - Sermon.
- II The Procession to the font
  - rubric for procession
  - Ps.42:1-7.
- III The Blessing of the Water
  - rubric for blessing water.
  - prayer of blessing.
- IV The Promises
  - rubric for interrogation.
  - renunciation: threefold form.
  - affirmation of faith: Apostles' Creed, threefold form.
  - promise of obedience.
- V The Baptism
  - rubric for triple pouring and for naming.
  - Baptism: threefold Name.
- VI The Ceremonies after Baptism
  - rubric.
  - the signing with the Cross.
  - \*- the giving of the candle.
- VII The Confirmation
  - rubrics.
  - responses.
  - rubric to stretch hands over candidates.
  - Confirmation prayer: based on Is.11:2.
  - rubric to lay hands on candidates.
  - Confirmation with response.
- VIII The Holy Communion
  - rubric to begin at Offertory (B.C.P.).
- IX The Prayers (when no H/C)
  - responses.
  - Lord's Prayer.
  - responses.
  - prayer of thanksgiving/intercession.
  - Grace.

The Ministration of Baptism to Infants and others who are not of age  
to answer for Themselves

- rubrics.
  - preface.
- I. The Ministry of the Word
- rubric.
  - response.
  - Collect.
  - Epistle: Gals.4:4-7 with response.
  - responsive psalmody: 119:1, 2, 5, 3, 4, 5.
  - Gospel: Mt.28:18-20 with preceding and succeeding response.
  - homily or sermon.
- II The Blessing of the Water
- rubric to go to font.
  - prayer of blessing.
- III The Promises
- rubric for interrogation.
  - introduction to interrogation.
  - renunciation: single form.
  - affirmation of belief: single form.
  - promise of obedience.
- IV The Baptism
- rubric for naming, triple dipping or pouring.
  - Baptism: threefold Name.
- V The Ceremonies after Baptism
- rubric.
  - signing with the Cross.
  - \*- the giving of the candle.
- VI The Prayers
- responses.
  - Lord's Prayer.
  - responses.
  - prayer of thanksgiving/intercessinn.
  - \*- prayer for parents.
  - Grace.
- rubric for infant baptism at H/C or Daily Offices.

The Ministration of Confirmation to those who have already been Baptized  
and are now of Age to Answer for Themselves

- rubrics.
- I The Ministry of the Word
- Ps.27:1-7 (or hymn).
  - introduction (if no H/C).
  - response.
  - Collect.
  - O.T. reading: Joel 2:28, 29, 32 with responses.
  - responsive psalmody: 147:12, 13, 1, 14, 19, 1.
  - Epistle: Acts 1:3-9 with response.
  - responsive psalmody: 47: 5, 6, 7; 48:8, 3; 47:6.

- Gospel: Jn.14:5-17 with preceding and succeeding response.
  - sermon or homily.
- II The Renewal of the Promises
- rubric for interrogation.
  - introduction to interrogation.
  - renunciation: single form.
  - affirmation of belief: single form.
  - promise of obedience.
- III The Confirmation
- rubrics.
  - responses.
  - rubric to stretch hands over candidates.
  - Confirmation prayer: based on Is.11:2.
  - rubric to lay hands on candidates.
  - Confirmation, with response.
- IV The Holy Communion
- rubric to say/sing Nicene Creed then go to Offertory (B.C.P.).
- V The Prayers (when no H/C)
- responses.
  - Lord's Prayer.
  - responses.
  - prayer of intercession.
  - Blessing.

It was possible to say of the 1928 revisions that, broadly speaking, the '1662 structure' had been retained; not so with these services. There have been changes in both the overall structure and the individual elements of the services.

The immediately noticeable difference from earlier rites is the reversion to an archetypal rite; previously the services of initiation were of a fragmentary nature and administered on separate occasions. Provision is made for this to be the case, but the Liturgical Commission notes (1958 Report, p.IX) that it is "impossible to deal with any part of the material in isolation. From every point of view, pastoral, theological and liturgical, Baptism and Confirmation must be viewed as two parts of one whole, and must further be associated as closely as possible with the Holy Communion".

The Baptism services show the greatest change. The services now begin with a eucharistic-style 'Ministry of the Word' (this is true also of the rite of confirmation). This can hardly be called

an innovation in that previous services expected that initiation would take place at Morning or Evening Prayer, and would therefore be preceded by readings from the Scriptures and the singing of psalms. This expectation is now obligatory in that three lessons are provided in the archetypal service, and two for the separate infant rite; both include the responsive use of psalms. The Ministry of the Word in the infant rite is preceded by a preface (modelled on the 1951 York Rite) which sets out the duties implied by baptism for the benefit of parents and godparents. A further addition is provision for a homily or sermon in each service.

One effect of the structural changes is to bring into juxtaposition the 'Promises' and the 'Baptism'; the Liturgical Commission's chief concern was to "relate the pouring of water to the making of the act of faith" (1958 Report, p.X). Since 1552 the vows had been separated from the actual baptism by the blessing of the water. Prior to that the vows had immediately preceded the baptism; in the ancient West (e.g. Hippolytus) the affirmations were made in the course of triple immersion. Whitaker (Proposed Services Re-Considered, p.16) comments that the restoration of credal interrogations to a position immediately before the baptismal washing is right: "To place them at any peripheral point within the rite does justice neither to Philip's words to the eunuch, nor to the ancient practice and abiding faith of the Church".

Post-baptismal ceremonies are now clearly made to be distinct from the baptism. The 1662 and 1928 rubric was unclear, thus allowing the Minister to baptize one child and give the sign of the Cross, and then go on to the next child. Now it is required that all baptisms should be completed before passing to the 'Ceremonies after Baptism'. To the ceremony of signing with the Cross has been added the optional giving of a lighted candle. Taken overall: there is more responsive

material, less hortatory material, and no alternative material.

#### Initiation Discipline

In these rites, generally speaking, the discipline of the B.C.P. is followed, and even strengthened. General rubrics are given before the services and these make the same requirements with regard to when baptism should be administered and who should be confirmed. However, we are told that the font should be in "spacious and well-ordered surroundings"; and the priest is allowed to set up a temporary font.

The archetypal rite should be used only for those already instructed in the Catechism. Candidates for this rite should have three (or at least two) communicants to be their witnesses. The scope of the infant rite has been widened to include the old, infirm or the handicapped. As in earlier services, the deacon may take the role of the priest if he is absent. The duties of parents and godparents are clearly set out at the beginning of the service. They must see to it that children baptized in infancy are: (1) taught the Creed, Lord's Prayer, Ten Commandments, and "all other things which a Christian ought to know, and believe and do"; (2) helped by their parents' and godparents' example and prayers, as well as by their teaching, to be regular in public worship and in private prayer; (3) brought to confirmation and holy communion. As in the B.C.P., the rite of confirmation is only to be used for those instructed in the Catechism and able to answer for themselves; and it is desirable to have a godfather or godmother present as a witness of the confirmation.

As in the 1928 services, anyone can administer baptism in cases of dire emergency, but if that person survives, he/she must be received into the Church. Conditional baptism follows the practice of the B.C.P. and 1928.

## Theology of the Services

The report introducing these services quoted Resolution 74c of the Lambeth Conference: "A chief aim of Prayer Book Revision should be to further that recovery of the worship of the Primitive Church which was the aim of the compilers of the first Prayer Books of the Church of England". The Liturgical Commission goes on to say that "In the N.T. Adult Baptism is the norm, and it is only in the light of this fact that the doctrine and practice of Baptism can be understood" (1958 Report, p.X). So it is, therefore, that the archetypal rite is based on the baptism and confirmation of adults.

In the previous rites, the theology of baptism was diffused throughout the services; in these services the Commission has sought to bring together the theology of baptism into one prayer - the prayer for the Blessing of the Water. This had been made the principal prayer in each service. In spite of this, the theology is still one of changing from a state of sinfulness to one of sinlessness and membership of the Church - man's fallen nature being exchanged for adopted sonship. One of Whitaker's criticisms of these services is that, perhaps, they emphasize the latter to the detriment of the former, and he suggests that may be 1662 and 1928 were right to begin the services on the theme of sinfulness. In past liturgies the theology of baptism was often presented by means of the Pauline concept of 'dying and rising with Christ'; the more dominant theme for expressing the baptismal theology of these services is the example of Our Lord's own baptism. Christ's baptism as archetypal of our own is not clearly reflected in ancient liturgies or the Prayer Book, the only reference to the baptism of Jesus is the "rather sterile idea that Our Lord imparted a blessing and a sanctification to water by his descent into the Jordon at his baptism" (Whitaker, Proposed Services Re-Considered, p.37). The Liturgical Commission chose the theme it did



for three reasons: (1) from the vast range of ideas, only a few could be held in one rite; (2) the death and resurrection theme is not simple; (3) the two themes are not separate and mutually exclusive. The Commission says that Jesus' baptism was "prefiguring the baptism with which he was to be baptized in his death and resurrection" (1958 Report, p. XV). The baptism of our Lord as the archetype of Christian baptism is, however, no new teaching; one could quote: Jerome (Adv. Lucifer), Augustine (De Trinitate XV46), Cyril of Jerusalem (Cat. Myst. 3:1), and modern authors : Cullman (Baptism in the N.T., p.20), Lampe (Seal of the Spirit, p.45). Flemington writes (p.29): "In our attempts to describe the antecedents of Christian baptism we would do well to give a conspicuous place to the baptism of the Lord". The lessons chosen for these services reflect the theme above; though the proposed gospel reading for the infant rite, Mt.28:18-20 instead of Mk.10:13ff, received a sour reception. Cranmer used the Markan reading to assure parents that God will "favourably receive this present infant". However, Whitaker, speaking of the B.C.P. gospel says: "It is a very beautiful passage, and it is well-known and much-loved. But these attributes are not sufficient to justify the inclusion in the rite of a passage of scripture which contributes practically nothing to our understanding of the sacrament which is being performed" (Proposed Services Reconsidered, p.41). Also in producing a list of appropriate 'baptismal passages', the Lambeth Conference of 1958 omitted it.

It was noted earlier that the vows have reverted to their ancient place in close proximity to the act of baptism. In Whitaker's view, Cranmer's rites conceived of a covenant between God and man: God's promises were made in the reading from scripture and the following exhortation, while man's promises were made in the renunciations, affirmations, and promise of obedience. The restoration of the vows

to their primitive positions put an end to that concept. As we have seen, it was characteristic of the western Church that the credal interrogations were the actual baptismal formulae; but the now customary formula in the west has been in use for at least 1400 years. The adult form of the promises is in a triple fashion, not based on ancient models, adding emphasis to the affirmation of faith. The infant form is simpler and is derived from the Catechism.

In the infant service we face the vexed question: "Who makes the promises?" The tradition in the pre-Reformation Church and post-Reformation Church of England has been that the godparents expressed repentance and faith "in the name of this Child". This proxy form of vows is retained in the 1958 services. Whitaker (Proposed Services Reconsidered, p.19) notes: "it cannot be too strongly emphasized that the primary concern of the Church in baptism is with the faith of the candidate, no matter whether he is an adult or an infant, no matter whether his faith is a present reality or a hope for the future. It follows that if we seek for an expression of the godparents' faith, then we must find some other place in the rite for it. The classical interrogations are concerned with the primary question of the candidate's faith". He does, however, go on to comment that some future element might have been included in the promises; e.g. He will believe, or we pray that he will believe.

With regard to the gift of the Holy Spirit, we recall that the situation was confused in the B.C.P. rite, and the 1928 confirmation rite was not authorized because of controversy. In these services, it is the aim of the Commission to placate both those who hold sacramental initiation to be complete in baptism and those who hold confirmation to be a second sacramental act. This is attempted by suggesting two meanings for the word 'confirm' (strengthen and complete), and seeing these as not mutually exclusive. The Confirmation

formula: "Confirm, O Lord, thy servant, N, with thy Holy Spirit", is hoped to include both views. However, Buchanan (Grove Books 65, p.7) sees a "less than even-handed treatment". He points specifically to: the opening rubric which speaks of the confirmation prayer as the "Prayer for the Sending of the Spirit"; the prayer itself is changed from "strengthen them with the Holy Ghost" to send down from heaven upon them thy Holy Ghost"; the lessons in the separate confirmation rite are from Joel 2, Acts 1:3-9, and Jn.14:15-17; and in that service the bishop's address has the words: "they come now with repentance and faith to receive the Spirit". In defence of the Commission, Whitaker sees in the infant baptism service enough to suggest that the Holy Spirit is given in baptism: the theme of adoption and sonship; the reading of Gals.4:4-7 where the Spirit is said to be given because they are sons; and reference to our Lord's baptism implying the descent of the Spirit on the candidates. He concludes (Proposed Services Reconsidered, p.31): "If we look at the proposed rites as a whole we find that they both contain and omit enough to satisfy both schools of thought". Compared with previous confirmation rites more emphasis is given to the prayer and hand-laying in that the rubrics ask for the congregation to stand and the bishop to stretch hands over those to be confirmed. Also, the new form allows for the candidate's name to be used; and for them to respond with the Amen.

In the ceremonies after baptism the signing with the Cross has been joined by the optional giving of a lighted candle, to show that the candidate has passed from one realm to another. Neither ceremony may take place until all the baptisms have been completed, thus avoiding confusion between symbols. However, immediately prior to the baptismal act there is still the request for the naming of the candidate.

The Commission concludes its work with the hope that the work will

be recognized "as an honest attempt to get behind the controversies which arose out of the late medieval period, by means of a fuller understanding of 'the most sincere and pure Christian religion taught by the Scripture' and of 'the usages of the primitive Church'" (1958 Report, p.XVI).

## THE RITES OF SERIES II (Part 2)

A revised version of the 1959 services was completed in December, 1966, these subsequently became known as Series II, and were authorized for use as such. The range of the services is exactly the same as that of the 1959 services, and they also may be combined with Holy Communion; also each of the baptism services may be inserted into Morning or Evening Prayer. The form of the services, however, is quite different.

### Form of the Services

#### The Baptism and Confirmation of those who are old enough to answer for themselves

##### Introduction

- \*- Ps.34:1-8 (or hymn)
- response.
- collect.
- \*- O.T. lesson: Ezek.36:25a, 26-28.
- \*- Ps.107:1-9 (or hymn).
- Epistle: 1Cor.12:12-13 (can be omitted if OT read).
- \*- Ps.97:9-12 (or hymn).
- Gospel:Mk.1:1-11, with preceding and succeeding response.
- sermon.

##### The Decision

- rubric for interrogation.
- introduction to interrogation.
- renunciations: threefold form.
- rubric to go to font, \*ps.42:1-7 (or hymn).

##### The Blessing of the Water

- response.
- Prayer of Blessing.

##### The Baptism

- rubric for interrogation.
- introduction to interrogation.
- affirmation of faith: threefold form.
- rubric for naming, dipping or pouring.
- Baptism: threefold Name.

##### The Signing with the Cross

- the signing with the Cross.
- \*- the giving of a candle.
- \*- the welcome.

#### The Confirmation

- rubrics.
- responses.
- rubric to stretch out hands towards candidates.
- Confirmation prayer: based on Is.11:2.
- rubric to lay hands on candidates.
- Confirmation with \*responses.
- congregational intercession for candidates.

#### The Holy Communion

- rubric to begin at Preparation of People, or Bread/Wine Ser.II.

#### The Prayers (when no H/C)

- Lord's Prayer.
- prayer of thanksgiving/intercession.
- Blessing.

As in the 1959 services the baptism and confirmation of adults is the archetypal service, with the other services being derived from this. The renunciations and affirmations of faith are now separated from one another in all of the services; the renunciations are now called 'The Decision' while the affirmations of faith are part of 'The Baptism'. In the Confirmation service the affirmations are designated 'The Profession of Faith'. The same vows are used in all of the services and are of a simpler form than the 1959 proposals; there is now no explicit promise of obedience.

The beginning of the services differs from that proposed in 1959. In the adult service there are still three lessons and a sermon, but the responsive psalmody has been replaced by optional psalms or hymns; either the O.T. lesson or the Epistle may also be treated as optional. The infant service now begins with a rubrical preface declaring the basis of infant baptism and the responsibilities of those concerned with it. This was part of the main text in the 1959 service. Instead of a collect, epistle and gospel, there are now two catenae of scripture and two prayers; there is no sermon. In the confirmation-only service, the ministry of the word is now represented by a collect and one or more readings, with no psalmody or hymns. In all of the services the beginning is called 'The Introduction' rather than 'The Ministry of the Word'.

What was called 'The Ceremonies after Baptism' in the 1959 services is here called 'The Signing with the Cross' although this section contains more than the title suggests: signing with the Cross, optional giving of a candle, and an optional welcome for the newly-baptized. In the corresponding position after confirmation there is now a prayer for the newly confirmed to be said by the Bishop and congregation; it is, in fact, the confirmation formula from the B.C.P. and Series I services.

With regard to the administration of baptism the 1959 services ordered a threefold administration by pouring, and all had to be baptized before proceeding to the ceremonies after baptism. In these rites, one is free to choose between dipping and pouring, and there is no stipulation on a threefold or a single practice of administration; neither is there stipulation on whether all candidates have to be baptized before continuing to the signing with the Cross, or not.

#### Initiation Discipline

There are fewer rubrical instructions in these services with regard to initiation discipline than was previously the case. This allows for greater flexibility in pastoral approach. The adult service emphasizes the personal decision being made by the candidates; however, in the infant service a preface sets out in rubrical form the basis on which the Church of England baptizes infants, and also the responsibilities which the parents and sponsors are about to undertake. The baptism takes place on the basis that the infants "will receive a Christian upbringing". This is seen in terms of the infants being taught and encouraged to practise the Christian faith until they come of age to make their own personal decision on the matter. The priest is required to: check if the child has been baptized before; whether the parents and sponsors to the best of their ability, agree to "give him a Christian upbringing

within the family of Christ's Church; whether they will help him to be regular in public worship and in private prayer, not only by their teaching but also by their example and their prayers; whether they will encourage him in due time to come to Confirmation and Communion".

In these services, there is no specified provision for emergency baptism; hence one may assume that the previous provisions hold good.

#### Theology of the Services

In these services the Liturgical Commission has sought to allow breadth of interpretation over the issues of: whether baptism is presented as following Christ's example, or as dying and rising with Christ; whether the vows are made by parents and sponsors on their own behalf, or on behalf of the child; and whether the Holy Spirit is indwelling from baptism or from Confirmation.

As in previous rites, the theology of baptism is that of the change from a state of sinfulness and alienation from God to one of being reconciled to God. The Liturgical Commission made the prayer for the 'Blessing of the Water' the principal prayer of the 1959 baptism services: however, in these services the same prayer is much shorter and focused on the theme of dying and rising again - both Christ's and ours. The clause "sanctify this water to the mystical washing away of sin", has been removed; the element of cleansing, however, is still implied. In the infant services the scripture, Mk.10:13ff., which was excluded from the 1959 services, has again been included (though not on its own). Of particular note is the congregational welcome after the baptism, emphasizing the role of the congregation as the family into which the newly-baptized person has come.

The separation of the renunciations from the affirmations of belief took place because of the suggestion that the renunciations were really part of the old catechumenate and therefore preliminary to the actual baptism, whereas the declarations of faith were integral to it (Grove Book 65, p.12). Hence the placing of the renunciations in the primitive position



before the blessing of the water as the "indispensable prelude to the whole action" (1966 Report, p.2). This corresponds to St. Peter's exhortation to repent and be baptized (Acts 2:38). It was then suggested that renunciation was a negative start to the main part of the service, therefore the first question, "Do you turn to Christ", was added to bring a more positive approach to the first part of the service. The use of the words: "I believe and trust in Him" at the affirmation of faith reveals the truth that not only intellectual assent is required of the candidate but also practical assent in everyday affairs too.

Who makes the vows? Obviously the candidates themselves in the adult service, but what about the infant service? Buchanan's view is that many clergy interpret the preface and introductions to the Decision and Baptism as implying that the parents and sponsors are declaring their own faith. However, this is not the view of the Liturgical Commission; they claim to leave the question open: "We have tried to make the words of the service cover both views. The present renunciation and faith of the parents and sponsors is professed in their rejection of all that is evil, and their belief and trust in God. The future renunciation and faith of the child is affirmed by his baptism in this profession, in which it is the duty of the parents and sponsors to bring him up. In this way we have tried to retain the view expressed in 1662, that the child promises "by his sureties" that he will renounce and believe, while placing the responsibility for the implementation of this promise upon the shoulders of those who made it on the child's behalf" (1966 Report, p.2). Buchanan (Grove Book 65, p.21) defends the concept of proxy: "Nor is the proxy concept absurd or immoral. If there is but one baptism, common to all who receive it (whether adult or infant), then an infant baptism must have the same initiatory meaning as the adult one. In

other words, baptism binds its recipients to 'walk in newness of life'. It carries obligations to live under the headship of Christ. It is that which is being expressed in the vows. It is in fact how Christian parents bring up their children - as bound to Christ as Lord. The fact that the child cannot articulate does not mean he has no duties towards God until some adult age - no, they are there from the start. To have an infant baptism without obligations is to go halfway to having no infant baptism at all.....".

The Series I Confirmation service was rejected because it was felt to be divisive with its use of Acts 8 in the Preface, suggesting that a 'special gift' was imparted at Confirmation. The 1959 services tried to make the issue acceptable by its ambiguity, but still faced a charge of one-sidedness. In these services more emphasis has been given to the gift of the Spirit in water-baptism. In the derivative confirmation service the first two readings may be the same as in the adult archetypal service. Buchanan comments (Grove Book 65, p.8): "This suggested more strongly a going back over the baptismal ground, rather than an adding to it of a separate Pentecost".

The Liturgical Commission (1966 Report, p.3) noted three current views of the relationship between baptism and confirmation: "The first view is: Baptism in water is the sacramental means by which the Spirit is given to Christians, Confirmation is the occasion on which Christians renew the acts of repentance and faith which were made in their name, or which they themselves made, at their baptism. They do this in the presence of the Bishop, who solemnly blesses them; and this blessing may be regarded as an occasion of grace. The second view is: Baptism in water is the sacramental means by which the Spirit is given to Christians, Confirmation is a second sacramental act, consisting of prayer for the coming of the Spirit, with laying on of hands upon those whom the Spirit is asked to come. It effects a further work of

the Spirit, to assist them to grow in the Christian life, and to strengthen them against temptation. The third view is: Baptism in water and prayer with the laying on of hands together constitute the sacramental means by which the Spirit is given to Christians. If the two sacramental acts are distinguished in thought, or separated in practice, the Spirit is thought to come in baptism to effect cleansing from sin and the new birth, and in confirmation to complete the divine indwelling". The Series II services have been drawn up so as neither to give assent to, nor to deny any of the above views. Therefore, there has been no use made of Acts 8:14-17, 19:1-7; but the phrase "after the example of thy holy apostles" (which has appeared in every English Prayer Book since 1549) has been retained. The Confirmation prayer, though saying: "Send forth upon them thy Holy Spirit", does not mention the effect of the sending; the Confirmation formula can mean either a strengthening or a completion as well as an occasion of grace. The Liturgical Commission has arranged that the Holy Spirit be seen to be associated with both services alike but "nothing has been said which defines exclusively his function on either occasion" (1966 Report, p.4).

THE RITES OF SERIES III AND OF THE A.S.B. 1980

After the period of debate from 1971-76 had largely retained the status quo in the matter of initiation, the Liturgical Commission was forced to stay within its earlier terms of reference. However, some changes were made; especially with regard to the range of services, and also the form. The forerunner to the Series III services was a Synod Report (G.S. 343) published in 1977.

Range of the Services

Series II provided one archetypal rite for the baptism and confirmation of adults, and also three derivative services. The Series III/A.S.B. archetypal rite has a much wider range; the baptism and confirmation of adults, the baptism of families and confirmation of adults, the baptism of adults, the baptism of families, the baptism of children, and the confirmation of those already baptized. Only when children are to be baptized on their own, or those already baptized are to be confirmed by themselves, do you use the two derivative rites.

Orders for emergency and conditional baptism are provided; and also an order for the renewal of baptismal vows on various occasions (for use at Easter, New Year, and on other suitable occasions) which may be combined with baptism and/or confirmation and/or holy communion, or with morning and evening prayer.

G.S. 343 provided prayers after the death of a newly-born child or a stillbirth, but they are included among the funeral services in the A.S.B.

Two services of thanksgiving have also been provided as a Series III experiment and are, in fact, included in the A.S.B.; one is for use after the birth of a child, the other for use after an adoption. This fulfils one of the recommendations from the Ely Report.

## Form of the Services

Series III (1979) Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Communion

## Notes

## The Preparation

- \*- sentence: Ps.118:14, \*(and hymn or canticle).
- salutation.
- \*- prayers or penitence from Series III H/C.
- collect.

## The Ministry of the Word

- \*- O.T. lesson (various) with \*response.
- \*- silence.
- \*- Ps.107:1-9.
- \*- Epistle (various) with \*response.
- \*- silence.
- \*- canticle or hymn.
- Gospel (various) with preceding and succeeding response.
- \*- silence.
- sermon.
- \*- silence.

## The Decision

- rubrics for interrogation.
- introduction to interrogation.
- renunciation: threefold form.
- the signing with the Cross (here or later).
- prayer for deliverance from evil.
- \*- Ps.121 (Or other psalm or hymn).

## The Baptism

- response.
- the blessing of the water.
- rubrics for interrogation.
- introduction to interrogation.
- affirmation of faith: threefold form.
- congregational affirmation of faith.
- rubric for dipping or pouring, addressing by name.
- Baptism: threefold Name.
- godparents' response.
- \*- giving of lighted candle.

## The Confirmation

- rubric.
- responses.
- rubric to stretch out hands towards candidates.
- Confirmation prayer: based on Is.11:2.
- rubric to lay hand on candidates.
- Confirmation with response.
- congregational intercession for candidates.

## The Welcome

- rubric.
- the welcome.
- \*- rubric for congregational renewal of baptismal vows.

## The Peace

- rubric directing the continuance of H/C from this point.

Propers

- thanksgiving.
- post communion sentence.
- rubric for Bishop to say both Blessing and Dismissal.

In the 1928 rite there was a cross-heading 'The Blessing of the Water'; this was reproduced in the 1959, Series I, and Series II services. Here the heading has been omitted, though the prayer itself has remained under the cross-heading 'The Baptism'. The Liturgical Commission commented (G.S. 343, p.8) that: "It seems desirable to keep cross-headings to a minimum, and by this arrangement we group together everything which necessarily takes place at the font". Also under this cross-heading there has been included a congregational affirmation of faith which, Whitaker tells us, is an innovation in the baptismal liturgy of the Church of England borrowed from a similar form in the Roman Catholic rite of 1969 (Baptismal Liturgy, p.78).

The cross-heading 'The Ministry of the Word' has been returned after omission in Series II. This is consistent with the form of the eucharist, with which these services 'ought' to form a part.

The form of the B.C.P. baptismal rites had the affirmations of faith separated from the actual baptismal act by the prayer for the blessing of the water. The 1959 services proposed a return to the more traditional practice of placing the affirmations of faith adjacent to the baptismal washing. This reflects what St. Augustine had said centuries before: "Whence does the water acquire such power that by touching the body it is able to cleanse the heart, if it is not through the action of the word: and not because the word is spoken but because it is believed?" (Discourses on St. John's Gospel, 15:3). In the 1959 services the renunciations and the affirmations were part of one section, 'The Promises'; they were separated in the 1967 services with the renunciations forming the 'Decision'. This distinction is maintained in the Series III and A.S.B. services because: "they are concerned with separate matters, they originated

in isolation from each other, and each gains its impact if it is kept apart from the other" (Whitaker, *Baptismal Liturgy*, p.76).

The creation of 'The Decision' paved the way for the restoration of the signing with the Cross to the preliminary part of the service in 1979; it had held its post-baptismal position since 1552. Whitaker comments (*Baptismal Liturgy*, p.76): "This ceremony was not inappropriate in the position to which Cranmer assigned it, for it illuminated something of the meaning of baptism. But it is no less appropriate in association with the renunciation. It is a sign of commitment with Christ in the struggle against evil and also of victory. It identifies the candidate with both, and the renunciation is the best place for it. Historically, this position approximates more closely to the use of the signing with the Cross in the Prayer Book of 1549 and earlier examples of the Western baptismal rite, where it was associated with exorcism and other ceremonies concerned with the Christian's fight against evil". However, because of the strength of tradition, this is only an optional change.

In 1956 the renewal of baptismal vows at <sup>the</sup> Easter Vigil was provided for members of the Roman Catholic Church; a similar provision is made in this rite to take place after the confirmation but before proceeding to the communion service.

The children-only service is derived from the archetypal rite, but the 'Ministry of the Word' is preceded by 'The Duties of Parents and Godparents'. This section comprises an interrogation of the parents and godparents, and an 'address' to the child if he is old enough to understand. As in the Series II rite, the ministry of the word is in the form of a catena of scripture (Jn. 3:3,5; Mt.28:18-20; Acts2:38) with prayer, rather than an O.T., Epistle, and Gospel reading. The confirmation-only service is likewise derived from the archetypal rite with the 'Preparation' and 'Ministry of the Word' able to be exactly the same as at that service.

The only significant changes in form in the A.S.B. are that the prayers for use after the birth of a stillborn child or the death of a newly-born child are treated as funeral services rather than initiation services; also, the cross-heading 'The Peace' is replaced by 'The Communion', emphasizing more clearly that initiation and holy communion are, preferably, to be part of one service.

#### Initiation Discipline

The services of thanksgiving differ from the baptismal services in one very important respect, there is no requirement on parents that they must express their Christian belief in any form of affirmation of faith. However, to prevent confusion between 'thanksgiving' and 'baptism', the minister is bidden that "unless Baptism is to follow immediately, the minister shall explain to the parents or adoptive parents .... that the service of thanksgiving is not baptism, which is the sacrament instituted by Christ for those who wish to become members of his Church" (Note 1, Series III Thanksgiving Service). Furthermore, if such a service is used in Church it must not be taken near to the font, again to avoid the risk of confusion with baptism. Wherever possible, other members of the family should be present; the services may be used in the holy communion or daily offices thereby allowing the general congregation to take part.

E. C. Whitaker (Baptismal Liturgy, p.74) points out that: "Not all parents today are careful to bring their children to baptism, and some are careful to see that their children are not prematurely committed". He suggests that the decrease in infant baptism has led to an increase in adult baptism. It has also become necessary to change 'Baptism of Infants' to 'Baptism of Children', and to provide for the baptism of whole families.

In the case of adults these services expect baptism to be immediately followed by confirmation and first communion; indeed the



title of the Series III and A.S.B. services includes 'Holy Communion'. As in Series II adults make a personal decision to turn from the 'old life' and to embrace the 'new'. Where children are concerned parents and godparents have their duties explained to them at the beginning of the service, particularly that children are baptized "on the understanding that they are brought up as Christians within the family of the Church". The parents and godparents are required to give their verbal assent to this at the outset of the service. When a child is old enough to understand what is happening (G.S. 343 suggests the age of 7) the child may answer for himself at the priest's discretion. The baptism of children carries with it the expectation that they will eventually come to confirmation. If such a baptism takes place as a separate service then regular members of the congregation should be present. The A.S.B. rite of child-baptism preserves the spirit of the Prayer Book as to when baptism should take place in its opening notes: "Holy Baptism is normally administered by the parish priest in the course of public worship on Sunday; but it may be administered at other times, and he may delegate its administration to other lawful ministers".

When families are baptized together, and where children are too young to answer for themselves, parents and godparents answer for themselves and for the children as follows: "We turn to Christ; we repent of our sins; we renounce evil; we believe and trust in him". Parents are then baptized before their children.

The Series III and A.S.B. emergency baptism procedure has more rubrics than does the 1977 provision, especially: "The parents are responsible for requesting emergency baptism for an infant, and they should be assured that questions of ultimate salvation or the provision of a Christian funeral for an infant who dies do not depend upon whether or not he has been baptized". If need be, a layperson may baptize but then must inform "those who have the pastoral responsibility for the person

so baptized". In the absence of the parents, or if, for some reason, there is uncertainty of the child's name, the baptism may take place without the use of a name. If a child (or adult) survives he must be brought to church for the promises to be made.

There is no mention made of formal catechizing, but the Christian upbringing is the responsibility of parents, godparents and the congregation. With regard to the number of godparents, Canon B23 prescribes three though two will suffice and the parents can also be the godparents.

#### Theology of the Services

In the absence of any new directive from the General Synod these services preserve the same theological balance as those of Series II. The Liturgical Commission (G.S.343, p.6) did, however, comment that "when the Liturgical Commission produced its unitary service of Baptism, Confirmation and Communion in 1958, the 'Mason-Dix' line was more widely accepted than is now the case. The 1958 structure has been retained in both Series II and Series III services; and this structure still suggests that baptism is a preliminary to be dealt with so that the service can proceed to confirmation - the real climax. We do not think that the wording of the service supports this suggestion. Nevertheless the suggestion is there, and it is evident when adults are being initiated on their own". The language of the services (apart from being in the 'you-form' current today in schools and liturgical books of other churches) is categorical; but Buchanan notes that "there is no distinctive 'grace' affirmed of confirmation, and thus no categorical language about it" (Grove Book 65, p.18). The confirmation prayer of G.S.343 read: "Send down upon them your Holy Spirit", which was the emendation of the draft report by the House of Bishops; but on its passage through the General Synod the Liturgical Commission's

favoured words: "Let your Holy Spirit rest upon them" were restored as the Series III and A.S.B. text. This maintains the intended ambiguity and diversity of interpretation, and is nearer to the actual text of Is.11:2. Against the charge of theological emptiness of the phraseology, Whitaker says: "On the contrary, it carries with it the positive teaching that the Christian has entered the new age of the Messiah which Isaiah foretold, and that he has received the full outpouring of the gifts of the Spirit; only it does not attempt to indicate the point at which this outpouring takes place, whether it is to be associated with the water of baptism or with the laying on of hands" (Baptismal Liturgy, p.80). It must be said that in the archetypal rite at the blessing of the water occur the words: "Send your Holy Spirit upon them to bring them to new birth in the family of your Church...". The prayer is the same in the child-only baptism service. The following words occur in the collect: "fill them with your Holy Spirit; and receive them into the family of your Church". However, the collect in the Series II baptism and confirmation of adults has been replaced by one which now refers to both baptism and to confirmation. Also, the moving forward of the signing with the Cross, and the moving of the welcome to a later position, has allowed baptism and confirmation to be directly juxtaposed. There was a minority on the Revision Committee of the General Synod who said that adult baptizands should not be confirmed at all, but this was a doctrinal change beyond the scope of the Revision Committee.

The effect of baptism, as before, is to bring about a change in the person baptized; that he may be brought into a new relationship with God, having been: "Cleansed and delivered from all sin". Sin is used in the singular, showing the truth that all sins alienate us from God.

The prayer for the blessing of the water has been substantially

altered; the basic theme is water: "The prayer sets out the variety of contexts in which water is significant both in nature and in Scripture, and then draws the variety into unity in baptism. It includes the neglected truth that water is a sign not only of cleansing but also of new life and resurrection; and it restores the traditional Exodus typology" (G.S.225, p.6). This prayer sums up the baptismal theology of the services and includes the example of our Lord's own baptism. No language of regeneration is used explicitly, as it is in the B.C.P.; though being "one with Christ" may imply this.

As previously mentioned, the signing with the Cross has optionally moved to an earlier position; this also has the effect of avoiding any mistaking of this ceremony for the actual sacramental sign of baptism. It also groups together the material which deals with evil, and provides a "good strong basis for then proceeding to the actual baptism" (Buchanan, Grove Book 65, p.14). The whole section is finished off with a prayer for deliverance from evil.

The renunciations carry the assumption, as do the affirmations of faith, that children are represented by parents or godparents who are believing and trusting Christians. The Liturgical Commission (G.S. 343, p.7) comment that they: "do not accept the view that these questions ought to be modified in such a way that they can be answered by people with no Christian convictions. If it is found that this raises difficulties on some occasions, either because parents will not answer the questions or ought not to be encouraged to answer them, or because in some parishes they may be used to support an unreasonably rigorous policy, then the proper solution of the difficulty lies in the field of pastoral ministration and not liturgical reason".

The Series II affirmations of faith, which owed much to the B.C.P. Catechism, were deemed to be too restrictive in the G.S.343 report. Hence the Liturgical Commission's widening of their scope to

express belief and trust in: "God the Father, the Maker of all.... Jesus Christ, the redeemer of the world....Holy Spirit, the giver of life". These express the truths that God is free in time and space, that Christ redeemed the whole of creation, and that the work of the Holy Spirit is not limited to the people of God. However, in the 1979 services and the A.S.B., the affirmations are cast in their Series II form. Also the congregation affirms its belief and so associates itself with the candidate's profession.

Around the making of the vows lies the question: who makes them? Is it the parents' and godparents' own faith being professed; is it the child's as in the Prayer Book; or is it both? In Series II the Liturgical Commission left the option open; but many clergy saw it as only the parents' and godparents' declarations being made. In the Series III and A.S.B. services, parents and godparents are told: "You must answer for yourselves and for these children". Now the parents and godparents declare explicitly both their own and the child's faith. "The Series III proposals to make godparents answer for themselves as well as the infants means that they must in fact be professing Christians, but the liturgical importance belongs with their proxy response, not their reply about themselves" (Buchanan, Grove Book 65, p.21). The Liturgical Commission has retained the combination of making one's own declaration of repentance and faith (this being the basis for the Christian upbringing of the child) and the 'proxy view' where the promises are made "in the name of this child" (B.C.P.). Buchanan again (p.21): "The Commission will no longer tear itself in two on the issue, because it has been prepared to see the strengths and the advantages of both the views, and not only to allow them to be held by separate parties, but rather to insist that all should hold both views".

The increased number of readings from Scripture reflects the

widening range of the services. The list includes Acts 16:25-34, which is especially appropriate for the baptism of both parents and their children. The confirmation-only service allows for the use of the same readings as in the archetypal service, emphasizing that confirmation is a going over of baptismal ground. In the infant-only rite, there is now one catena of Scripture (cf two in Series II) which is: "somewhat larger in its theological scope (it starts with creation and birth), though slightly shorter in total length" (Buchanan Grove Book 65, p.20). The Mk.10 passage is omitted from the baptismal services, but finds itself more appropriately placed in the Thanksgiving services.

With regard to the actual administration of baptism, G.S.343 ordered a threefold administration. However, the Revision Committee did not direct for or against this practice; but they did add a note at the beginning of the service: "A threefold administration of water (whether by dipping or pouring) is a very ancient practice of the Church and is commended as testifying to the faith of the Trinity in which candidates are baptized. Nevertheless, a single administration is also lawful and valid".

In the Series III and A.S.B. services there is no injunction to "name this child", showing clearly that baptism is not a 'naming' ceremony. In fact, in both the archetypal and derivative services of baptism, the candidate may be addressed by name.

In the Series III confirmation rite the bishop laid hands (plural) on the heads of the candidates; in the A.S.B. there is a return to the Prayer Book practice of laying a single hand upon the candidates' heads - which is, in fact, the tradition of the western Church. Whitaker notes (Baptismal Liturgy, p.81): "The fact that Anglican bishops usually lay both hands on the candidates' head, and that the rite is often known as the 'laying on of hands', very possibly springs from the common association of confirmation with the occasion when

Peter and John laid their hands on the Samaritan converts and they received the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:17)". It was dispute about this passage which led to the non-authorization of the Series I confirmation service.

In the baptism and confirmation, and confirmation-only services extra prayers are provided to enlarge the vision of the service beyond the immediate people and surroundings; hence prayers are provided for all Christian people, for the Church's witness, and for the candidates' and congregations' part in it. Included too are the prayers of St. Francis and St. Richard.

As noted earlier, the Church of England, like the Roman Catholic Church, now possesses an order for the renewal of baptismal vows. Buchanan (Grove Book 65, p.24) comments: "It is perfectly clear that, like confirmation itself, it rests solidly upon the existing baptism, and wholly accepts it. It does not, and must not, call that baptism into question. But it can provide an opportunity for public testimony as to commitment, which is so obviously desired and often deeply needed".

One of the Ely recommendations taken up was that of the provision of services of thanksgiving. These services have two similar orders, one for the birth of a child, the other for use after an adoption. Returns from the dioceses in the period 1974-76 suggested that the term 'thanksgiving' was strongly preferred to 'blessing'; hence there is no mention of 'blessing' in the titles, no liturgical act to imply blessing; and no carrying of the child by the minister. However, and perhaps contradictory, is the use of the Mk.10:13-16 passage, for so long associated with infant baptism, where the context is clearly one of 'blessing'. The theology of the orders has to do with creation rather than redemption; it is only in one of the optional prayers that the desire for baptism is expressed. The services can cover a variety

of situations: a post-natal ceremony for Christian parents who cannot accept infant baptism; a ceremony for those who should not be encouraged to seek baptism for their children for any reason; and a ceremony where it seems right to thank God for a child and follow this by baptism at a later date.



CHAPTER FIVEINITIATION IN THE METHODIST CHURCHINTRODUCTION

The foundation document for Methodist initiation rites was John Wesley's "Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America, 1784". This contains baptismal services derived from the 1662 B.C.P. of the Church of England, though with drastic alterations. Wesley omitted: the private baptism of infants; all references to godparents (and therefore all vows of renunciation, belief and obedience made in the infant's name); the central petition in the prayer for the sanctification of the baptismal water (or altered it in some editions); the signing with the Cross and reception (in some editions); and, by 1786, the references to baptismal regeneration. There were other changes aimed at shortening the service. In Great Britain the service for infant baptism had no trace of baptismal regeneration by 1882.

The Methodist church in Great Britain had both Wesleyan and non-Wesleyan factions; the Wesleyan Conference had no service for the public recognition of new members until 1894. The different factions united in 1932, and in 1936 "The Book of Offices" was authorized for use. The services most recently authorized for use are those of "The Methodist Service Book" (1975), but prior to these the Faith and Order Committee had produced a booklet, "Entry into the Church" (1967), which proposed initiation services with a fresh structure from those of 1936. These were authorized for experimental use by the Methodist Conference. As they do not differ substantially from the 1975 services, I look more closely at the later services and refer to the 1967 forms in passing. However, I do acknowledge that they mark a turning point in the Methodist initiation services.

I begin with the rites produced four years after the Methodist union in Great Britain.

THE BOOK OF OFFICES (1936)

## Range of the Services

These services were authorized at the conference in Newcastle upon Tyne and comprise: an order for the baptism of adults; one for infants; and an order for the public reception of new members. The services do not allow for the baptism of adults and infants at the same time, neither can reception of new members follow on from the baptism of adults.

## Form of the Services

Baptism of such as are of Riper Years

- \*- hymn.
- Lord's Prayer.
- Apostles' Creed.
- readings, choose from: Mt.28:18-20; Acts 2:38-9, 41-2; Rms. 6:2,4-5; Jn. 3:1-7.
- introduction to interrogation.
- interrogation: threefold form.
- congregational interrogation.
- extempore prayer/set intercession for candidate.
  
- rubrics for baptism, inc. asking of name.
- Baptism: in threefold Name.
- reception.
- benediction.
- intercession for candidate with responses.
  
- \*- hymn.
- ascription of praise, Jude vv24-5.
- Grace.

Baptism of Infants

- rubrics.
- address
- introduction to interrogation.
- interrogation: threefold form.
- congregational interrogation.
- prayers of intercession for child, home, parents.
  
- request for name.
- rubric for Baptism.
- Baptism: in threefold Name.
- reception.
- Aaronic Blessing.
- intercession for child with responses.
  
- Grace.

### The Public Reception of New Members

- rubrics.
  - introduction.
  - reading: Mt.18:19-20.
  - hymn "See, Jesu, Thy disciples see ...".
  - exhortation on Church and Faith.
  - silent prayer.
  - litany.
  - Lord's Prayer.
  - hymn "Christ from whom all blessings flow ...".
  - Apostles' Creed/Scriptural confession of faith.
  - rubrics, candidates named.
  - address to those who are to be received.
  - interrogation: two fold form.
  - welcome and prayer for candidates.
  - exhortation for congregation to be rededicated to God.
  - silent prayer.
  - hymn "Lord, in the strength of grace ...".
  - Benediction.
- rubrics to begin Lord's Supper at Prayer of Humble Access.

### Initiation Discipline

In the 1936 services the rites of baptism are fragmented and do not form a part of other services. The public reception of new members however, "may be used at the close of a shortened service on the Lord's Day".

The key feature of the adult baptism service is the personal decision being taken by the candidate himself: "forasmuch then as you now present yourself for Holy Baptism we ask you to make answer concerning your faith and obedience ....." . Although the candidate has no godparents the congregation is required to be a support to him. Following upon the candidate's interrogation the congregation is asked: "will you endeavour so to maintain here a fellowship of worship and service that he may find in it full opportunity and encouragement in his discipleship?".

In the case of infants inquiry must be made beforehand to find out whether the child has been previously baptized. If not a rubric preceding the order of service lays down the conditions under which the sacrament may be administered: "All parents bringing their children to

be baptized are to be reminded by the reading of the following address or otherwise that they thereby devote them to God, and are pledged to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; and that the Sacrament of Baptism is administered on their promise so to do". If possible both parents are required to attend the service; there are no godparents but the congregation are called upon to "maintain here a fellowship of worship and service in the Church that he may grow up in the knowledge and love of God, ...".

The baptismal act, itself, is in the threefold Name, and is administered by sprinkling, pouring, or dipping - the mode is not specified in the case of adults.

The service for the public reception of new members would normally take place when the candidate was around 12 years of age for those baptized in infancy; in the case of those baptized as adults it would take place on a separate occasion after their baptism. As in the baptism services the congregation is involved and use is made of silent prayer in this service. The service may then lead into a celebration of the Lord's Supper.

#### Theology of the Services

The Methodist Conference of 1936 saw baptism as a symbol of Christian unity, and as "an outward and visible sign of inward and spiritual grace"; in the case of adults the rite may be an actual means of grace (Minutes, Appendix X, p.400). It is worth remembering that Charles Wesley said: "One may be an inward Christian without baptism" (Journal of Charles Wesley, Vol. 1, p.180). Holland (p.47) comments on John Wesley that: "By defining adult regeneration as 'conversion' he had, at a stroke, severed it from its sacramental setting and lifted it into the realm of the free working of God's Spirit".

The Conference saw baptism as being extended to infants because parents desired it and Jesus, himself, welcomed children. Although it

could describe infant baptism as "the Sacrament of Initiation into the Church on earth, and the symbol of universal grace", it still said "the outward act anticipates the day when the child will consciously accept the inward grace. Our hope and confidence is that, through the operation of the Holy Spirit, in answer to the prayers of the Church, and through the influence of Christian nurture to which the parents pledge themselves, this sacrament will be inwardly completed and made effective when the child through faith in Christ responds to the grace proclaimed and pledged by the rite" (Minutes, Appendix X, p.400).

English (Epworth Review, Vol. 2, May 1974, p.72) says of this Conference's view of baptism: "There is almost a denial of any specific inward grace being given to the child in baptism, since he is incapable of the conscious fellowship within which such grace is experienced". The 1936 service reflects the above understanding of infant baptism. John Wesley, himself, was a high churchman believing in the baptismal regeneration of infants; however, scholars disagree as to whether he maintained or repudiated this belief. According to English (p.69) one thing is clear: "Wesley would not allow his hearers to appeal back to a sacramental act as an alternative to a satisfactory present spiritual condition". In one of his sermons, John Wesley said: "I ask not, whether you was (sic) born of water and of the Spirit; but are you now the temple of the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in you?", and again, "Lean no more on the staff of that broken reed, that ye were born again in baptism. Who denies that ye were then made children of God, and heirs of the Kingdom of heaven? But, notwithstanding this, ye are now children of the devil. Therefore, ye must be born again" (Standard Sermons of John Wesley, Vol. 1, pp. 295-6).

The adult baptism service begins with the Lord's Prayer and a declaration of faith in the form of the Apostles' Creed. The readings which follow offer a choice of four, of which more than one may be

used. The use of Mt.28 bases the baptism service as a response to the direct command of Jesus; Acts 2 speaks of the promised reception of the Holy Spirit and shows the example of the disciples meeting to receive the apostles' teachings, their common life, prayer, and breaking of bread; Rms. 6 shows baptism as burial into Christ's death so that we may walk in the new life; and Jn.3 speaks of mankind's need to be born again of the Holy Spirit. The threefold promises that the candidate makes are these: repentance and belief in Jesus Christ; keeping the commandments and being ready in the service of God; and fulfilling the ministry appointed to him by Christ. The candidate is not required to 'go it alone', the congregation are pledged to give him their support. There is no prayer over the baptismal water in either this or the infant service. However, the prayer of intercession which precedes the baptismal act reflects the 1662 B.C.P. from the Church of England, except that there is no mention made of regeneration; the candidate is offering himself in the sacrament, seeking his reception by God as promised, that he may remain a true disciple through the indwelling Holy Spirit, and that at last he may attain to eternal life. The candidate comes for baptism in an attitude of penitence and faith and is received in the congregation of Christ's Church; there is no signation but the candidate's name is requested prior to his baptism. The post-baptismal prayers or intercession ask that he "may continually partake of the Holy Spirit" and that he might build up Christ's Body and bear witness to Christ. Also prayed for is wisdom for the Church in fulfilling its role of strengthening and teaching.

service

The infant baptism/<sup>is</sup> based upon the responsibilities accepted by the parents and finds its meaning in their honest attempt to fulfil their promises. The opening address recalls both the warning and promise of Christ: the warning is against putting stumbling blocks in the way of a little one; the promise is that if we receive a little one then we receive Christ himself. The baptism of infants is justified

biblically by alluding to Acts 2, 2 Cor. 5, Mt.28, and Mk.10. Neither this nor the adult service looks back to the O.T. for examples of God's grace to mankind. The address contains echoes of the B.C.P.: "Doubt ye not, therefore, but earnestly believe that He (Jesus) will likewise receive this little child; that he will embrace him with the arms of His mercy, and ...". The introduction to the promises made by the parents (there is no sense of their being proxies for the child) acknowledges that they are dedicating the child to God and receive him back again: "You are come here to acknowledge that this, your child, belongs to God, to dedicate him to God in holy baptism, and to receive him again as from the hands of God to be trained as a disciple of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ". The threefold promises cover this training: provision of a Christian home, provision of a Christian upbringing, and surrounding him "with such things as are pure and true, lovely and of good report". Parents are to make sure that their own lives do not wrongly influence the child, and that they will provide access for the child to the Church's worship and teaching. As in the case of adults parents are not expected to accomplish this on their own; the congregation are asked whether they will maintain the conditions necessary for the child's growth in faith. In common with the adult service the pre-baptismal prayer of intercession reflects the B.C.P., but with no mention of regeneration. The prayer simply says: "we call upon Thee for this child, whom we bring to Thee in this Holy Sacrament" and "that this child may become and ever remain Christ's true disciple, and may at last attain to the eternal kingdom ....". There are also pre-baptismal prayers for the home and parents of the child. The child's name is requested prior to the baptismal act, which is by either dipping, pouring or sprinkling (a mode introduced by Wesley in his N. American service of 1784). There is no signation after baptism; the child is then received into the congregation; "that he may be instructed and trained in the doctrines, privileges, and duties of

the Christian religion, and trust that he may be Christ's faithful soldier and servant ...". There are post-baptismal prayers for the child (for his continual spiritual growth and partaking of the Holy Spirit), his parents, and the Church.

The introduction to the service for the public reception of new members sets out the intention of the service: "Dearly Beloved, we are about to receive into full communion with the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ these persons presently to be named". The first half of the service sets out the faith of the Church and prays for the constant renewal of the congregation in that faith. The second half begins with the address to those to be received. Here is the recognition that they are already new members; at baptism they were received "into the congregations of Christ's flock", in this service they are told that "(you) are taking your place among the great company of those who in many generations and in every land have become His servants and His brethren, ...". Therein lies the meaning of the service "In view of their response to the call of Christ to follow Him they now take their place and are welcomed into the fellowship". Prior to actually being welcomed the 'new' members face a twofold interrogation: one is confession of faith in Jesus and a pledging of themselves to Him; the other is resolve to follow the Christian life and to hasten the coming of His kingdom. They are then welcomed joyfully into the fellowship of Christ's Church. The service closes with a congregational rededication of loyalty to Christ.



THE EXPERIMENTAL SERVICES OF 1967

In these services the baptism of infants is seen in terms of: Christ's baptism, death and resurrection; his command to baptize; and his welcoming of children. There is now a baptismal prayer over the water of baptism, and the act of baptism is seen as a sign of cleansing. By this act the children are made members of God's family, the Church, and all that Christ promised in the new covenant is claimed for them.

The next service in the booklet is the 'Public Reception into Full Membership, or Confirmation'. The addition of 'Confirmation' to the title reflects the contents of the service, which "reaffirms the benefits of baptism, stresses the response of faith which has since taken place, and speaks of coming 'by your own choice publicly to renounce evil and profess your faith in Him'. God's strength by his Holy Spirit is promised and prayed for" (English, Epworth Review, p.73).

The third service deals with the situation where candidates for baptism are adults. This service marks a turning point in Methodist initiation services in that it is in the form of an archetypal rite of baptism followed by confirmation and holy communion at the same service.

These services employ a larger range of biblical concepts of baptism, and the 'confirmatory' nature of the reception service is more marked. Also the reception service contains more explicit references to the Holy Spirit. With regard to the concept of regeneration English comments of these services: "the language about baptism is restrained, and neither mentions nor implies regeneration. If 'new birth' or 'conversion' is to be experienced it is between the two services. We appear to be in the middle ground between 'the Christian life begins at baptism' and 'the Christian life begins at conversion'" (Epworth Review, p.73).

## The 1975 SERVICES

The preface to "The Methodist Service Book" (1975) recalls the preface to the 1936 service book which has the words: "It must not be thought that there is here any attempt to disparage the practice of free prayer, which has always been one of the glories of Methodism". The preface to the present book has the following words: "These forms are not intended, any more than those in earlier books, to curb creative freedom, but rather to provide norms for its guidance". So it is that extempore prayer is a feature of the new initiation services as it was of the old. The present preface goes on to say: "The ecumenical movement has brought Methodists into close contact with the worship of other communions; and though this book resembles the Book of Common Prayer less than any of its predecessors, it will serve as a link not only with the Church of England but with other communions also, for the investigations of liturgical scholars into the origins and basic structures of liturgical rites have caused a marked convergence in the forms of worship used in various churches. The services retain, however, a distinctively Methodist flavour, and constitute part of our contribution to the life of the universal Church".

The range of the services is exactly the same as those authorized for experimental use in 1967.

### Form of the Services

#### The Baptism of Infants

##### The Preparation

- Lord's Prayer, if not used later.
- any part of the Preparation of the Sunday Service.
- collect.

##### The Ministry of the Word

- \*- O.T. lesson, or epistle.
- \*- sermon.
- Gospel lessons, Mk.1:9ff, Mk.10:13ff, Mt.28:18ff.
- exhortation.

## The Baptismal Prayer

- rubric "at the font".
- Baptismal Prayer.

## The Promises and the Profession of Faith

- congregational interrogation.
- introduction to interrogation of parents and godparents.
- interrogation: threefold form.
- interrogation of sponsors, if present;
- Apostles' Creed, or summary of faith.
- presentation of child for baptism.

## The Baptism

- rubrics.
- naming of child.
- Baptism: in threefold Name.
- signing with the Cross/reception.
- Aaronic blessing.
- \*- giving of the lighted candle.

## The final Prayers

- intercession for child, home, parents, the Church (or extempore prayer)
- Grace
- rubric to continue the Sunday Service.

Public Reception into Full Membership of Confirmation

## The Ministry of the Word

- hymn "In the Name of Jesus" or some other.
- collect, or extempore prayer.
- O.T. lesson: Jer.31:31ff, or some other.
- epistle: Rms.8:12ff, or some other.
- hymn "Christ from whom all blessings flow", or some other.
- Gospel: Mk.1:14ff, with \*preceding and succeeding response.
- sermon.
- hymn "O thou who camest from above", or some other.
- exhortation.

## The Promises and the Profession of Faith

- interrogation: threefold form.
- Apostles' Creed.

## The Confirmation and Reception

- Confirmation prayer: based on Is.11:2.
- Confirmation: two forms - one with laying on of hands, one with right hand of fellowship.
- \*- giving of Bible or other book.
- prayer of dedication to service.
- Lord's Prayer.
- hymn "Lord, in the strength of grace".

## The Lord's Supper

- rubrics to begin at the 'Setting of the Table'.

The Baptism of those who are able to answer for themselves, with  
the Public Reception into Full Membership, or Confirmation

The Ministry of the Word

- hymn "Being of beings, God of love", or some other.
- collect, or extempore prayer.
- O.T. lesson: Ezek.36:25ff, or some other.
- epistle: Rms.6:3ff, or some other.
- hymn "Come, Father, Son and Holy Ghost", or some other.
- Gospel: Jn.3:1ff, with \*preceding and succeeding response.
- sermon.
- hymn "O thou who camest from above", or some other.
- exhortation.

The Baptismal Prayer

- rubric "at the font".
- Baptismal Prayer.

The Promises and the Profession of Faith

- congregational interrogation.
- rubric.
- introduction to interrogation of baptizands and confirmands.
- interrogation: threefold form.
- Apostles' Creed.
- request for baptism.

The Baptism

- rubrics, sponsors or other witnesses give the candidate's name.
- Baptism: in threefold Name.

The Confirmation and Reception

- rubrics.
- exhortation.
- Confirmation prayer: based on Is.11:2.
- Confirmation: in two forms - one with laying on of hands.
- \*- giving of Bible, or some other book.
- prayer of dedication to service.
- Lord's Prayer.
- hymn "Lord, in the strength of grace".

The Lord's Supper

- rubric to begin at the 'Setting of the Table'.

If no confirmation, then after 'The Baptism' there follows: signation/  
reception, Aaronic Blessing, prayer of intercession, and Grace.

It could be said of the 1936 services that there were no headings to indicate the stages of the services, that there was no baptismal prayer, that the act of baptism was separated from the making of the vows, and that the reception service contained no act of 'confirmation'. In the 1975 services there are headings; there is a baptismal prayer; the act of baptism is closer to the vows and declarations of faith; and there is an act of 'confirmation'. However, perhaps, the greatest

change is the drawing together of an archetypal rite of baptism and confirmation, and in the context of holy communion.

Within the services two things may be noticed: the first is that the congregational interrogation now precedes that of the candidate (or his parents' and sponsors'), presumably reflecting how important is the 'health' of the congregation to those about to come into closer fellowship with them; and secondly, the Apostles' Creed occurs now in the section containing the promises and declarations of faith, thus rationalizing the services. All of the services deal with the Ministry of the Word first (except for the baptism of infants which has a brief preparation) and are therefore judged to be theologically sound in their order (Dixon, *At Your Service*, pp. 48 & 54). Baptism is seen by Methodists as a response to the Word of God; therefore the service follows logically from readings and exposition to prayer, promises, and the act of baptism (even when only the Gospel passages are read in the infant service). Confirmation is seen as the response to the call of Christ; the Ministry of the Word represents the call to which the candidates respond.

These services are different in form from the 1967 experimental services only in that some of the headings are expressed in different words.

#### Initiation Discipline

It was noted that the 1936 services were fragmented and unattached to other services; except for the reception service, which could be used at the end of a shortened service. With these services the intention is that they will form part of other services: the infant baptism service should take place at a service of public worship, the confirmation service should include a celebration of communion, and the candidates for adult baptism should also be confirmed and receive communion at the same time. For pastoral reasons an adult may be

baptized privately and be confirmed and receive holy communion on a later occasion - this pastoral exception was not a part of the 1967 services. Dixon (p.47) sees administration of infant baptism outside normal hours of worship as a bad practice because it is something in which the whole church family should share; the same point may be made for the other services.

Looking first at infant baptism. As in 1936 inquiry must be made to check whether or not the child has been baptized before; if the parents are not sure then a conditional form of baptism must be used. A major feature of the former infant service was the understanding by the parents of their role of fostering their child's spiritual growth; this is still the case. The first of the General Directions states: "A solemn obligation rests upon parents to present their children to Christ in Baptism, which claims for them the benefits of his redeeming work and signifies their admission into the visible community of his Church. Parents thereby dedicate them to God and are pledged to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; and the sacrament of Baptism is administered on their promise so to do". Seven days notice is normally required to allow for interview and preparation; if the parents or guardians cannot pledge themselves to give the promises contained in the service then the minister may defer the baptism of that child. Two sponsors may now be appointed to assist the parents in fulfilling their promises; one should be chosen by the minister from among the worshipping congregation. They should "act as a link between the family and the larger family of the Church; and regularly to pray for the children" (General Directions). The local Church as a whole, and particularly the Church Family Committee, have responsibility for the spiritual welfare of the child and its family. "Thus through the life of home and church it is hoped that the child will reach a point at which the

claims of Christ are recognized and accepted by the growing boy or girl" (Prickett, p.44).

In an emergency anyone may perform the baptism, but with a healthy child the administration will be by the Minister, or a Probationary Minister in pastoral charge, an ordained Deaconess, a Probationary Deaconess in pastoral charge, or by a fully accredited Local Preacher after consultation with the Superintendent or one of his colleagues. If a child baptized in an emergency recovers he must be brought to Church for reception by the congregation and for the parents to make their promises.

The key feature of the adult service is still the personal decision taken by the candidate himself; however, unlike the 1936 services adult candidates may have two sponsors to assist him in the carrying out of his promises. They would be appointed by the minister but "in consultation with the candidate". It is desirable that adults now proceed at once to confirmation and holy communion, as proposed in the 1967 services. In an emergency an adult is to be baptized by the minister "if he is satisfied as to his repentance, faith and desire for Baptism". If that person then recovers, he/she must be received into the congregation and given instruction so as to become a full member of the Church as soon as possible. If there are children to be baptized at the same time as adults, such as in the case of families, then the adult service would be used and making the necessary additions. When the parents have made their own promises, they would then make those relating to the upbringing of their children. In the case of persons being received from other Christian communities: if they are unbaptized or unconfirmed/not full members of other communions but now wish to be a part of the Methodist Church, then they are to be baptized and/or received (confirmed) into full membership; if they are confirmed members or full members of communions from which they

can be received by transfer, they can be admitted without any public service. Otherwise, they must first be instructed and publicly received.

Those who are baptized as infants or children are to be taught to look forward to full membership when they will be strengthened by the Holy Spirit for his service. Those who are eligible for reception into full membership are those who "confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour and accept the obligation to serve him in the life of the Church and the world" (General Directions). Their sincerity will be shown "by evidence of life and conduct, by fidelity to the ordinances of the Church, and by the maintenance of Christian fellowship in the means of grace" (General Directions). To be received/confirmed a child, who is receiving regular instruction in the Bible and the Faith, must be entered as a 'Member in Training' and have further instruction in the form of a 'Preparation Class' where the Senior Catechism may be used. Adults, too, would become 'Members in Training'. After at least three months 'in Training' their names may be brought before the Pastoral sub-committee again who may then recommend them for admission to full membership.

#### Theology of the Services

I begin this section with a passage from Dixon's commentary on the new services (p.46): "Baptism is the first part of entry into the Church. The second part, confirmation, takes place when a person baptized in infancy is able to answer for himself and has responded to the call of Christ. He then voluntarily ratifies what was done on his behalf years before, and the Church prays that he may be strengthened by the Holy Spirit for Christian service. A baptized child is a member of the Church, but not a full member. His membership is, in a sense, conditional until it is endorsed by his own action and that of the Church in confirmation". There may be a case here for saying that



Dixon's view does not represent Methodist theology: parents are not understood to be acting as proxies for their children in either the old or the new services.

There have been structural changes in the new services (compared with the older ones); changes in the range; little change in initiation discipline; but theological change (if any) is more difficult to assess. Baptism is clearly still the first part of entry into the Church, and reception/confirmation is the second and completing event; but do the differences between the two service books imply any substantial shift in Methodism's theology of initiation?

Beginning with baptism, and looking first at the baptismal prayer - itself a new feature. This prayer echoes the Thanksgiving prayer in the Sunday Service, and in doing so reflects a trend seen in Anglican services. This parallelism should direct the congregation's minds to the Sunday service and its eucharist and establish the link between the two. It reveals the different aspects of baptismal theology: "Baptism is a divine act of new creation; it proclaims the saving love of God; it declares God's power to deal with human sin and to break the power of evil" (Dixon, p.49). The prayer is longer in the adult service but covers the same themes. The second half of the prayer is in the form of petitions, asking that the baptizands may die to sin and be raised to the new life of righteousness in Christ; that they may have victory over evil and be led from darkness to light, from death to life. A further petition in the infant service asks that they may learn to trust Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. The prayer in the adult service has the words: "we pray that they who are now to be baptized in this water, having professed their faith in Christ, and being born again of the Spirit, may die to sin ..."; the exhortation in the infant service expresses baptism as the sign of new life in Christ. The 1936 services contain no mention of rebirth explicitly, yet it is a

moot point as to whether these present services mark a departure in theology because the older services pray for the newly baptized to continually partake of the Spirit. This cannot be possible for those outside the new life with Christ.

The lessons, as in 1936, are different for adults and infants. The infant service relates how the Holy Spirit was given to Jesus at his baptism, it shows baptism to be the direct command of Jesus to his Church, and gives the assurance that God is ready and willing to receive the child. The adult service's readings show the need for us to be born again, to accept the renewing activity of God within us, and to share his death and resurrection.

The promises for adults and infants, like the readings are different in the two services. In the infant service the promises are a means of eliciting from parents a pledge to fulfil the responsibility they undertook by having their child baptized. They now have the option of having two sponsors to support them, together with the support of the congregation. The three promises are: to provide for their children Christian homes of love and faithfulness; to help them by their words, prayers, and example to renounce all evil and to put their trust in Jesus Christ their Saviour; and to encourage them to enter into the full membership of the Church and to serve Christ in the world. Adult candidates make promises corresponding to the last two promises in the infant service: repentance and renunciation of evil; trust in Jesus Christ an Lord and Saviour; and obedience to Christ in service. These are the same as those made in the confirmation-only service. Hinchliff (p.143) makes a telling observation on the situation where adults make different promises from those at the baptism of infants, speaking first of infants: "It can be argued that they are the real questions that need to be put and that they make the meaning

of what is being done quite explicit; and, since the Apostles' Creed follows immediately afterwards, it can also be argued that a confession of faith is still made on the infant's behalf. On the other hand, since the promises made at the baptism of an adult are in the traditional form, the difference is bound to raise very sharply the question whether infants' and believers' baptism is the same sacrament in any real sense".

The baptismal formula in both cases is the Matthean one, and in the infant service it is followed by signation and a prayer of reception which resembles that of the 1662 B.C.P.. Here, however, the ambiguities of the Anglican prayer have been omitted; it is clearly stated that it is baptism which receives the child into the congregation. Once received the whole congregation now says the Aaronic blessing for the child, expressing their corporate concern for the child. There then follows the optional post-baptismal ceremony of the giving of a lighted candle. This has been the cause of controversy in Methodism, with suspicions of 'High Churchmanship' and an 'unholy alliance with Rome'; yet Dixon (p.52) says: "If the giving of the candle is regarded with an unprejudiced eye, this symbolism is seen to be full of meaning."

Dixon (p.58) points to the fact that although the archetypal service follows the other two services in the book, "historically and theologically, adult baptism is the norm". Adult baptism is then to lead to confirmation and reception of holy communion immediately, unless pastoral considerations direct otherwise. Of confirmation, Dixon (p.54) says: "Despite some appearances to the contrary, the Church is not a club which a man may join if he feels like it, and from which he may sever his connection at will. To belong to the Church is to have responded to the call of Christ; 'Jesus said to them, "Follow me"'. His call comes to us; then we respond, for him or against him.

This is the heart of confirmation theology: Jesus calls us to accept a place in his family, a place that has been reserved for us since we were baptized; we respond to that call; the church publicly recognizes our response and admits us to the full membership of the family; by his Holy Spirit God strengthens us (confirms us) for his service. This theology is reflected in the structure of the confirmation service. The Ministry of the Word, in readings and sermon, represents the call of Christ. It is the proclamation to which we respond". The readings deal with the prophecy of the new covenant written on the heart, life in the Spirit, and Christ's request to Simon and Andrew to follow him.

The candidate's response to Christ's call begins, liturgically, with their promises and profession of faith; these are referred to above. "This partly represents the candidates' general response to the call of Christ, it is also the embodiment of a specific part of that call - the invitation to become full members of the Church" (Dixon, p.55). From here the service moves to two new features: the confirmation prayer, and the act of confirmation with its optional laying on of hands. The confirmation prayer, as in the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church, is based on the passage from Is.11. The words are here rendered as: "establish them now in faith by the Holy Spirit, and day by day increase in them your gifts of grace". This is followed by the act of 'confirmation' with the words: "Lord, confirm your servant N by your Holy Spirit that he may continue to be yours for ever. Amen". Hinchliff (p.143) sees here both echoes of the formula "Defend, O Lord....." from the 1662 B.C.P. of the Church of England and a development of the Series II (Church of England) confirmation formula. The laying on of hands upon the head of each candidate may accompany the confirmation. This latter item does not do injustice to their 'reformed tradition', for Whitaker (p.148)

tells us that although Calvin did not provide or practise such a rite himself, he would have been content to see the restoration of the laying on of hands when children made a personal confession of faith on condition that it was understood as a blessing. Where laying on of hands is not used, greater emphasis is placed upon the welcome and the right hand of fellowship. The new full members are welcomed by both clerical and lay members of the Church, thus representing the involvement of the whole congregation. Hymnology has always been an important feature of the Methodist Church and appropriately titled hymns form a part of the service and are printed in the order of service. Dixon (p.58) concludes, with regard to this service: "This is a fine service, much to be preferred to its predecessor of 1936, which was spoiled by its inordinate length...and its verbosity. The new service has many merits; not least in its ability to link the act of confirmation both with baptism, by means of its frequent references to and parallels with that rite, and with the ongoing life of the Church, in its emphasis on service and its close association with the Eucharist".

There are slight differences between the 1967 services and that of 1975, the more important of which are given here. The 1967 infant baptism service did not include the passage, Mk.1:9ff, in the ministry of the word; the events related there are incorporated into the baptismal prayer of that service. The 1967 service did not have a summary of the faith as an option to the recitation of the Apostles' Creed, nor did it have the optional giving of a lighted candle. In the case of adult baptizands, the baptismal prayer of 1967 contained five petitions (as opposed to three in the later service); for forgiveness of sins; death to sin and raising to new life; for new creation; for remaining a disciple of Christ; and for leading from darkness to light and death to life. In the 'Promises and

Profession of Faith' the third promise is different in the two services: 1967 has "will you obey Christ and serve him in the world?" The 1975 service has "will you obey Christ and serve him in the Church and in the world?" The wording of the confirmation formula is slightly different, the newer service has merely updated the language; this is true of all the later services.

Taken as a whole, theology of these services has not changed substantially; the structural and other changes that have taken place serve to express more explicitly what was implicit in the 1936 services.

CHAPTER SIXCONCLUSIONS

In this final chapter the concern is to draw together the evidence available to us from the different sources and to judge whether liturgical and/or theological convergence has taken place. A further judgement must also be made as to whether the rites, both in word and action, reflect the usage of the early Church (so far as we can tell). For convenience we shall consider these matters under the headings: Liturgical and Theological.

LITURGICAL

Hinchliff (p.5) comments that with the progress of the Ecumenical Movement following the Second World War there was "the general expectation that a study of baptism might lead to a greater unity because baptism was widely regarded as that which bonds all Christians together". This expectation has still not been fully realised, though work has steadily produced more agreement both in liturgical and theological detail. At the international level, the Preface of the Lima document (Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry, W.C.C., 1982) states (p.viii): "If the divided churches are to achieve the visible unity they seek, one of the essential prerequisites is that they should be in basic agreement on baptism, eucharist and ministry". The Lima document is the fruit of fifty years toil by the Faith and Order Commission of the W.C.C., which first met at Lausanne in 1927. The writers of the document admit (p.ix) that full communion has not yet been reached, and that this can only "be proclaimed after the churches reach the point of living and acting together in unity". Guarded though the writers are, section V para.20 of the document proposes that: "Within any comprehensive order of baptism at least the following

elements should find a place: the proclamation of the Scriptures referring to baptism; an invocation of the Holy Spirit; a renunciation of evil; a profession of faith in Christ and the Holy Trinity; the use of water; a declaration that the persons baptized have acquired a new identity as sons and daughters of God, and as members of the Church, called to be witnesses of the Gospel. Some churches consider that Christian initiation is not complete without the sealing of the baptized with the gift of the Holy Spirit and participation in holy communion".

Within this country the 'semi-official', inter-denominational Joint Liturgical Group (with members from the Church of England and Methodist Churches, and an observer for the Church of Rome) produced a booklet ('Initiation and Eucharist') as a response to a growing demand for a common rite. The comment (p.10) is made that: "On the one hand, the search becomes one for agreement on liturgical structure rather than total uniformity of ritual and practice". This would allow for the real impact of history and social custom on the way we worship. Also, the warning is voiced: "On the other hand, the structure to be sought must be sufficiently and faithfully expressive of common theological understanding".

Turning now to the four denominations under study in this thesis the most striking liturgical development is the possession by all four churches of an archetypal rite of initiation. This has been 'recovered' for use with adults by Roman Catholics, Methodists, and the Church of England; the Orthodox have never 'lost' it. By archetypal I refer to the celebration of baptism, the 'rite of the Spirit' (whatever the theological uncertainties, inbuilt ambiguities, and misgivings concerning it might be), and the holy communion as one rite celebrated together at the same time.....or at least with the possibility of the celebration of holy communion following very



soon upon the rites of baptism and the Spirit. The Barberini Euchologion (the oldest extant liturgical document of the Byzantine rite of the Eastern Orthodox Church) orders that a celebration of the holy communion should take place. The modern texts have replaced this with a brief synaxis, litany and blessing; though it is still the custom in many Orthodox churches to administer holy communion from the reserved sacrament at the end of the Order of Baptism if a celebration of holy communion is not soon to take place.

Though archetypal rites have been available for several years their use, with the exception of the Orthodox Church, is not mandatory and it is still perfectly possible and permissible to use the derivative rites. In spite of theological arguments to the contrary the continuation of their use as separate services would seem to be assured (at least for the foreseeable future) by the forces of social custom, traditions of the Church, and even out of convenience. Where this fragmentation of the rites of initiation is apparent the warning voiced by the Joint Liturgical Group (p.14) seems to have particular weight: "the total significance of the initiatory reality must not, in any final sense, be segmented. For such segmentation presses inexorably towards a falsely instantaneous view of sacramental action that suggests that different things are 'effected' at different moments". One of the great advantages that has accrued to the Orthodox Church over the centuries is that it has not had to endure the great waves of destructive arguments that have raged over the years with regard to the relative importance of each element in the initiation liturgy. This is largely due to the maintenance of an archetypal rite which has kept baptism, chrismation and holy communion closely bound together. Once this archetypal rite had been fragmented into several separated rites in the western Church the necessity to define 'what was going on' at any particular stage

became inevitable and has been a constant source of hot debate between and within churches. The fact that the western Church is returning, at least in liturgy, to the archetype as the norm has served little to alleviate this problem, as the W.C.C. has found in its recent work.

As noted above the Orthodox Church has only one rite of initiation. This is used for both adult and infant baptizands and there are (in Orthodox eyes) no practical or theological difficulties surrounding this. The distinction is made between becoming a catechumen and becoming a baptizand. One cannot become the latter until one has made a renunciation of Satan (apotaxis), followed by a declaration of allegiance to Christ (syntaxis), and professed one's faith in Jesus and the Trinity. In the Orthodox Church the becoming a catechumen and becoming a baptizand is expressed liturgically by having two services, though celebrated at one occasion. This is not the case with the Roman Catholic Church. Here the celebration of baptism, confirmation and holy communion is the last of three stages which begin with a service of becoming catechumens, moving on to enrolment, and finally proceeding to baptism. The time taken to proceed from the first stage of the catechumenate may extend to several years until there is evidence of a maturing faith. Enrolment takes place at the beginning of Lent and baptism follows at Easter. The Church of England and Methodism have no distinctive service of becoming catechumens, though it is expected that prior training will be given to those wishing to be baptized. Also, it must be stressed that the archetypal rite is only to be used for adults in all except the Orthodox Church; where infants are concerned the derivative services must be used.

Wainwright (p.18) believes that: "the varying lengths of the catechumenate and the varying positions of instruction in the faith in relation to baptism and to delayed 'confirmation' reflect different

attitudes of the Church toward what is required for receiving the gospel in different historical and cultural circumstances". Hence, while eschatological expectation was high preparation remained short; as this receded so a more lengthy period of testing and instruction was felt to be appropriate. When Constantine 'established' Christianity leading to an increased number of converts a shorter preparation returned once more.....perhaps to cope with the great numbers. He further says (p.20): "The Reformers - having rediscovered the importance of the "Word" and of "faith", and being perhaps influenced by Renaissance intellectualism and individualism - made instruction in the gospel a condition for receiving "confirmation": and even, in the case of the Baptists, baptism". Interestingly, only the Roman Catholic Church has seen a need to restore the adult catechumenate in our times.

In the fairly recent past baptism, and any preparation which may have been given, was treated as a more or less private occasion involving minister and family only. This practice would seem to have arisen simply as a matter of convenience so that the 'normal' course of worship would not be disturbed. Cranmer never intended, for the Church of England, initiation to be anything other than an event to which the whole congregation would be witnesses. The act of baptism was intended to take place on a Sunday at a main service and the learning of the Catechism by the confirmands was meant to follow on from the second lesson at Evening Prayer. More recently the role of the congregation has increased in the Roman Catholic and Reformed Churches. The presence of the congregation was always important in Orthodoxy, though even there, at times, it became acceptable for baptism to take place in the home. The Roman Catholic Church prescribes that baptism should take place on a Sunday and even during Mass when the most people would be present. When it must be outside Mass relatives, friends and neighbours should attend, thus widening the service beyond

the family to the community. The Church of England strongly recommends that the baptism of infants or adults should take place within the context of another service when a representative congregation would be present. If this were not to happen then the act of welcome by the congregation would lack integrity. The Methodist Church shares the same intentions but where pastoral considerations dictate otherwise an adult candidate for baptism may be baptized privately and be brought to confirmation and receive holy communion on a later occasion.

In considering the range of services now authorized for use I quote, at length, Wainwright (p.16): "In the historical circumstances of "Christendom", the initiation of infants came to be seen as the "normal" practice, and this is reflected in later medieval western service-books which often presuppose that the only persons who will be baptized are infants. In both East and West, the ceremonies of the catechumenate were compressed into the form of a brief overture to the baptismal rite proper. Both East and West made provision for the baptismal interrogations to be answered by the sponsors in the name of the infant. During the Middle Ages, no rite of initiation was specifically designed for infants; there occurred only ad hoc adaptations of rites which had taken their classical shape in times when adult initiation was the fundamental practice. The new liturgies of the Lutheran, Zwinglian, Calvinist and Anglican Reformation take, on the whole, more account of the fact that it is specifically infants who will be baptized; and they set up "confirmation" as a ceremony for children after instruction in the faith". One of the questions that has to be asked of the provision of services specifically for infants and specifically for those of more mature years is: are we dealing with one and the same baptism? This question cannot be asked of the Orthodox Church which has staunchly stood by its policy of one initiation rite for all. It must be considered by those who

have different services for different situations, and particularly when the profession of faith is cast in a different form (such as is the case in the Methodist and Roman Catholic Churches). The Liturgical Commission of the Church of England were aware of the problem of the integrity of the derivative services; an example is given here (A.S.B. Commentary, p.115): "The historical evidence from a very early date shows that when infants were baptized they were also anointed and received the laying on of hands. The plain implication of this is that whatever the laying on of hands may mean, it means something which is applicable to infants no less than to adults, to the age of innocence no less than to years of discretion. There could therefore be no theological objection if the laying on of hands, whatever it may signify, were to be included in the service of infant baptism". They deemed, however, that such an addition to the infant baptism service would not command support. Whatever the theological answer may be the liturgical situation is that, unlike the Orthodox Church, the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of England possess many derivative rites and the Methodists retain the three that they have had since 1936.

I refer now to the symbolic actions that accompany the verbal content of the liturgies of initiation. Without a doubt symbols can change in meaning throughout time and in different cultures making explanatory words a necessary addition to pin-point their meaning. Sometimes this does not lead to clear and unequivocal interpretations of individual symbols. The laying on of hands and anointing are notoriously difficult to assess. Symbolic actions have always been a prominent feature of the Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches, but at the Reformation they were radically reduced in the Church of England. For example: the exorcism which was present in the 1549 BCP was removed in the book of 1552, also Cranmer moved the signation

associated with the catechumenate to a new post-baptismal position. Still further reduction took place as Methodism grew from the Church of England. However, in these latter two denominations the use of symbols has found a new standing: a member of the Church of England today may be anointed with oil at the confirmation; a Methodist child is given the sign of the Cross at baptism and may receive a lighted candle, an adult may have the laying on of hands at the confirmation and may be given a Bible or other book. These changes have not come about without controversy, and some members of the Reformed Churches fear that these changes herald a return to the 'popery' of the past. Such a claim is unfounded. While the Roman Catholic Church has ready for use in its restored catechumenate such symbolic actions as: exorcism, signation, insufflation and Lenten scrutinies, these are to be seen as "a quarry and a framework within which there may be substantial local variation" (Sagovsky, p.16). They are not slavish rituals to be 'got through' at all costs. The exorcism which departed the Church of England liturgy in 1552 made a return in the form of a prayer at the end of the renunciations in the A.S.B.; the signing with the Cross has also made an optional return to its earlier position. Typically, the Orthodox Church has maintained its symbolic actions of the catechumenate undisturbed for, at least, the last twelve hundred years.

When one considers the symbolism that accompanies the baptismal washing one must ask oneself whether anything less than total immersion can possibly convey the theological truth that we have died and risen with Christ. The Orthodox Church has always insisted that total immersion ( or at least pouring water over the whole of the body) at the name of each Person of the Trinity be practised, and also with the baptizand facing East. Cope (p.315) comments on this latter posture with a quotation from Clement of Alexandria: "The East is an image of the day of birth". This rigorous policy may be relaxed in

an emergency when a pouring of water over the forehead is sufficient. In its later services the Roman Catholic Church has restored the option of triple immersion, the other option being a triple pouring (the Rituale of Pius V had water poured in the form of a Cross). Of the two it is immersion which is the preferred mode as being the more suitable symbol of participation in Christ's death and resurrection. The latest services of the Church of England maintain the tradition of the B.C.P. in that dipping or pouring are the requisite modes. John Wesley omitted the option to pour water over a candidate and, instead, introduced the mode of sprinkling water over a baptizand. The latest services of the Methodist Church retain sprinkling and have included the option of pouring. The question which has come to the fore in the Reformed churches is whether one ought to use a triple administration of whichever mode is chosen, or would a single administration suffice. The Synod report, G.S.343, of the Church of England required a triple administration but the Revision Committee removed that obligation and declined to order either way. They did, however, make comment on the long tradition of a threefold action and its witness to the Trinity, but they also declared that a single action was lawful and valid; this has entered the baptism rubrics in the A.S.B. The Methodist Church followed the same line, and in its General Directions for baptism in the 1975 Service Book is the rubric: "It is fitting that water should be poured or sprinkled on the candidate three times, once at the mention of each Person of the Trinity, but it is sufficient that it be done once". Whereas the practice may differ between the denominations, all baptisms are administered in the name of the Trinitarian God as laid down at the end of St. Matthew's Gospel.

The ceremonial action accompanying confirmation is often described as the 'laying on of hands' in the western Church; this

is not, strictly speaking, correct. In the Methodist Church it was not until 1975 that the optional use of the laying on of hands was allowed. The point has been made (p.126) that Calvin was not against the use of this act providing it was understood as an act of blessing with no sacramental connotations. The Church of England has chosen its words with care with regard to this matter; the Series III service spoke of the 'laying on of hands' (plural), the A.S.B. has the 'laying on of a hand' (singular). There was concern to avoid a repetition of the dispute which caused the non-authorization of the Series I confirmation service, i.e. the suggestion that confirmation follows the example of Acts 8:17 where it appears that the Holy Spirit was passed on through the laying on of hands by Peter and John. What the Church of England has sought to avoid the Roman Catholic Church has sought to affirm in its confirmation service, namely, the transmission of the Holy Spirit. This is symbolized by the laying on of a single hand and at the same time anointing the confirmand with holy oil and accompanied by the appropriate verbal formula. The Orthodox rite of initiation has always contained chrismation with an anointing of various parts of the body (but not the imposition of hands) and, as has been previously mentioned, was free from the theological wrangling over the role of the Holy Spirit. Both the Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches have pre-baptismal anointings and the post-baptismal giving of a white garment, but neither of these things are found in the services of the Church of England and Methodist Churches.

In spite of the above comments the overwhelming liturgical feature is the presence once again of an archetypal rite in all four churches. This is a mark of liturgical convergence which draws them both closer to each other and back towards the early witness of the Church. Although, in general terms, it is true to proclaim convergence between the rites, it is also clear that the rites retain the evidence



of their separate origins. The Orthodox rite, with its renunciation (apotaxis) and declaration of allegiance to Christ (syntaxis), bears evidence of its eastern heritage; whereas the lack of a syntaxis in the others is testimony to their western tradition. The relative paucity of symbolism, when compared with the Roman Catholic Church, reveals the effect still of the Reformers' axe on the Church of England (and on Methodism which followed).....though the effect would seem to be waning.

In chapter one we found that the amount of biblical liturgical detail was small and far from unambiguous. This being so, it can only be said with certainty that these rites reflect the eastern and western traditions of the post-apostolic Church. One can point to the following features as being indicative of a deliberate attempt to return to the earlier practices of the Church: the recovery of the use and value of ceremonial actions by the Church of England and Methodism; the accepting of a rite of confirmation by the Methodist conference; and the restoration of an adult catechumenate by the Roman Catholic Church. The Orthodox Church has, by and large, retained the early usage intact throughout the ages. Other features such as the practice of total immersion, where present, and the western profession of faith might well have direct biblical lineage.

#### THEOLOGICAL

The W.C.C. certainly feels that the 1982 Lima document marks an important step in the process of recovering visible unity of faith in the one Church. The preface encouragingly states (p.ix): "This Lima text represents the significant theological convergence which Faith and Order has discerned and formulated. Those who know how widely the Churches have differed in doctrine and practice on baptism, eucharist and ministry, will appreciate the importance of the large

measure of agreement registered here". However, the writers acknowledge that the document is not a "complete theological treatment" (p.ix) and has dealt mainly with areas of theological convergence while indicating in italicized commentaries difficulties still to be overcome.

Commentary (6) is as stark a reminder as we could wish of the task before the world-wide Church: "The inability of the churches mutually to recognize their various practices of baptism as sharing in the one baptism, and their actual dividedness in spite of mutual baptismal recognition, have given dramatic visibility to the broken witness of the Church. The readiness of the churches in some places and times to allow differences of sex, race, or social status to divide the body of Christ has further called into question genuine baptismal unity of the Christian community (Gals.3:27-28) and has seriously compromised its witness. The need to recover baptismal unity is at the heart of the ecumenical task as it is central for the realization of genuine partnership within the Christian communities". We may deduce from this that, at the world-wide level, theological convergence is incomplete.

It was noted earlier that the most prominent feature of liturgical revision in our country was the restoration of an archetypal rite to the Roman Catholic and Reformed Churches. The fragmentation of the rite in the western Church had been due mainly to the expansion of the Church and a corresponding shortage in the number of bishops available to administer the sacrament of the Holy Spirit (which, unlike in the East, they reserved to themselves). A contributory reason to the holding part of the initiation services was the practice of infant baptism. This led to the situation in which it was felt that a rite of 'confirmation' was a necessity for someone baptized before the age of personal decision. With the liturgical and theological revision that has taken place in the recent past the Roman Catholic and Reformed Churches have returned to an archetypal

rite (for adults) which, preferably, includes a first reception of the holy communion. This is a return to the tradition which the Orthodox Church has always maintained to be correct. Theologically the fragmentation of the initiation rites are now understood to be abnormal rather than normal; the service of confirmation is seen very much to be bound up with baptism, with both finding fulfilment in the sharing of the holy communion. Within the Church of England the ancient unity of baptism, confirmation and first communion was reaffirmed and a return to this practice proposed as long ago as 1911 by Bishop Frere.

The Faith and Order Commission has been able to pin-point agreement in the area of the institution of baptism - namely, that it is a gift of God, that it be administered in the threefold Name as expressed at the end of St. Matthew's Gospel, and that it is (p.2) "rooted in the ministry of Jesus of Nazareth, in his death and in his resurrection. It is incorporation into Christ, who is the crucified and risen Lord; it is entry into the new covenant between God and God's people". The four churches in this thesis would find that acceptable, as they would also the meaning of baptism: "Baptism is the sign of new life through Jesus Christ. It unites the one baptized with Christ and his people.....The images are many but the reality is one" (p.2). These images include: participation in Christ's death and resurrection; conversion, pardoning, cleansing; the gift of the Spirit; incorporation into the body of Christ; the sign of the Kingdom.

Faith and Order also expressed agreement on the relationship between faith and baptism (p.3): "Baptism is both God's gift and our human response to that gift. It looks towards a growth into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Eph.4:13). The necessity of faith for the reception of the salvation embodied and

set forth in baptism is acknowledged by all churches. Personal commitment is necessary for responsible membership in the body of Christ". It is at this point that paedobaptist churches and believers' baptism churches find difficulty in mutual acceptance of one another's baptism. There are signs, too, of stress within some of the paedobaptist churches as they seek to affirm the unity of baptism, confirmation and communion, and as they seek to acknowledge that the clearest biblical evidence is of the baptism of adults, whilst still retaining the baptism of infants and with a separate service of confirmation later. Wainwright comments (p.17): "The case of infant baptism.....provides a good example of the way in which theology has influenced, or sometimes failed to influence, the liturgy of initiation". Jeremias is probably right in supposing that it was pastoral (rather than theological) reasons that led to the practice of infant baptism; namely, that parents desired to include their offspring in their Christian hope. On the other hand, Aland is also probably right in seeing the doctrine of original sin as the prime reason for the continuance (he would say origin) of this practice. As Faith and Order indicated the initiation procedure of any church must never be divorced from an expression of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. In the churches under study here there has always been a profession of faith and a corresponding renunciation of Satan and his influence. The area for potential disagreement is in the understanding of who actually makes the renunciation and the profession of faith. In the case of adults it is obviously they themselves who make this act of commitment, but with infants this is not invariably the understanding. Wainwright again (p.17f): "The Reformers rediscovered the theological principle of justification through faith, but they mostly failed to grasp the nettle when it became a question of relating that principle to baptism....Luther

was aware of the theological problem, but liturgically his two Taufbuchlein show no sign of uneasiness in this matter and simply ordain that the infant make the responses "through the godparents"; the Anglican Prayer Books of 1549 and 1552 feel the need for some kind of explanation and state that the infant must "promise by you, that be his sureties", and the Book of 1662 adds "until he come of age to take it upon himself". On the other hand, it is in the name of theological principles (justification by faith; the authority of New Testament Scripture.....) that the Baptists have limited baptism to candidates able themselves to profess their faith".

In the history of the Church there have been two solutions put forward with regard to the question of an infant's commitment to Christ: one of them invokes the concept of proxy faith; the other does not. Where an infant is admitted by a proxy profession of faith the child is deemed to have actually made a personal response. This kind of expression of faith has a long history in the liturgical traditions of the Church, dating back to Hippolytus (Ap. Trad. XXI:4). This concept of proxy is not unknown in other decision-making processes devised by mankind. There are situations where when a person is not present or able to make a decision then someone-else may act as that person's 'stand-in'; but if it had been possible the person would have made answer for himself. However, in the case of infant baptism, even though the child is present he is not able to make a response, and will not be able to do so for several years at least. Here the proxy response may be made by both parents and godparents, the latter being appointed for the very purpose of being an infant's mouthpiece. According to this concept the faith of the parents and godparents is secondary to the primary task of speaking on behalf of, or in the name of, the child.

Where the admission of an infant is by a non-proxy means, a

moral responsibility is placed upon the parents and godparents for the right upbringing of the child. This follows a tradition found in Tertullian (*De Baptismo*, 18) where godparents act as sureties for the child - they make themselves answerable to God if the child does not ultimately proceed to a personal declaration of renunciation and profession of faith. This moral responsibility is not necessarily a part of the tradition inherited from Hippolytus.

Both of these views are represented in these four churches. The Orthodox Church has remained the one which has most clearly maintained the use of the proxy method; but even here the Church baptizes only those whose family connection with the Church is readily known so a moral dimension is implied in the task of the parents and godparents. The old rites of Pius V followed the proxy concept but the post-Vatican II rites have the parents and godparents answering for themselves; i.e. a moral rather than a proxy understanding of the parental/godparental role. The Church of England has, again, used the device of ambiguity to allow for both proxy and non-proxy interpretations of the role of parents and godparents. This is achieved within its services by using the words: "Therefore I ask these questions which you must answer for yourself and for these children" at the introduction to the renunciation and profession of faith. Methodism has always repudiated the proxy concept in favour of the moral understanding; the provision of godparents did not begin until 1976 and even then the questions put to them and to the parents are of a practical nature relating to the right bringing up of children.

As was noted earlier, in the western Church the role of the congregation has increased, and nowhere more so than in the realm of the profession of faith. The congregations explicitly reaffirm their faith at the same point in the service as the candidates, sponsors and parents. In the Methodist Church the congregational reaffirmation

of faith precedes that of the candidate, emphasizing that he is entering a living community of faith. The Orthodox Church would wish to see in the presence of the congregation something of the ever-present faith of the Church such that no baptism, be that adult or infant, can be deemed to be devoid of faith. Schmemmann (p.17f): "For the whole Church is changed, enriched, and fulfilled when another child of God is integrated into her life and becomes a member of Christ's Body".

When we look at the actual content of the promises that make up the renunciation of evil and the profession of faith we see that, in some cases, the form of words used is not the same for both infant and adult baptisms. Where this happens we do well to recall the question raised earlier by Hinchliff as to whether one could consider that infant baptism and believers' baptism are in fact one and the same baptism. The Orthodox Church does ask the same questions of both adult and infant baptizands and the renunciations and professions are very thorough and further emphasized by the use of ceremonial acts. The threefold renunciation is followed by another question to confirm the baptizand's intention. The profession of faith, which is the recitation of the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed, is preceded and succeeded by a declaration of allegiance to Christ during which our Lord is acknowledged as both King and God. Likewise, the Church of England maintains the same promises whether the baptizand is an adult or an infant; they are also the same promises as at confirmation. The renunciation is in a threefold form and expresses a turning to Christ and a turning from evil, while the threefold profession of faith expresses belief and trust in the three Persons of the Trinity. These promises were a matter of debate as to whether the language ought to be modified so that someone with no Christian conviction could make them; the Liturgical Commission rejected this view

(G.S.343, p.7). The duties of parents and godparents are set out at the beginning of the infant service and require verbal assent before the service may proceed.

In common with the Church of England, the Roman Catholic Church requires a similar verbal assent from its parents and godparents. There are, however, alternative forms of promises which may mean that the promises are different in an adult and infant celebration. There are two forms of renunciation in the infant rite: one is a traditional threefold rejection of Satan, his works, and empty promises; the other is more explicit: "Do you reject sin, so as to live in the freedom of God's children? Do you reject the glamour of evil, and refuse to be mastered by sin? Do you reject Satan, father of sin and prince of darkness?" There are three options for the renunciation in the adult rite, two of which are the same as in the infant rite. The profession of faith is the same for both adults and infants, being a threefold form based upon the Apostles' Creed. In the Methodist Church the promises are always different for adults and infants. In the infant service the promises are a means of making parents and godparents accept moral responsibility for the spiritual upbringing of their children. The threefold promises pledge the parents and godparents to provide Christian homes of love and faithfulness; by word, prayer and example to renounce all evil and to trust in Christ as Saviour; and to encourage their young to full-membership of the Church and lives of service. In the case of adults the threefold promises are based on the last two promises in the infant service: repentance and renunciation of evil; trust in Christ as Lord and Saviour; and obedience to Christ in service.

One area where the Faith and Order Commission had to admit disagreement was the location of the gift of the Holy Spirit. "Christians differ in their understanding as to where the sign of



the gift of the Spirit is to be found. Different actions have become associated with the giving of the Spirit. For some it is the water rite itself. For others, it is the anointing with chrism and/or the imposition of hands, which many churches call confirmation. For still others it is all three, as they see the Spirit operative throughout the rite. All agree that Christian baptism is in water and the Holy Spirit" (Lima, p.6). It is clear to all churches that there is no sense in which initiation can be understood to be complete without the activity of the Holy Spirit. However, just when and how the Holy Spirit acts is a matter of dispute between and also within individual denominations. The crux of the problem would seem to lie in the distinctiveness of the two rites of baptism and confirmation/chrismation.

As has been noted above the Orthodox Church avoided much of the theological disturbances experienced by the western Church by maintaining the 'oneness' of the initiation procedure. Within this one rite there are two distinct processes at work. Through the working of the Holy Spirit at baptism the candidate is incorporated into Christ. This new spiritual life needs then to be fed and directed along the path of doing God's will; this is begun at the point of chrismation when the Holy Spirit Himself is given to the candidate by an anointing and the accompanying words: "The Seal of the Gift of the Holy Spirit". Although the candidate is usually an infant he becomes a full member of the Orthodox Church from this point.

With regard to the Roman Catholic Church, we have already seen Walsh's interpretation of the baptism/confirmation theology as merely the theological rationalisation of an established pastoral practice. The New Ordo expresses the Holy Spirit as working in baptism to bring about regeneration, the giving of a new life with God in His Church. In confirmation this regenerated life is strengthened spiritually by the gift of the Holy Spirit. The new formula for the confirmation is

very similar to that of the Orthodox Church; it being an anointing together with the words: "Receive the seal of the Gift of the Holy Spirit". In common with the Methodist Church and the Church of England the confirmation prayer is based on the Isaiah 11 passage; in this denomination the words are rendered: "...send your Holy Spirit upon them...". In the situation where the rites are celebrated in a fragmented manner and a number of years intervene between baptism and confirmation, one might well ask the question of the role of the Holy Spirit during these intervening years - is the person to live up to at least the age of seven before receiving the promised gift of the Holy Spirit?

In choosing to make its initiation services ambiguous on this point from the Series II services onwards, the Liturgical Commission of the Church of England included material in both services which could enlist the support of anyone holding one of the three interpretations given earlier. So there is evidence for supporters of the 'Mason-Dix' line to show that baptism and confirmation are separate acts of the Holy Spirit which together complete initiation. There is also evidence to support the 'Lampe' line that sacramental initiation is completed in the administration of water-baptism. This is a shift in the understanding of the Church of England which, prior to Series II, favoured more strongly a two-stage sacramental working of the Holy Spirit.

At the separation of the Methodist Church from the Church of England the confirmation service was not continued. It was not until the experimental services of 1967 that the term 'confirmation' was introduced into the service-books of the Methodist Church. In the baptism service is the declaration of the defeat of sin and death and an invocation of the Holy Spirit to effect a being born again into new life. In the confirmation/reception service is the personal

response of the candidate to Christ's call and the strengthening by the Holy Spirit for a life of service. The confirmation/reception service is understood to be the taking up of a place already set aside after baptism; one becomes a 'full member' after having been confirmed/received. The service refers back to the baptism of the person and is further building upon what has gone before rather than a separate act. Hence the wording of the confirmation prayer is: "...establish them now in faith by the Holy Spirit, and day by day increase in them your gifts of grace..."; the confirmation formula is: "Lord, confirm your servant, N, by your Holy Spirit that he may continue to be yours forever".

Traditionally, in the western Churches, when confirmation has been celebrated as a separate rite it has had a special significance to the life of a parish/congregation because it required the presence of the bishop. Holeton (p.87) comments: "Where confirmation continues to be practised, its liturgical celebration takes on a character that far outshadows the normal liturgical celebration of baptism and the eucharist. It is still common in some churches to baptize an adult privately and then confirm the person publicly a few hours or days later. This is, most would admit, an abuse, but it illustrates a dangerously skewed understanding of the relative importance of baptism that has developed through an unbalanced teaching on, and celebration of confirmation". Where baptism, confirmation and communion can be celebrated together with the bishop or superintendent minister present a more balanced teaching and celebration can be achieved.

In view of the above we may find general agreement with the Faith and Order Commission in that there is significant theological convergence between these churches particularly in the understanding of the institution of baptism, its meaning, and the relationship of faith to baptism. However, there remain differences in the understanding

of the activity and locating of the Holy Spirit in the rites. Also, infant baptism as opposed to adult baptism is a source of concern to those who seek the baptismal unity of the Church. The images of baptism that the Lima text identified as commanding universal agreement are thoroughly biblical and we may say with confidence that these churches have a theology of baptism which may be discerned in the New Testament. Whether that baptism was open to infants as well as adults is debateable. With regard to confirmation we saw that the New Testament does not give overwhelmingly clear indications for or against such a rite and that uncertainty has led to different interpretations in the present-day rites.

My overall conclusion must first stress again that the intention of the writers of what we now call 'Scripture' was not to give a thorough theology of initiation and its practice. These documents cover many subjects but their first concern was to witness to the Lord Jesus Christ. Also, the situation in which they were written varies from document to document, as does the date and place of writing. It is important too to remember that these early Christian writers would never have expected this world to continue in existence for as long as it has; they looked towards an imminent (or at least early) parousia. Tremendous changes have taken place in the world, not least in that Christianity has become a global religion rather than remaining as a Middle Eastern sect. I conclude that within this country and within these four paedobaptist churches both liturgical and theological convergence has taken place. The presence of derivative rites which may be celebrated separately, and the uncertainties surrounding infant as opposed to adult baptism, and ambiguity over the activity of the Holy Spirit reveal that convergence is not complete. These churches do bear faithful witness to the past, and eastern and western traditions

of the post-apostolic Church are clearly visible both in form and thought, and certain aspects probably date back to the New Testament scriptures themselves.

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FOOTNOTE

the following book arrived too late to be taken into consideration in this thesis:

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'The Meaning of Baptism: a Comparison of the Teaching and Practice of the Fourth Century with the Present Day', Alcuin Club Collections nos. 67.

