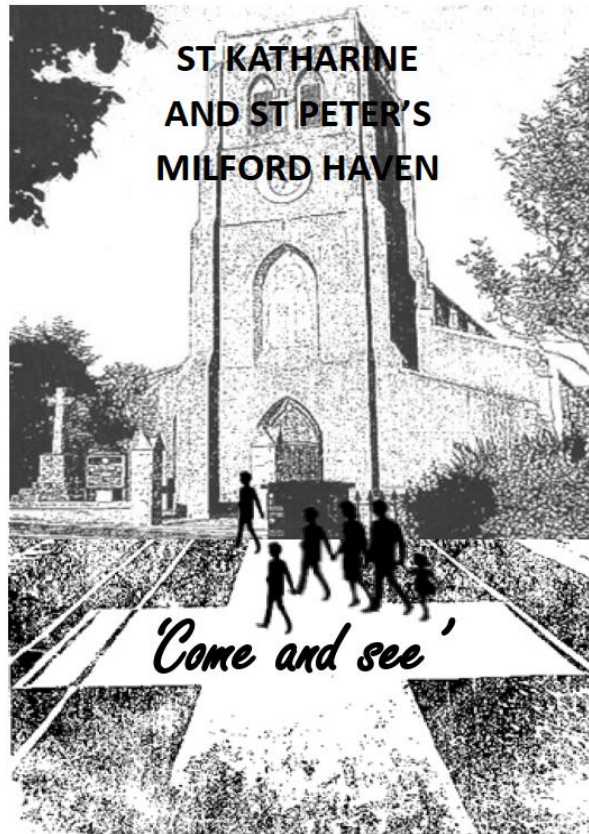


**THE PARISH OF
MILFORD HAVEN**



**BAPTISM FOR YOU
AND YOUR CHILDREN**

What is Baptism?

Holy Baptism makes us Christians, which is why it sometimes called 'Christening'. It is the first of seven sacraments and absolutely essential- we cannot become Christians without it. When someone is baptised they become members of Christ's body, which is the Church. Baptism marks a new beginning of a person's life as a Christian.

Why baptism?

Those who care for us want us to have the very best start in life. From the moment we are born we are dependent upon others to feed us, clothe us, care for us and love us. Without this care we would quickly perish. We also need our spiritual well-being looked after until we are able to look after ourselves, which is why baptism is so important. When you smile at your child it brings them to life. God's smile comes in baptism. It is a sign that we are precious and valued.

What is your role?

Very often the child to be baptised is too young to understand what is happening at their baptism, so as your child he or she needs your support. This is done through:

- Your prayers-asking God to help you and your child.
- Your example-showing your child how to live in love and compassion.
- Your teaching-telling your child about Jesus and His life.

Don't worry! The Church is here to help. If you have any questions about faith or prayer, or simply want advice, just ask one of the clergy.

What about Godparents?

You will need support in bringing up your child as a Christian. The Church asks for Godparents to help with this responsibility-do think carefully about your choice. It is desirable that all Godparents should be baptised and if possible that they attend Church regularly. Choose people who are willing to accept the same responsibilities as you in bringing up your child as a Christian.

How do Godparents help?

Godparents share responsibility in a number of ways: for example, remembering your child on their birthday, at Christmas, Easter and on the anniversary of their baptism. They also encourage the child in their life, praying and caring for the child, perhaps even teaching your child prayers, such as the 'Our Father'.

It is vital that Godparents have been baptised or christened themselves. If you have a potential Godparents who has not been baptised then this can be organised in advance of the service or during the same service. Please speak to Fr Harri about this.

The big day

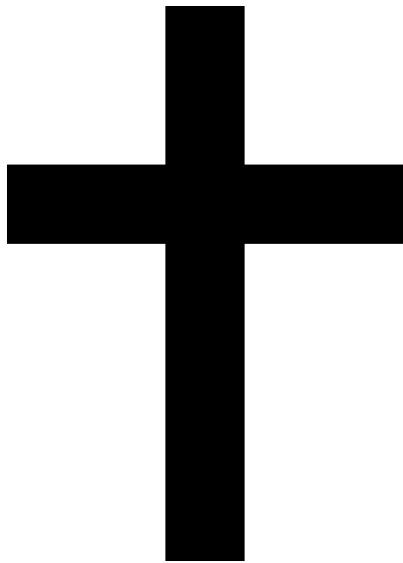
The day of Baptism is a great day for your child and the family, and for the Church as it welcomes a new member. Because baptism makes us members of the Church the rest of God's family will want to get to know you and welcome you, so please come to church, so that you can begin to learn what it means to be a member of the Christian family.

How much does it cost?

Nothing. There is no charge for baptism. If you wish to make an offering that is at the total discretion of the family-but this is a purely voluntary contribution.

The signs and symbols of baptism

During the baptism service many signs and symbols are used to indicate the presence of God and his love for us.

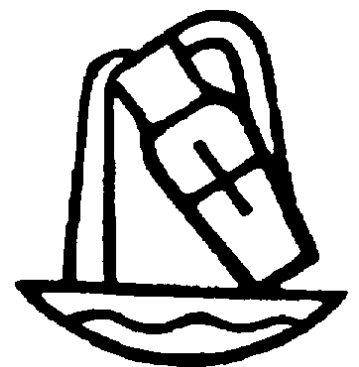


The Cross

A sign on something shows its origins or ownership. The sign of the cross is the mark for Christians of Jesus Christ who died on the cross. The sign of the cross is traced on the child's forehead to show that he/she belongs to Christ, who now offers his help and grace to face and overcome the trials of life.

Water

This is for washing and refreshing, a sign that our sins are washed away. Water is also necessary for life and so is a sign, too, that the life of the risen Christ is ours. It is through the waters of baptism that we are 'born again.'



Oils

Oil of Baptism is olive oil blessed by the Bishop. Just as athletes used to rub oil into themselves to strengthen and prepare them for the race ahead so it is used in baptism to prepare us for the Christian

journey. The oil of Chrism is also used. It is a mixture of olive oil and sweet smelling balsam. It is rubbed onto the crown of the head just as it is used when the monarch is crowned. It is a sealing of the gifts of the Holy Spirit and a sign that we belong to Jesus' royal family.

White garment

This garment (usually a shawl or gown) is a reminder of the clothes worn by Christians after baptism in the first centuries. It is a sign of innocence and putting on a new life of resurrection.

The lighted candle

Any light burns away darkness. The candle given to the child at baptism represents the light of Christ burning away the darkness in our lives, to bring us new light and life, assuring us that Jesus is always with us. The baptismal candle is lit from the great Easter Candle which is a sign of the risen Christ. We pray that your child's life will illuminate others through the love of God.



The Future

Your efforts will not only help your child to grow up in the love of God: they will also help you grow. As you teach your child to pray, you yourself will also deepen in prayer; as you teach your child to appreciate the life of the Church and its sacraments, your own faith will be enriched. Your child's baptism is the beginning of a new life in which you will grow close to one another and to God.

The Parish of Milford Haven welcomes you, and your family. We are here to offer help and to pray for the future happiness and peace of your family in the years ahead.

Vicar and Parish Priest

Fr Harri Williams

The Vicarage

4 Pill Lane

Milford Haven

Pembrokeshire

SA73 2LB

01646 692476

harri1985@gmail.com

Lay Reader

Mr Steve Traynar

5 Sandy Haven Drive

Herbrandston

Pembrokeshire

SA73 3TS

01646 699023

sjtraynar@aol.com



Find us on
Facebook

www.stkatharinestpeterschurch.org

Services

The normal pattern for Sunday services in St Katharine's & St Peter's Church, Milford Haven is as follows:

Time	Service
8.00am	Low Mass
10.00am	Parish Mass <i>with Sunday School</i> <i>Family Mass held on the 4th Sunday of the Month</i>
4.30pm- 6.00pm	'Prayer and Pizza' Youth Group

Sunday School

Children from 0-10 are welcome in Sunday School. This is held during the 10am service every week. The children begin in the main body of the Church before leaving for the Church Hall. During their time in Sunday School they listen to a story from the Bible, play games and enjoy a craft activity.

Prayer & Pizza

Our Youth Group caters for young people between the ages of 10-18. This group meets on a weekly basis during term time. The young people enjoy games, teaching based on a theme for the week or the term, quiet/reflective time and pizza to conclude their evening.