



Presented to



On _____

By _____

A Word
to My
Sponsor



Celebrating the Life
of Your Godchild

Richard and Hazel Bimler

*This booklet is dedicated to our sponsors
and godchildren:*

*Bill, Caroline, Ed, Ann,
Cheryl, Kim, Tom, Mark,
Jimmie, Lisa, and Jill.*

*Thanks for sharing the baptismal promise
with us!*



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Your Godchild's Special Day



Name _____

Date _____

Congregation _____

Address _____

Scripture Lessons _____

Parent(s) _____

Sponsor(s) _____

Other Special People Who Attended

Pastor _____

Special Stories or Observations of the Day

Introduction

A splash of water.

The words of promise: “In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit . . .”

A community of believers . . .

Another Baptism as the Lord marks a person as His forgiven child!

And because of this action by our Lord, we continue to live out our daily Baptism each day as members of the family of God.

This booklet focuses on the power and promise of God first shared with each of us at our own Baptism. It is intended for baptismal sponsors of infants, children, youth, and even adults. The following pages remind each of us of God’s daily promise to us through our Baptism and encourage us to live out this promise with those around us, especially with those who call us sponsors. The book also emphasizes the fact that our Lord continues to be the “sponsor” for each of us as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and makes us holy each and every day.

These pages will provide some practical ideas, prayers, questions, and activities designed to help you live out your baptismal promise with those around you. The activities also are intended to focus on the joys and celebration of Baptism as they serve as daily reminders of the promise God has given to each of us in our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Baptism is God’s gift of love, affirmation, and belonging. It is God “calling us by name” (Isaiah 43:1) and making us His own. And no one will ever take away that promise! Not even when we forget whose we are or when we forget to remember those who call us sponsor.

We are renewed and refreshed in knowing that God continues to hug us for the sake of Jesus through the power of Baptism.

Baptism is a daily event. Five-year-old Rachel expressed this well. She and Grandpa had been discussing Baptism informally for several weeks when one day she spilled lemonade all over the kitchen table. Grandpa became a little upset, especially because Grandma wasn't around to help clean up the mess. As Grandpa began helping Rachel clean up the sticky stuff, Rachel, sensing Grandpa's irritation, looked at him and exclaimed, "Well, I still am baptized, aren't I?"

Enough said. Case closed. Baptism is a daily occurrence. It is a constant reminder of God's promise through Jesus that has been given to each of us—to Rachel and even to Grandpa—to love, accept, and forgive, even in sticky situations.

How Do You Spell Baptism?

Use these thoughts to instigate making Baptism a daily event in your life, as well as in the life of your god-child.

- B** stands for *BE*. Baptism tells us who we are. We are human beings, loved and redeemed by Christ. Our Baptism seals this promise of redemption in our lives. Being one of God's people, forgiven in Christ, assures us of life eternal and helps us to live each day as a gift from the Lord.
- A** stands for *AFFIRM*. Baptism affirms us! It says we are special people. It marks us with the sign of the cross, through water and Word, and says to us that we are special! Amid the problems, pains, hurts, and hopelessness of life, Baptism reminds us each day that we are affirmed.
- P** stands for *PROMISE*. Baptism is God's promise that He will never leave us. Even when we try to leave Him, even when we forget who we are, Baptism brings us back to the promise of God. And that's forever!
- T** stands for *TIME*. Baptism allows us to see that time is a gift from the Lord. God-given time can be used in special ways. As sponsors we can spend time with godchildren through prayer and through engaging in various activities with them. Time is a gift to be used wisely. As someone once said, "God invented time so everything wouldn't happen all at once!" Time

allows us to see our Baptism happening in our lives each day.

- I** stands for *INDIVIDUAL*. Baptism calls us by name—we are individuals. We are not just a social security number, a zip code, an area code, or an e-mail address. We are individuals, named and saved through the blood of Christ. And because of that, we are people of promise. We are people who share this promise with others. There is only one of each of us—God loves us as individuals in Christ Jesus.
- S** stands for *STORIES*. We continue to tell stories about our faith life. We tell stories with our godchildren, with our sponsors, with those around us. “Those who tell the stories, define the culture.” Wise words. People of God, people of Baptism, need to continue to tell the stories of love and joy and forgiveness in Christ. Tell the stories through Scripture, through personal experiences, through your church life, through your family. Continue to tell the story! We love to tell the story!
- M** stands for *MODEL*. Baptism makes us models of what it is to be baptized and forgiven people of God. We continue to model a life of forgiveness to those around us. We do not model perfection, but we model forgiveness. Forgiveness is not something we do. It is, first and foremost, something we are in Christ Jesus. It is a relationship we model through other people. We model ministry. We rub shoulders with others. We put people in caring, loving contact with each other. Our model is Christ, and Baptism allows us to be Christ-like to others!

Use each letter in the word Baptism to think through other faith experiences you have had. Baptism is not just

a word, it is an experience of faith in Jesus Christ. Celebrate this faith today!

Living Out Our Baptism

Our daily life is really just a living out of that baptismal promise. When I forget who I am in Christ and when I fail to live out the promise that God has given to me and all of my family members, the Spirit of God is present in the Gospel to remind me. The Spirit continues to connect me with God's baptismal promise that He will always love and forgive me.

Baptism is lived out each day in our daily relationships. The question is not "Were we baptized?" as if Baptism is simply an historical event. Instead, the question is "How are we living out our Baptism daily with those around us?" Martin Luther really did have a good idea when he suggested that we remember our Baptism each morning when we awake as we cross ourselves and get ready for a new day of promise.

Take time to look at your life to see the signs and symbols of your Baptism. In a sense, living out a life in God's baptismal promise is a way of reminding ourselves that each day is truly "a word from our Sponsor"!

In my office is a unique picture titled, "Christ." It is the kind that you need to stare at before you can see various images popping out from the myriad of colors. This picture is a great symbol of Baptism for me. Even when I cannot see the crucified Christ zooming out at me from the wall, I still know that He is in the picture. Likewise, even when I fail to remember my Baptism each day, even when I treat my own family members as if

they are not baptized, and even though I forget my baptismal promise, Christ never forgets His promise to me and those around me. Baptism continues to be a daily activity as we remind each other that, yes, we truly are a family, one brought together through our Baptisms by God's love and forgiveness in Jesus Christ.

So What Does This Mean?

How can we evangelically live out our daily life of Baptism? Here are a few suggestions.

1. Write down the Baptism date of each member of your family, including your godchildren. Post the list on the refrigerator door or some other significant place as a reminder. On each baptismal birthday, light a candle, bake a baptismal cake, sing a song, and do something special to celebrate the special day.
2. Keep close to the Word "from our Sponsor." In other words, connect yourself and your godchild to regular devotions, Scripture reading, and corporate worship with a community of faith. Remember, none of us is an island—we are all connected by the waters of our Baptism!
3. As a baptismal sponsor, help your godchild celebrate his or her baptismal birthday. Write a letter, make a phone call, send a special gift, affirm that person in the promise of Baptism.
4. Encourage your congregation to celebrate each Baptism in special ways. Perhaps families could make a banner, bring a candle, write a song, or send a card of celebration to those who are newly baptized.

5. Remind your family members and godchildren of Baptism through daily signs and symbols around them. A morning shower, a rainstorm, seashells, a cool breeze, a rainbow, a kind word and act—these are all gifts from God that connect the spirit of life with the promise of Baptism. As a favorite banner proclaims: “He is—and He is here—the signs are all around us!”
6. Remember your own baptismal sponsor. Why not write a note or call your sponsor? If your baptismal sponsor is no longer living, remember with joy the faith and significance of that person in your life.
7. Within your own family and with your godchildren, talk about what you remember about the baptismal service. Ask family members for their recollections about that special day. Who cried? Who laughed? What special prayers were offered or songs sung? Get everyone involved in remembering.
8. Do a word study about your godchild’s name and your own. Ask your godchild what he likes about his name. What does she dislike? Share your own dislikes about your own name. Find out why the name was chosen. If you could have chosen your own name, what name would you have chosen? What is the root word of your name?
9. Talk daily about your Baptism. Put a sign on the bathroom mirror with the reminder *I am baptized!* Make baptism a household word.
10. Encourage your congregation to develop special prayers, liturgies, events, and opportunities for people to celebrate their Baptisms. As many congregations pray for each other on individual birthdays, they might also pray for each other on their baptismal birthdays.

God has called each of us by name—we are His! And that “word from our Sponsor” is really what keeps us together as we live, love, forgive, and care for each other, especially in the midst of the pains, problems, and messes in which we find ourselves. As baptismal sponsors, we are credible models living out the power and love of Christ in our lives for the children around us. As we live out the baptismal promise through examples of doing and telling; through our steady, patient, and positive witness; and through our life of prayer, worship, and service, we continue to shape children’s images of God more than anything else around them. What a great God to mark us as our Sponsor! What a great God to forgive us and to promise that He will always call us by name. What a great God!

Who Is Your Sponsor?

God is the “Sponsor” for all of His children. He sponsors us by continuing to forgive, love, and accept us. He created us, redeemed us in Jesus Christ, and continues to make us holy through the power of His Spirit.

Who was your sponsor at your Baptism? Who answered the questions, proclaimed their faith along with the entire congregation, and stated their commitment to pray for you and be intentional about bringing you up in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ?

Thank the Lord for your sponsors today. If they are still living, contact them by phone, letter, or e-mail to say thanks for their support. Even if you have not been in touch with them for years, make it a point to connect with them. What a great way to thank the Lord and to live