



Baptismal Preparation Model II

A. For Whom

Suitable for a parish having a moderate number of candidates for baptism, and able to limit parish baptisms to a few festivals per year.

B. Leadership

Lay or/and clergy.

Involves the use of a parish appointed sponsor for each candidate, who also comes to all sessions.

C. Format

Preferably in a private home.

Five two-hour sessions - four before the baptism, one after; a vigil on the eve of baptism for all candidates, parents, parish sponsors, and godparents.

D. Programme

Session 1: Introductory

1. Stand-up socializing, over food/drink in order to build community.
2. Outline of programme, roles of those present.
3. Sharing of life and 'church' histories in parent (candidate)/sponsor groups, with an emphasis on how (if at all) they are related.

Session 2: History and Practice of Baptism

1. Either: Bible study (Acts 2:22-24, 33:36-42), with an emphasis on the difference between this ancient and much more modern baptismal practice.
Or: Discussion in small groups of personal experiences of new beginnings/changes. Exploration of life of Christ/baptism in terms of death, resurrection, and new life.
2. View "Godparent Gussie" (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=01-gdeQTmgQ>) for history and technology of baptismal rite.

Session 3: Baptism as Entrance into Covenanted Life

1. Bible Study on Christian mandate for discipleship (Matthew 28:16-20, Mark 3:13ff)
2. Leader Presentation on Covenant: O.T. roots and N.T. developments, e.g., meal and sacrifice, obedience, means of entrance into covenant community.



3. Examination of the Baptismal Covenant.
4. Homework: Participants to think about specific ways they can fulfil and be helped to fulfil baptismal covenant.

Session 4: Covenanting

1. Notion of Covenant and Entry in Daily Life: In small groups discuss requirement for joining and maintaining membership in some organization of own experience. Report back. Make the connection between this and the idea of baptismal covenant.
2. Covenanting: Prepare covenant between candidate (represented by self or parent) and the church (represented by the parish sponsor).
3. **Vigil for Baptism** (ECUSA Occasional Office Book or other)
Late afternoon/evening before baptism.
Could show a film like "Baptism" at time of homily.

Session 5: Continuing Christian Nurture

1. Display of pertinent materials from Anglican Book Centre available for perusal and purchase.
2. Reflection on merits/inadequacies of Church school (onus for Christian nurture of children is on parents.)
3. Discussion of experiences important for Christian nurture: e.g., prayer, scripture, eucharist, family celebrations, "spontaneous traditioning".