



# National Office for Vocation

*Called into God's wonderful light*

# BAPTISM

**“God, You call those who have been baptised to announce the Good News of Jesus Christ to people everywhere.**

**[Blessed be God]**

**You have called your child, N., to the cleansing water and new birth, that by sharing the faith of your Church he (she) may have eternal life”.**

**Rite of Baptism**

National Office for Vocation  
The Chase Centre, 114 West Heath Road, LONDON NW3 7TX  
020 8458 6017 [enquiries@ukvocation.org](mailto:enquiries@ukvocation.org) [www.ukvocation.org](http://www.ukvocation.org)

## Introduction (5 - 10 mins)

Very often when we hear the word vocation, we think of Priests and Nuns, but vocation is quite simply a call. God calls us into life, through love.

And love claims a response: in some deep part of our being we recognise that we are loved - not that we would ever put it in such clumsy terms! We long to respond to God. St Augustine puts it neatly - 'our hearts are restless till they rest in you'.

So: God calls us; we receive God's love, and then we long to respond to it. We already have a vocation (a call) from God and yet not many of us are priests or nuns! So perhaps we have got the definition wrong. Perhaps our minds' dictionaries were set up wrongly!

Maybe vocation is not so much *being a something* as simply just being. If we can take that as a reasonable proposition, where does it leave us? How about this as a description of life and love:

Life is a gift received, which of its nature, is a gift to be given

**Life is a gift  
received, which  
of its nature, is  
a gift to be  
given.**

This is most closely expressed in the birth of a new child. The lives of the parents become a 'sacrifice of love' to the needs of their partner, and primarily to their baby.

The child becomes the focus of their attention - their whole life is centred upon and around this small, dependent, sometimes delightful, person! Even in the marriage rite, we are asked "Will you accept children lovingly from God?"



## Life as a gift received (by each parent) (20 mins)

Blessed be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all the spiritual blessings of heaven in Christ. Before the world was made, God chose us, chose us in Christ to be holy and spotless, and to live through love in his presence, determining that we should become his adopted children, through Jesus Christ, for his own kind purposes; his free gift to us in the Beloved. And it is in him that we were claimed as God's own, chosen from the beginning.

Ephesians 1: selected vv3-14

Listen to the following short passage from St. Paul's letter to the Ephesians. Bear in mind that you were created as 'people' long before God invited you to become parents(!) as you listen to the piece.

*Spend a moment thinking about the significant times in your life - whether or not God was apparent in them. After a few minutes, share perhaps just one thing, with the group.*

## Life as a gift given (to the baby) (20 mins)

Blessed be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all the spiritual blessings of heaven in Christ. Before the world was made, God chose us, chose us in Christ to be holy and spotless, and to live through love in his presence, determining that we should become his adopted children, through Jesus Christ, for his own kind purposes; his free gift to us in the Beloved. And it is in him that we were claimed as God's own, chosen from the beginning.

Ephesians 1: selected vv3-14

During the baptism ceremony, the parents and godparents will be asked 'What do you ask of God's Church for your child?'. Listen again to the same words of St. Paul in his letter to the community in Ephesus. Imagine that he is recognising the generosity of God, and is speaking about your child.

*Spend a moment or two reflecting on your dreams and hopes for your child. Baptism, is a means to unity with the Father through Christ, by the power of the Spirit.*

*Why do you want to have your child baptised? What does baptism confer? How does this relate to the hopes and dreams that you have for your child? After a few minutes, share, as before.*

## Closing Prayer

Loving Father, your plan for us is like a dream found in your heart, because each of us is found in God's heart.

You call us to life. You call each of us to express a particular aspect of your mind and heart.

In your call we find our name and our identity; we recognise our freedom and uniqueness. Father, help us to hear your voice. Through Christ our Lord, **AMEN.**