

Reflection: Baptism and Creation

If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come (2 Cor 5:17). There is no doubt that baptism marks the beginning of something new – but what is this and how important is it really?

The writings of the New Testament suggest that the baptism of believers was a response to the command of Jesus and that it was practised in the Church from the very beginning. At the end of Matthew's Gospel, Jesus appears to the disciples and says:

"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age" (Matt 28:18-20). Jesus, speaking with authority, passes to his followers the mission of making disciples of all the nations. Matthew's gospel is explicit that they are to do this by teaching and baptising in the name of God who is Father, Son and Spirit. The Acts of the Apostles contains many accounts of baptism as the entry to the life of the Church. The New Testament letters, especially those of St Paul, contain much reflection and teaching on the meaning of Baptism. When we look at these we can see that the mystery of Baptism is understood in at least five ways:

Union with Christ - Paul understands baptism as a profound identification with Christ, dying with him so as to share life with him. Baptism is thus the most significant happening in the life of a Christian: the beginning of a new and eternal life.

New birth as beloved sons and daughters of God - Our identification with Christ in Baptism brings us into the same relationship with God as he enjoyed.

Incorporation into the Church - We form a visible community or family of faith which is both local and universal, that is, it stretches back in time to the apostles and forward to the end of history and exists throughout the world.

Forgiveness of sins - In Baptism, sin is forgiven, grace prevails and the possibility of living in union with Christ is realised.

Gift of the Holy Spirit - Through the action of the Holy Spirit we have the capacity to live, with love, joy and peace.

How do you reflect on this definition of baptism?

Pastrow Pilgrimage



Charlton
to



Enham Alamein

3.25 km (2.03 miles)



Pastrow Family

Churches sharing the love, grace and truth of Jesus Christ

Route details: (numbers in brackets refer to pictures)

Start: St Thomas, Charlton, GR SU 3508 4704

Grid Ref	Directions
SU 3508 4704	Leave through the car park gate. Turn L up Enham Lane, 200m turn R into Armstrong Rise
SU 3523 4719	50m, turn L into Aldrin Close. Straight 75m past garages to hedge line, turn R behind houses 20m to stile on L (1). Cross stile, bear right 250m to stile in far hedge. Follow path 50m through woodline to roundabout. <i>(Alternative route avoiding stiles: continue up Enham Lane to roundabout)</i>
SU 3553 4745	Straight ahead into Kiel Drive, 400m bearing left after 2nd roundabout. Turn R into Andeferas Road, 150m to T-jct with footpath (2)
SU 3602 4734	Turn L, 500m to fourth gate on R (3). Through gate, cross valley at concrete culvert and at far side keep straight ahead into Meliot Rise, then L into King Arthur's Way to roundabout
SU 3645 4760	Straight ahead into Roman Way. 200m, keeping straight at 2nd roundabout into Viking Way
SU 3667 4770	Turn L into Witan Close. 200m straight, bear L into woodline, then immediately R into sunken lane between trees
SU 3672 4798	After 100m cross Icknield Way and continue straight 1100m, passing Hamlet Gdns on L on edge of Enham Alamein
SU 3684 4897	Turn L into Chapel Lane (4), 70m to jct with A343
SU 3679 4897	Turn L to church porch

End: St George, Enham Alamein, GR SU 3679 4896

Refreshments: Royal Oak PH, Charlton (150m S of church); Charlton Convenience Store (100m S of church); Tesco Express, Charlton (300m S of church); Saxon Fields Store; Enham Trust Coffee Shop

Photographs:



(1)



(2)



(3)



(4)