

Waters of Creation

What We Found

- Before God makes anything, Genesis 1:2 shows the Spirit of God moving over the waters: water and Spirit together from the first page.
- On day five, God commands the waters to bring forth life (Genesis 1:20); in Scripture water is where life comes from, not just what washes things.
- Titus 3:5 describes salvation with the same pairing: God saved us *by the washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit*.
- St. Paul calls anyone in Christ a *new creation* (2 Corinthians 5:17), an echo of Genesis: and Baptism is how we come to be in Christ (Galatians 3:27).

Voices of the Church

Tertullian • *On Baptism, ch. 1*

“Happy is our sacrament of water, in that, by washing away the sins of our early blindness, we are set free and admitted into eternal life!”

With this sentence, verified word for word against the standard English translation, Tertullian opens the earliest surviving treatise on Baptism, written around the year 200: joy before argument. In the chapters that follow he teaches, in substance, that water has been the seat of the divine Spirit since Genesis 1:2, and that this ancient partnership is why water, of all creatures, is fitted to carry sanctifying power.

St. Ambrose of Milan • *On the Mysteries; On the Sacraments*

St. Ambrose, catechizing the newly baptized of Milan in the fourth century, teaches in substance that the Spirit who *was moving over the face of the waters* at creation already pointed toward the font, and that water by itself heals no one: it is the Spirit's presence, invoked over the water, that makes Baptism a new creation rather than a bath.

The Church's Liturgy • *Blessing of Baptismal Water, Easter Vigil (Roman Missal)*

Every Easter Vigil, before anyone is baptized, the Church prays over the font to the God “whose Spirit in the first moments of the world's creation hovered over the waters, so that the very substance of water would even then take to itself the power to sanctify” (Roman Missal, Blessing of Baptismal Water).

This is not a private theologian's opinion; it is the Church praying her faith aloud: the font's whole family history recited over the water in one prayer.

My Guess • sealed until mid-study

Why do you think God chose water?

Write your honest guess below, fold this page closed, and bring it back every week. We will open it together at Session 7.



Live It This Week

- Once this week, bless yourself with holy water slowly and deliberately, and as you do, say in your heart: *the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters.*
- Find out the date of your own Baptism if you do not know it (a parent, a baptismal certificate, the parish office). Write it somewhere you will see it.
- Read Genesis 1 straight through once, alone, listening for water.

Memory Verse

he saved us, not because of deeds done by us in righteousness, but in virtue of his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit

Titus 3:5 (RSV2CE)

Before next session: Read Genesis 6:5–9:17, the story of Noah and the flood. Notice what the water destroys and what the water carries.

Catechism references: 1213, 1217–1218, 694