

5. WATER: DEATH OR LIFE?

Fill a large pail or bucket with water. Now, how many different things could you do with that water? List some of those things here:

Here are a few more ideas. Tell, in your own words, what would happen if . . .

1. A person put his muddy hands into the water.

2. A person put a dying plant or flower into the water.

3. A bug that couldn't swim or breathe under water fell into the bucket.

Nearly every day we read in the newspapers how water affects our lives. We see how cities and farms can be destroyed by too much water in flooded rivers, or how children are drowned in water. We read how dangerous it is if we do not get enough rain to water our crops and fill our rivers and reservoirs so that we have enough to eat and drink. And we all know how dirty we could get if we didn't have enough water to keep us clean.

As we can see, water can do many things. It can:

1. Destroy — by flooding or drowning,
2. Give life — to plants and fish or people,
3. Make things clean — by washing away dirt.

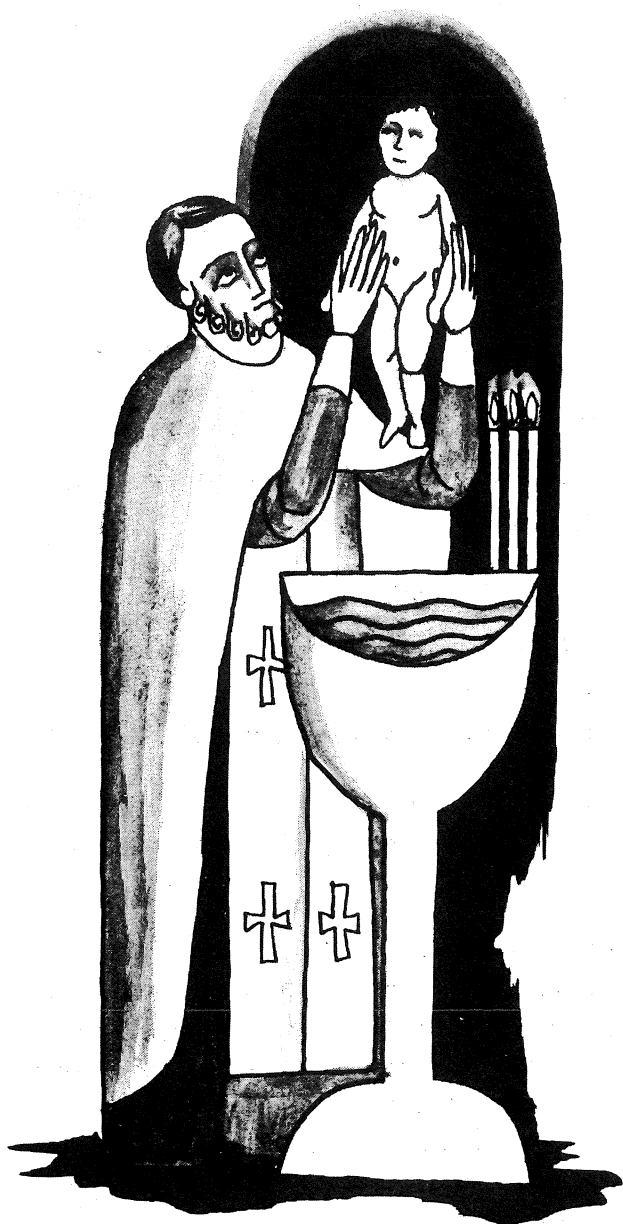
Water is so important that we call it a **basic element** of life. You probably already know from your science lessons in school why water is so necessary to life. In other words, without water life could not go on.

When you were baptized, a large font or tub was filled with water. The priest blessed the water and asked that the Holy Spirit would make it holy. He prayed that it would not be a place for any evil spirits, that it would keep you from evil and make it possible for you to be with God forever.

The priest then took you from your sponsors and put you into the water. Three times he put you into the water and raised you up. As he did, he said:

*"The servant of God, _____
(name)
is baptized in the name of the Father. Amen.
And of the Son. Amen. And of the Holy
Spirit. Amen."*

In baptism, all the meanings of water are used. We first "die" and are "buried" with Jesus Christ by being put fully into the water. Then, as the priest brings us up, we "rise" with Jesus Christ to a new life free from sin and death. We are washed of our sins and are made clean. Water means then, for all Christians, death and life and cleansing. In



this way, you were now given a new birth, a new life. You were born now as a child of God, a member of God's Family, the Church.

Make a poster showing the different uses or meanings of water. Use pictures from newspapers or draw your own. Try to include in your poster the meaning of water in baptism.

Review

Print these words and actions on separate cards. Unscramble them and put them in the right order to show what happened to you at your baptism.

The oil of gladness.

This person belongs to God.

I reject Satan.

The servant of God is baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Sign of the Cross.

I believe in Jesus Christ.

The servant of God _____ is baptized
(name)
in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of
the Holy Spirit. Amen.