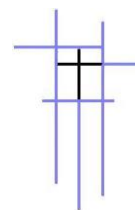


**BENEFICE OF CREECH ST MICHAEL AND  
RUISHTON WITH THORNFALCON**



**BAPTISM POLICY**

Baptism, along with Confirmation, is the rite of initiation into the Christian faith. At baptism a person becomes a member of God's family, the church. If it is an infant being baptised, the parents and godparents make the declarations on behalf of the infant, on the understanding that they will do all they can to bring their child up in the Christian faith: that they will teach them about Jesus, that they will pray with and for them, that they will bring them to worship suitable for children, and set them a good example of Christian living. They will encourage them to come to confirmation when the time is right.

Anyone who desires baptism, and who has not already been baptised may be baptised provided they meet certain requirements (Canon B22):

1. They must live within the parish in which they would like to be baptised.
2. If they do not live in the parish, then they are required to attend worship regularly before a date for the baptism is agreed (with the agreement of the Incumbent).
3. They are willing to undergo preparation for the baptism. In the case of an infant, this means a visit made by the Minister to the family, where baptism is explained, the declarations are set out for the parents, and the parents are made aware of what is required of them when they bring their child or children to baptism. They are also invited to attend worship at the church in which they are to be baptised, and any other activities suitable for children.
4. In the case of an adult (*of such as are of riper years*) they are required to attend a suitable preparation course where the gospel is explained, before the baptism is arranged. (Canon B23) The minister must be satisfied that the person being baptised understands what they are doing, and what will happen in the service.

Baptisms are required to take place during the main service of the day at the parish church. This is so that the person being baptised may be welcomed into God's family, and also so that the congregation may be reminded of the promises they made at their own Baptism/Confirmation. There may be times, when for pastoral reasons, a baptism is arranged outside the main service. On this occasion, members of the congregation are invited to attend to support the family. (Canon B21)

Those who satisfy the above requirements for baptism should not be refused baptism, although the baptism may be delayed until the appropriate preparation is completed.

Any person who is to be baptised, who lives outside the parish, but attends worship at the church, is responsible for seeking the good will of the Incumbent of the parish in which they reside.

If an infant or person is baptised in hospital under emergency baptism and they live, they are required to be presented to the congregation after the baptism.

For adults being baptised, they should be confirmed by the Bishop as soon as they are ready after their baptism so that they may be admitted to Holy Communion.

### **Godparents and sponsors (Canon B23)**

The child being baptised should have three godparents (usually two of the same sex as the child and one of the opposite sex). Otherwise, one godmother and one godfather shall be chosen. Parents may be godparents for their own children provided there is at least one other godparent.

The godparents should be baptised and confirmed (but this latter requirement may be dispensed with at the discretion of the Minister).

Godparents should stand alongside the parents at the baptism and make the declarations with the parents. They are to support the parents in the spiritual upbringing of the child.

For adults being baptised, they should have two or three sponsors who will present him/her at the font and remind him/her of his Christian profession and duties.

### **Following the baptism**

Children are sent a card on the anniversary of their baptism for five years following the baptism. This includes an invitation to return to the church where they were baptism to re-light the baptism candle and be prayed for. This is to remind them, and their parents and godparents, of their baptism.

September 2015