

Called By Name: Words to Child at Baptism

"You wear a white garment proclaiming the cleansing purity of water, and the eternal brightness of the Light of Christ. It shows on the outside the gift of Light that is within."

On The Day of Your Baptism...

This coming Sunday a child close to me named Nora Caroline will be baptized. Here is a reflection of welcome to her and all who will be baptized on this day.

Did you hear the Good Shepherd call your name, little one, Nora Caroline? This is your day – the one we remember in the church as the Baptism of our Lord - it is also your baptism day. This is the day that our Good Shepherd let's you know that before you were born – you were in his heart waiting for you to come into the world as a precious child of God. Now is the day that your parents and family of faith proclaims on your behalf that you are indeed one of our flock – our newest little one in the Good Shepherd's sheepfold.

Three months ago, you were born into this watery planet, called Earth; one whose creation began quite a few years ago – but continues to unfold in an on going story of creation every day. At the beginning of creation there was light, as we are told in the Bible, and that the Spirit of God hovered over the watery chaos, bringing life into order. Now, this same Spirit that we call the Holy Spirit, hovers again over the waters of baptism – where the Light of the Risen Christ has brought a New Order and offers New Life to all of creation – yet to be realized - but always available and becoming. You, my child, through the re-creative power of the Holy Spirit, in these waters of baptism, will receive this Light of the Risen Christ to become a New Creation as well.

The Paschal Candle stands tall and burns bright, beside the Baptism Font filled with fresh flowing water, reminding us of important signs and symbols of water and light. You wear a white garment proclaiming the cleansing purity of water, and the eternal brightness of the Light of Christ. It shows on the outside the gift of Light that is within. Keep this garment pure and clean, opening yourself always to the presence and strength of the Holy Spirit – which carries the power to cleanse every spot through out your life. Your parents are given a small Baptismal candle representing The Light of Christ, announced by the Paschal Candle. They will become the keepers of the Light until you, my child, will know when it is time for you to carry it for yourself. They will hear your plea of - "help me carry it by myself."

With blessed oil, you are sealed with the sign of the cross on your forehead and "marked as Christ's own forever." When you hear the Word of God proclaimed through the reading of scripture – listen carefully to the Gospel – and hear the Good Shepherd whisper in your ear, "You are my beloved child, Nora Caroline, with you I am well pleased."

Genelda Woggon has been ministered to and by children for over 40 years in her professional work as a Christian Formation Leader, most especially through the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd for the past 20 years.