

Baptism

PATTERNS I LIVE BY



The kind of music I usually listen to is: _____

After dinner, I usually: _____

A TV show I watch on Thursdays is: _____

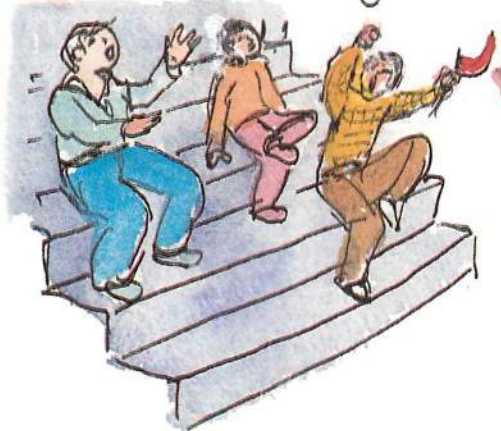
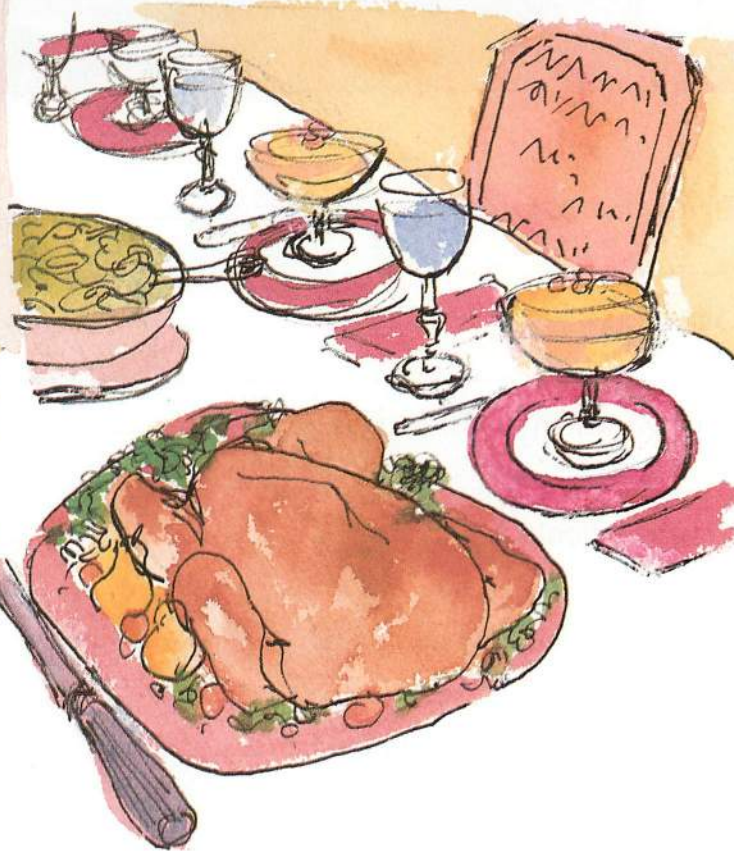
My favorite school clothes are: _____

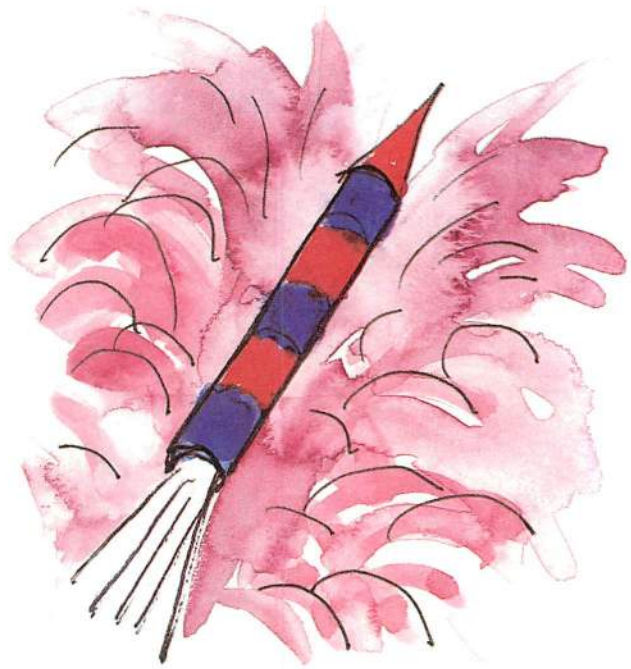
Some words or phrases my friends and I like to use: _____

Where my friends and I hang out: _____

Gym class usually starts with: _____

What rituals (special or always-the-same ways of doing things) do these pictures bring to your mind?





ABOUT BAPTISM

Now about baptism: this is how to baptize. Give public instruction on all these points, and then “baptize” in running water, “in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” If you do not have running water, baptize in some other. If you cannot in cold, then in warm. If you have neither, then pour water on the head three times “in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.” Before the baptism, moreover, the one who baptizes and the one being baptized must fast, and any others who can. And you must tell the one being baptized to fast for one or two days beforehand.

From the *Didache*, a manual of church practice written in the second century.

In fact we are born to the spirit by dying to the flesh, as the Lord says, It is I who bring both death and life (Deut. 32, 39). Let us die, then, that we may live. Let us destroy our material outlook, which cannot submit to the law of God, so that we may engender a strong spiritual mentality through which life and peace naturally come. Let us be buried with Christ who has died for us, so that we may rise with him, the forerunner of our resurrection.

There is a proper time for everything — a time to sleep, a time to awake, a time for war, a time for peace. But every time in man’s life is a time for baptism. The soul cannot live without knowing its creator any more than the body can live without breathing. Not to know God is the death of the soul. The one who is not baptized is not illuminated. And without illumination the eye cannot see its proper objects and the soul cannot contemplate God. Therefore any time is suitable for obtaining salvation through baptism, be it day or night, or a precise hour, or the briefest moment. But assuredly that time should be considered most appropriate which is closest in spirit to it. What could be more akin to baptism than the day of the Pasch? For that day commemorates the Resurrection and baptism makes the resurrection possible for us. Let us receive the grace of the resurrection on the day of the Resurrection.

Written by St. Basil the Great,
fourth century

Note: “Pasch” means Easter. The Armenian word “Zadig” translates as “Pasch,” i.e., “the feast.”

Baptism
Մկրտութիւն
Mgrdootiun

Looking at the Service of Baptism



Group One

We have said that God uses material things in our world, and gives them a new meaning. In baptism (mrgdootiun), water and oil are used.

*Read the "Prayer Over the Oil" (on page 23 of **Sacraments**) and answer these questions:*

Who was anointed with oil "aforetimes" (in the past times) by God?

What does the priest ask God to send down with the oil?

What does the prayer say God's grace will enable the newly-baptized person to do?

Now read the "Prayer Over the Water" on page 47.

What does the prayer say God ordered the apostles to do?

What did God decree about baptism?

What water does the prayer say God sanctified (made holy) before?

Group Two

After baptism, the sacrament of Chrismation (Gnoonk) is immediately given to the newly-baptized person. Chrismation is the "seal of the Holy Spirit" on the baptized.

Read the priest's words as he seals the newly-baptized person (p. 29). Make a list of the parts of the body he anoints with oil, and the reason why he anoints each one.
