

Celebrant's Guides: Rites around Childbirth

Index of Resources



Useful rites and texts are scattered in many sources:

<i>A Book of Blessings</i> (Canada)	BBC
<i>Book of Blessings</i> (USA) *	BBUS
<i>In Sure and Certain Hope</i>	ISCH
<i>Order of Christian Funerals</i>	OCF
<i>Pastoral Care of the Sick</i>	PCS
<i>Pocket Ritual</i>	PR
<i>Rite of Baptism for Children</i>	RBC

* BBUS is authorised for interim use in England & Wales.

References may cite page numbers (p) or paragraph numbers (n).

(a) Before Birth

Blessing of **both parents** during pregnancy:

BBC p53, BBUS p65 or p70

Blessing of **the mother only** during pregnancy:

BBC p56, BBUS p72 or p77, PR p107

(b) Stillbirth & Miscarriage

Rite of final commendation for an infant (including naming): ISCH n143, OCF n503, and [on-line text](#) formatted to fit on personal organizer-sized pages.

Prayers for those who mourn a stillborn child: OCF n15 (p428)

Blessing of parents whose unbaptised child has died: BBC p60 or p70

Blessing of parents after a miscarriage – BBUS p86 & p91

(c) Blessings After Birth

Blessing of parents is normally part of the Baptismal rite, but when this must be delayed for pastoral reasons, a suitable blessing is at BBC p59.

Blessing of **the mother only**: BBUS p79 or p84

Blessing of **an unbaptised child**: BBUS p45

Blessing of a **sick, initiated, child** for whom anointing is inappropriate: PR p111

(d) Live Birth of a Gravely Ill Child

Pastoral note (PCS n280): *a dying child should be baptised and confirmed, and initiation may be completed by receiving the Eucharist even if the child has not reached the age of reason.* See also notes PCS nn168-174.

Minimal rite of baptism: Scripture (PCS p233 / PR p87); blessing of water (PCS p235); baptism (PCS p237 / PR p90); a deacon or a priest with no Chrism says the prayer on PCS p238 / PR p91.

A child in danger of death should be *confirmed*. Use the rite at PCS p239 / PR p91.

The Lord's Prayer may be followed by Viaticum: PCS p241 / PR p93.

A child simply baptised in water who recovers may have the remaining rites supplied in Church at a later date: RBC p127.

(e) Normal Baptism

Rites in RBC according to number and context:

One child at Mass RBC p89

Several children at Mass RBC p39

One child outside Mass RBC p65

Several children outside Mass RBC p13

(f) Death of a Child after Birth

Vigil for a deceased child, whether baptised or not:

ISCH n125 (includes collects for baptised and unbaptised), ditto OCF n340

Prayers for a baptised child: OCF n25(p415) & n26 (p416)

Prayers for those who mourn a baptised child: OCF n8-12 (p425)

Prayers for those who mourn an unbaptised child: OCF n13-14 (p427)

(g) Celebration of Adoption

Rite of welcoming into a family a child who is already baptised:

BBC p63, BBUS p94