

## Summary of the Sacrament of Chrismation

- What happens to Christ at Theophany and to the Church at Pentecost takes place in the life of each member of the Body of Christ immediately following baptism through the Sacrament of Chrismation. It is a foundational teaching of the Church. See Hebrews 6:1,2. In the Scriptures, chrismation is sometimes called “an anointing” or “the laying on of hands.”
- Baptism and Chrismation are not separated in the Orthodox Church because one is “baptism with water” and the other is “baptism with the Spirit.” “Unless one is born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.” (John 3: 5).
- Theodore of Mopsuestia: “ After baptism..., you come immediately to the bishop to receive the final sealing which completes and perfects your initiation and empowers you with the gifts of the Holy Spirit.” As in the baptism of Jesus, “as soon as we come up from the waters of baptism the same Holy Spirit descends upon us through the Sacrament of Chrismation.”
- See the many witnesses to chrismation in the Church Fathers. It is the universal practice of the Church. It always follows the Sacrament of Baptism.
- Chrismation is a participation in the anointing of Christ by the Spirit after His Baptism (St. Cyril of Jerusalem). It is receiving the Holy Spirit, Who will enable us to live the life of God into which we were born in baptism. It is the sacrament by which our bodies are made temples of the Holy Spirit. The whole body—forehead, eyes, nostrils, mouth, ears, breast, hands, and feet— is anointed, sealed, and sanctified. The Church testifies that it is indeed the “seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit.” I John 2: 20—“You have an anointing (*chrisma*) from the Holy One, and you know all things.”
- Chrismation makes us “anointed ones,” or “little christs.” The title “Christ” means “anointed one.”
- Even though the Spirit is specifically imparted in Chrismation, we continually pray that the Holy Spirit may come and dwell in us (the *Trisagion Prayers*).
- Chrismation is the objective reality and assurance of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. We receive the chrism of the bishop, the representative of Christ for his One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, at a particular locality. We receive the Spirit of the Church. We are united to the entire Church, through the same Spirit which created the Church in the first place! We receive the Spirit of Truth, who leads us into all truth.
- The reception of the Samaritan Christians into the Church in Acts 8: 5-17 is an example of how chrismation imparts the Holy Spirit to the newly-baptized believers and unites them to the Church. Another example is found in Acts 19: 1-7.
- Chrismation was administered in the apostolic era by two means: 1) the laying on of hands and prayer (Acts 8 and Acts 19) and 2) by anointing (1 John 2: 20). In the East the practice of administering this sacrament through anointing prevailed. The oil of chrismation is consecrated by bishops and administered locally by presbyters (priests).
- Baptized Christians of other Trinitarian “churches” are usually received into the Orthodox Church through Chrismation.