

My wife and I grew up Catholic but have drifted away from the church. I wanted our son to be initiated in the spirit (and, to be honest, assuage his grandparents concern about his soul) but did not want to do it within the Catholic Church and its belief in original sin.

And yet, I felt something was missing between the joy of his arrival and the typical new-parent difficulties of 3 a.m. feedings, healthcare paranoia and baby-cry detective work (Is he hungry? Sleepy? In Pain?)

By his seventh month, we felt it was time for his initiation into the Spirit, and we chose Peter and his Interfaith work because its openness seemed to match our natural inclinations against any one strict dogma.

Peter met with us several times, helped us draft our ceremony, raised questions and practical concerns we never thought of (and were grateful for the day of the event). We were able to incorporate traditions that were comfortable for us, make space for relatives who were only there in spirit, and design an event that would be comfortable at our home.

The result was a gorgeous day and an emotionally powerful event for our family and our guests. For me, it completed our journey as "new" parents – it was a statement of purpose, a bow of gratitude toward creation, an acknowledgment of our holy sense of responsibility. It was an important first ritual for our son as a member of the community and the world of the Spirit.

The event can be viewed here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3MxkbaflVLg>

And part two here:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U3BAg_iXakY&feature=related

In a sense, Jonah's baptism marked the start of our journey together as a family, and we are grateful to have had Peter as our guide. It was an unforgettable day that lives with us every day.

Kevin Voight