

# The Font

The font is the earliest of the two fonts we have in St Mary's, the other being 19th Century. This font, however, dates from the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, though some of the inscriptions are much later.

Originally it stood in the middle of the Nave, and had a cone shaped cover which was removed, and lost, in the restoration of 1852-56, when the larger, more elaborate font now standing under the tower was installed near the West Door. There is a date on the octagonal bowl of the font – 1626 – which is undoubtedly original, though there is also an early example of 17th century graffiti in the letters 'W I'.

Baptism brings us into a much closer relationship with God, because through it we become his adopted sons and daughters, and therefore heirs of his Kingdom; we here catch a glimpse of 'the glory that shall be ours in Christ Jesus.' When we are baptised we are not simply handed a membership card – we are fully introduced into the Spirit-filled life of the community which is God's people.

In Baptism, water has been set aside by God to be the sign of the new birth we receive. This most common substance is consecrated for an uncommon use – bringing to birth the Church of God through its members.

At Baptism, the priest pours water on the candidate whilst saying the words "I baptise you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." So the water signifies birth, and the words specify what that birth is, namely that God the Holy Spirit enters into us, gives us life, and makes us children of the Father.