

To sum up: while submersion cannot be entirely ruled out in a restricted number of fonts, the general practice would seem to have been either for the candidate to stand in the font and have his head dipped in the water or for the water to be poured over his head. In the latter case, where the font was large enough for him to stand in it and sufficiently commodious for him to be able to enter it the water would flow down over the whole body and where, as, for example, in Greece and in many of the Syrian baptisteries, he could not enter the font it would pour only over the head bent forward over it." (pp. 23-26)

In the second of a series of three articles on "Modes of Water Baptism in the Church," appearing in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, William A. BeVier states:

"One more bit of evidence that has bearing upon this subject is here presented. It was customary in the Roman and Greek public baths to have either the water enter through the spouts up on the walls, as through the mouths of figurines of animals, or have a servant pour the water over the head of the bather. It is to be remembered that these baths were the first indoor Christian baptisteries. The spouts would fulfill the precept of the Didache (A.D. 150) that calls for running water to be used in the baptismal service."

-- *Bibliotheca sacra*, Volume 116, Number 463 (July 1959),
published by Dallas Theological Seminary, p. 236.

(7) Mode as illustrated in ancient pictorial representations

In *Baptism and Christian Archaeology*, Clement F. Rogers presents sixty examples of Christian art, dating from the first to the tenth century, and coming from Rome, Gaul, Spain, Milan, Ravenna, Armenia, Syria, Egypt, Byzantium, Sicily, Ireland, Lombardy, and Germany. In all of these cases, the person being baptized is standing in the water, usually naked, and water is pouring or being poured over his head. Frequently a dove is found in the pictures, representative of the Holy Spirit. In the earliest representations, the water is only ankle deep; but as the centuries pass, the water reaches the knees, then the thighs, then the waist, and finally the neck. There is usually another person in the pictures (frequently John the Baptizer) who stands on a higher level (the bank?), is clothed, and either guides the head of the candidate under the descending stream of water or places his hand upon him. There are no pictorial representations of immersion until the ninth century (although there are representations of the Egyptians being drowned in the Red Sea), at which time three pictures of infants being immersed appear.

William A. BeVier, in the article quoted above, states the following detailed information:

"Rogers submits three clear representations taken from the walls of ancient Roman buildings depicting water baptism in such baths (Roman baths) and the catechumen is either standing under the spout or is being poured upon by water from a pitcherlike container . . .