

The Baptism of the Lord

This Sunday we conclude the Christmas season with the feast of the baptism of the Lord. This great feast ushers us into the ordinary time of the church year.

The baptism of the Lord is another epiphany or God's revelation to the world.

In the gospel, Jesus came to John the Baptist to be baptized in the Jordan river. This is a profound event that marks the beginning of his public life and ministry in the world.

Perhaps, you may wonder why Jesus who knew no sin submitted himself to John's baptism of repentance and forgiveness of sin. Even John himself hesitated to baptize the One whom he perceived to be mightier than him. He felt unworthy to loosen the thongs of the sandals of the Holy One of God. But Jesus insisted on being baptized by John. He did this for good reasons. He wanted to show us the path of humility and obedience and to identify himself with our fallen humanity. Jesus descended into the Jordan river to sanctify its waters for our sake. He made the waters of the Jordan river the fountain of new birth, growth, and fruitfulness for us.

At his baptism, Jesus was revealed as the Chosen One of God. The gospel tells us that the heavens were opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus in a bodily form like a dove. And a voice proclaimed, "You are my Beloved Son; with you I am well pleased" (Luke 3:21-22).

The Holy Trinity manifested their presence in this scene. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit revealed the communion of their love and their cooperation in working for our sanctification and eternal salvation.

The baptism of the Lord brings each of us to reflect on our own baptism and its significance in our lives. Many of us were baptized in infancy and a few in adulthood. Today's feast is an opportunity for us to thank God for the gift of our baptism. For those of us who received this sacrament in infancy, it is good that we take time to appreciate our parents and godparents for the baptismal commitment they made on our behalf. Our parents and godparents helped to nurture our Catholic faith and together with the Christian community supported us in prayer and example to grow as disciples of Christ.

Each of us need to always remember who we are in Christ. Through baptism, are cleansed of sin and brought to new life in Christ. God adopted us as His daughters and sons and made us members of His church and heirs of heaven. Our heavenly father loves each of us and expects us to live in the grace of our baptism. God wants us to remain faithful to our covenant with him, to reject Satan and all his empty promises and grow in grace and holiness.

In his letter to Titus, Saint Paul reminds us about the power and efficacy of our baptism. He tells us that our baptismal life in Christ entails rejecting godly and worldly desires and living justly and devoutly in this present age.

As people born of water and the Holy Spirit, let us all strive to live a life worthy of our calling by walking in the light of Christ. Let us with the psalmist, acknowledge God's might and majesty and glorify His Holy Name in all aspects of our lives.

God bless,

Fr. Dr. Ben