

THE BAPTISM OF JESUS

January 10, 2021

Feast of the Baptism
of The Lord



Baptism is one of the greatest gifts God has given humanity. Through it we are cleansed of Original Sin; our sins are forgiven; we are given access to the life of the Holy Trinity (that is, grace); we are incorporated into Christ's threefold ministry as priest, prophet, and king; we are given the gift of the Holy Spirit and the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity; and we gain entrance to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church which is Christ's own body.

Jesus, too, participated in Baptism when, at the start of his public ministry, he

approached John the Baptist and was washed in the waters of the Jordan River. At that

“ON COMING UP OUT OF THE WATER HE SAW THE HEAVENS BEING TORN OPEN AND THE SPIRIT, LIKE A DOVE, DESCENDING UPON HIM.”

:: Mark 1:10

moment, the heavens opened, the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus, and the voice of the Father declared “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.” (Mark 1:11)

Why did Jesus ask to be baptized? After all, as the Second Person of the Trinity he is God. Jesus did not need to be forgiven of any sins, he

already participates in the life of the Trinity, and he is the head of the Church. So what was the point?

The *Catechism* tells us that Jesus “voluntarily submitted himself to the baptism of St. John, intended for sinners, in order to ‘fulfill all righteousness.’” Jesus’

gesture is a manifestation of his self-emptying.” (no. 1224)

Pope Benedict XVI elaborates on this in his book *Jesus of Nazareth*, saying that at his baptism Jesus took our sins upon himself in anticipation of doing the same on the Cross.



Watch the video:

youtu.be/nw0IN76pTH4

In other words Jesus isn't baptized for himself but to show how he, as the savior, relieves us of our sins and gives us an example to follow.

The presence of the Holy Spirit at Jesus' baptism echoes the Spirit's movement across the waters in the account of creation. Jesus makes us a new creation through Baptism: we enter the waters to die with him and rise out of them renewed through sacramental grace, called to a new life of discipleship.

The connection between Baptism and the Cross is evident at the Easter Vigil when we renew our baptismal vows, renouncing Satan and professing faith in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This renewal is a call to ongoing conversion and an invitation to review our lives and find how we can further die to our old sinful ways and be raised to new life in Christ.

As we celebrate the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, give thanks for the gifts you have been given through this incredible sacrament and pray that the grace you have received may bear even greater fruits in the year to come!

“FROM THE BEGINNING OF HIS PUBLIC LIFE, AT HIS BAPTISM, JESUS IS THE 'SERVANT,' WHOLLY CONSECRATED TO THE REDEMPTIVE WORK THAT HE WILL ACCOMPLISH BY THE 'BAPTISM' OF HIS PASSION.”

:: *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 565

Family Discussion Questions

1. Remember back to your baptism or the baptism of a family member. What symbols, gestures, or words do you remember? What do they teach us about Baptism?
2. At Jesus' baptism the Father declares “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.” (Luke 3:22) What does this tell us about Jesus' identity and mission? How are we to respond to him?
3. What are some of the obstacles or challenges that inhibit our conformity to Christ? Share with one another how you might overcome those obstacles.

Family Challenge

If you don't already know them, look up the baptismal dates for everyone in your family. Put them on your calendar so that you can remember and celebrate the day on which you and your loved ones were born into new life in Christ!

Additional Videos

- A Simple Word: The Baptism of the Lord: youtu.be/SYjKBGO0FSO

Other Resources

- [*You Have Put on Christ: Cultivating a Baptismal Spirituality*](#) by Jerry Galipeau (World Library Publications, 2014)
- [*Jesus the Revelation of the Father's Love*](#) by Daniel J. Harrington, SJ (Our Sunday Visitor, 2010)



Scripture texts in this work are taken from the *New American Bible, revised edition* © 2010, 1991, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Washington, D.C. and are used by permission of the copyright owner. All Rights Reserved. No part of the New American Bible may be reproduced in any form without permission in writing from the copyright owner.

English translation of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* copyright © 1994, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops—Liberia Editrice Vaticana. English translation of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church: Modifications from the Editio Typica* © 1997, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops—Liberia Editrice Vaticana.

DIOCESE OF LAFAYETTE-IN-INDIANA
www.do-in.org/catechesis ♡ facebook.com/diolafin

The ministries of the Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana are supported by generous contributions to the Catholic Ministries Appeal.