

January 10, 2020

Baptism of the Lord

Becoming closer to God through Baptism

"You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." - Mark 1:7-11

You've probably heard the phrase "born again." It's a term that Catholics may not be very familiar with, but many of our Protestant friends are. It might be that they were baptized or even verbally committed their life to Christ. Many Catholics are traditionally baptized as infants, and in their teenage years recommit and confirm the seal of the Holy Spirit they received. It can be a spiritually uplifting time for many.

The Gospel for this weekend comes from St. Mark and it's the account of the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River. We know that Jesus was conceived without sin and He remained sinless His entire life. So, we might ask the question, "why did Jesus have to be baptized?" Throughout salvation history, God gives us both extreme and practical examples of His love for us. Jesus is His son and you and I are children of God. Just as Adam and Eve were created by God, so were you and me. Like Adam and Eve, we are sinful creatures and we often use our free will to make poor decisions. It's just the nature of man. The only way we can attain our place in Heaven is to be cleansed by water and the Holy Spirit, through the blood of the lamb, Christ's eternal sacrifice on the cross.

Jesus submitted to the ritual cleansing that was being performed by John in the Jordan River, not because He needed it, but because we do, and so He sanctified, or made holy, the waters of baptism. God said to Jesus at His baptism, "You are my beloved Son, with you I am well pleased." Imagine the God of the Universe, creator of all, saying the words, "John, Mary, Greg - you are my beloved child,

with whom I am well pleased, who I created to live with me, to be with me for all eternity.” Know that God loves you more than anything and invites you to be close to His heart.

If you would like to learn more about coming into the Catholic Church and the Sacrament of Baptism, visit your local Catholic parish today.

- Bishop Gregory Parkes