

Singing Our Faith

Second Sunday of Advent – December 9, 2018

Each year on the Second Sunday of Advent, we get an account of the ministry of John the Baptist. John is considered the greatest of all prophets since it was his job to announce the Messiah. The hymn “When John Baptized by Jordan’s River” gives us a snapshot of what John was sent to do as the forerunner of Christ.

The first stanza conveys the “human spirit’s ageless quest” of “seeking a new beginning, repentance, and an end of sinning.” In John’s day, people had been longing for the Messiah – some thought it was John, and they sought these things in his baptism. Stanza two turns this thinking upside down as Jesus becomes the focus. It paraphrases the account of Jesus’ baptism in Matthew 3:16-17...

“After Jesus was baptized, he came up from the water and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove coming upon him. And a voice came from the heavens, saying, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.””

The final stanza reminds us that Jesus was baptized by John as a part of his humanity – to share in our likeness. As he reveals later, John’s baptism with water was a precursor to the true baptism with the Holy Spirit. We’re reminded of the uniqueness of our relationship with God through the New Covenant. Through the New Covenant, humanity’s intimate relationship with God was restored. God the Son now enters into our body through the Eucharist. God the Holy Spirit

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becomes part of our being through baptism. Hence, our body is a “Temple of the Holy Spirit.” These relationships unite all of us as the Body of Christ. No other religion has this element of closeness with their creator.

John was sent to proclaim the coming of the Messiah. Through our baptism, foreshadowed by John’s baptism, we, too, are called to proclaim Jesus as the Lamb of God. As we continue our Advent journey, let us be heralds of Christ, prophets filled with hope, and messengers of peace. May our spiritual exercises this Advent lead us to Paul’s vision that he shares in the letter to the Philippians...

“...so that you may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness...”

Stephen Eros

Director of Liturgy and Music

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When John Baptized by Jordan's River



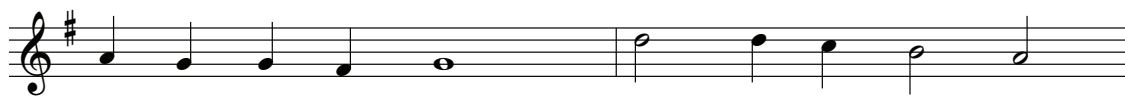
1. When John bap - tized by Jor - dan's riv - er
2. There as the Lord, bap - tized and pray - ing,
3. O Son of Man, our na - ture shar - ing,



In faith and hope the peo - ple came, That John and
Rose from the stream, the sin - less one, A voice was
In whose o - be - dience all are blest, Sav - ior, our



Jor - dan might de - liv - er Their trou - bled
heard from heav - en say - ing, "This is my
sins and sor - rows bear - ing, Hear us and



souls from sin and shame. They came to seek a
own be - lov - ed Son." There as the Fa - ther's
grant us this re - quest: Dai - ly to grow, by



new be - gin - ning, The hu - man spir - it's age - less
word was spo - ken, Not in the pow'r of wind and
grace de - fend - ed, Filled with the Spir - it from a -



quest, Re - pent - ance, and an end of
flame, But of his love and peace the
bove; In Christ bap - tized, be - loved, be -



sin - ning, Re - nounc - ing ev - 'ry wrong con - fessed.
to - ken, Seen as a dove, the Spir - it came.
friend - ed, Chil - dren of God in peace and love.