



The Catholic Community of Divine Savior

Family Faith Focus

Volume 9, Issue 24

January 10, 2021

Dates to Remember

- January 9: 4:00 PM Mass
- January 10: 9:00 AM Mass
- Please see our parish website for reservation information and links to view Sunday or weekday Masses online.

Beloved Children of God

As soon as Jesus was baptized in the River Jordan, the heavens were opened and the Holy Spirit alighted on him like a dove, as a voice from heaven said: "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased." We rediscover our own baptism in his baptism. Just as Jesus is the Beloved Son of the Father, we too, reborn by water and the Holy Spirit, know we are loved children—the Father loves us all! — brothers and sisters of many brothers and sisters, assigned with a great mission to bear witness and proclaim the Father's boundless love to all mankind. The baptism of Jesus reminds us of our own baptism. We too were reborn in baptism and the Holy Spirit came down to remain within us.

— Pope Francis

The Baptism of the Lord

Mark 1:7-11

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark.

This is what John the Baptist proclaimed:
"One mightier than I is coming after me.
I am not worthy to stoop and loosen the
thongs of his sandals.
I have baptized you with water;
he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."



It happened in those days that Jesus came
from Nazareth of Galilee

and was baptized in the Jordan by John.

On coming up out of the water he saw the heavens being torn open
and the Spirit, like a dove, descending upon him.

And a voice came from the heavens,

"You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

Psalm 29

R. The Lord will bless his people with peace.

Give to the LORD, you sons of God,
give to the LORD glory and praise,
Give to the LORD the glory due his name;
adore the LORD in holy attire.

R. The Lord will bless his people with peace.

The voice of the LORD is over the waters,
the LORD, over vast waters.
The voice of the LORD is mighty;
the voice of the LORD is majestic.

R. The Lord will bless his people with peace.

The God of glory thunders,
and in his temple all say, "Glory!"
The LORD is enthroned above the flood;
the LORD is enthroned as king forever.

R. The Lord will bless his people with peace.

Sunday Gospel Connection: January 10, 2021

The Baptism of the Lord, Cycle B

Mark 1: 7-11

Gospel Background: Today we celebrate the feast of the Baptism of the Lord. In most years, this feast is celebrated on the Sunday after Epiphany. When Epiphany falls on either January 7 or 8, the Baptism of the Lord is celebrated on the Monday after Epiphany.



In today's Gospel we hear John the Baptist contrast his baptism of repentance with the baptism that Jesus will inaugurate. John the Baptist says that he has baptized with water, but that the one who is to come will baptize with the Holy Spirit. John's baptism was not yet a Christian baptism; it was a preparation for the Christian Baptism we celebrate today, and through which sins are forgiven and the gift of the Holy Spirit is received. In accepting John's baptism, Jesus, though sinless, united himself with all sinners.

The baptism of Jesus is reported in each of the three Synoptic Gospels—Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Clearly, Jesus' baptism was an event of great significance for Jesus and for the early Christian community. Mark and Luke report the story from Jesus' perspective; the voice from heaven is addressed to Jesus. In Matthew's Gospel, the voice from heaven speaks to all who are present. The descent of the Holy Spirit on Jesus at his baptism shows that something new is beginning through the baptism and ministry of Jesus.

The baptism of Jesus is considered an important manifestation of God in the person of Jesus, another epiphany. Jesus' baptism inaugurates his mission. Mark's Gospel moves quickly from the report of Jesus' baptism to Jesus' temptations in the desert to his ministry in Galilee after John's arrest. The end of the ministry of John the Baptist is the beginning of Jesus' ministry. In an analogous way, our Baptism inaugurates our mission as Christians.

Surprisingly, on this the last day of the Christmas season the Gospel does not tell a story from Jesus' childhood. Instead the Gospel reveals Jesus' relationship to God: the Son of Mary and Joseph is also God's own Son. We believe that through Baptism we are also made children of God.

Family Connection: In the story of Jesus' baptism, we hear the report of a significant moment in Jesus' life. By accepting baptism from John the Baptist, Jesus shows himself to accept solidarity with sinners. In the voice from heaven and the descent of the Holy Spirit, we know that God received this offering from Jesus and found it pleasing. In the passages that follow in Mark's Gospel, we learn that Jesus' baptism marks the beginning of his public ministry.

Although many of us may have already taken down our Christmas decorations, liturgically speaking, the Christmas season hasn't ended yet; today is the last day. Holidays like Christmas are highlights of our year, moments of great grace. This grace renews us and prepares us for our return to the season of Ordinary Time, to the continuing work of discipleship.

Gather as a family and discuss your feelings about the ending of the Christmas season. How does it feel to take down the Christmas decorations? Many of us experience a letdown after the excitement of Christmas; others may feel relieved that life is returning to normal. Liturgically, we end the Christmas season today by reflecting on the importance of Jesus' baptism. Read together today's Gospel, Mark 1:7-11. Jesus' baptism prepared him for his public ministry. What will we take from this Christmas season to carry us forward into Ordinary Time, to renew and strengthen our life of Christian discipleship? Conclude by praying together today's psalm response taken from the book of the prophet Isaiah, Isaiah 12:2-6, or pray the Prayer to the Holy Spirit.

For more information and Sunday Connection resources visit:

<https://www.loyolapress.com/catholic-resources/liturgical-year/sunday-connection/baptism-of-the-lord-cycle-b-sunday-connection/>

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FEAST OF THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD



Priests, Prophets, Kings

Loving Father,
at our Baptism we were anointed
in Christ's name
to be priests, prophets, and kings.
Our mission is his.
Help us to worship you, Lord God,
and to offer our whole lives to you.
Embolden us to share your love
and salvation.

Empower us to seek your kingdom
of justice and peace.
When the light of our faith wavers,
and our white garments become stained
and torn,
cleanse us and renew your Spirit within us.
Guide us each day along the way of your Son
so that we, your beloved children,
may be pleasing to you in all that we do.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, January 10, 2021

Our Mission

Today's Readings: Isaiah 55:1–11; Isaiah 12:2–3, 4bcd, 5–6; 1 John 5:1–9; Mark 1:7–11 or Isaiah 42:1–4, 6–7; Psalm 29:1–2, 3ac–4, 3b, 9–10; Acts 10:34–38; Mark 1:7–11. Jesus, in his humanity, had to discern how to best offer his life to God. He drew inspiration from the promises God had made to Israel and, through Israel, to all people—promises of prosperity, justice, and peace. Jesus may have especially identified with the mysterious servant spoken of by the prophet Isaiah. This servant bravely brings God's salvation to everyone. As John the Baptist urged people to prepare for the next stage of salvation, his words would have resonated with Jesus, who was baptized as a sign of his commitment to the mission that was taking shape within him.

Our Baptism immerses us into the life of Christ, into his earthly ministry, his sacrificial death, and his union with God the Father. As members of Christ's body, we ask ourselves, "What is my mission? For what good work has God's Spirit descended upon me?" Perhaps God is calling us to spend time with someone who is struggling. Perhaps our mission is to change an unhealthy work environment. Our mission might be to address injustice in our community. In all these ways and more, we, God's beloved children, participate in the mission of Christ. In fulfilling our mission we, too, will hear God declare that he is well pleased with us.



THIS WEEK AND BEYOND

The Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

During Ordinary Time this year we will hear most often from the Gospel of Mark. However, the Gospel passage for the Second Sunday in Ordinary Time is always from John. Matthew, Mark, and Luke present Jesus' identity through the lens of his ministry, but John's focus is mostly on Jesus' identity as God's divine Son.

The Christmas season is filled with feast days that highlight Jesus' divinity. The passages from John's Gospel that we hear on the Second Sundays in Ordinary Time transition us from an emphasis on Jesus' identity to his public ministry. As we accompany Jesus in his ministry, today's passage reminds us to stop and spend time with the Lord so as to discover and rediscover all that he is.

Gospel/Ignatian Contemplation

Popularized by St. Ignatius of Loyola, Gospel contemplation is a way to pray with the Scriptures. It works best with passages in which there is some action, such as a healing. Because Mark's Gospel is filled with short passages in which people are doing something, it is well suited for Gospel contemplation.

To begin, read the passage you have chosen several times. Note the people, setting, and any dialogue. Let the scene take ever clearer shape in your mind. Then imagine that you are there, in the story. You might be one of Jesus' disciples, a person in the crowd, or someone who seeks healing. Notice who is with you, what you say and do, and, most especially, how you interact with Jesus and how he interacts with you. Gospel contemplation is one way to meet our Lord in our sacred texts. It might be helpful for those who are hesitant to try it to remember that the Gospels were written so that we, like generations before us, may encounter Christ and find salvation in him.

The Gospel of Mark

Since it contains very little teaching and few parables, the Gospel of Mark is the shortest and most fast-paced of our four Gospel accounts. It is also the darkest. The shadow of the cross looms from the first chapter as we hear Jesus begin his ministry right after John the Baptist has been arrested (1:14). Jesus' first miracle is casting out a demon, a symbol of the evil he must confront (1:21–26). Chapter 2 consists entirely of stories in which people challenge Jesus and object to his or his disciples' actions. By chapter 3 people are already plotting his death (3:6). As the Gospel continues, Jesus will face opposition from his family, the villagers of his hometown, and his disciples.

The portrait of Jesus that emerges from this threatening narrative is a Jesus who struggles and suffers. He is the messiah, but he is a suffering messiah. "Suffering messiah" is a contradiction, an oxymoron. No one expected the messiah, God's chosen one, to suffer and be killed. Christians today are so familiar with the story of Jesus' passion and death that we forget how shocking it was, how horrible and horrifying. St. Mark reminds us.

As we move through the Gospel of Mark and hear how Jesus is challenged, misunderstood, ridiculed, and physically attacked, we're reminded that true discipleship has costs. Seeking the reign of God brings us into opposition with others who either don't understand how we're trying to live or who downright reject the kingdom of God that we seek. Jesus knows this. He has been through it. He now stands with us as we continue striving for his kingdom, confronting evil in all its forms until at last he raises us up to life with him in his kingdom forever.

