

Journey OF Faith

January 10, 2010

BAPTISM OF THE LORD

In Word & Deed

Some events are so significant they can serve two purposes, bring to a close one era and open a new chapter in our life. Weddings, funerals, graduations, an out of state move or a conversion to a new belief or way of life splits life in two: before and after. Once the change takes place, there is no turning back as one chapter is written and another presents a blank page.

The Baptism of Jesus ends one phase of His life and opens another. He leaves behind a life of relative obscurity and begins openly preaching the Gospel message. Heralded by John, Jesus begins the phase of His life that will lead Him to preach, teach, heal and forgive and then end in the horror and sorrow of His passion and death on the cross. He carried the hopes of Israel and of the whole human race.

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Jesus comes out of the water, drawing the world with him, as it were, and raising it up when it had hitherto been sunk in the abyss. He sees the heavens, not being rent, but opening of their own accord. The first Adam had of old closed heaven to himself and us, just as he had seen the earthly paradise being closed to him, with a fiery sword barring access.

The Holy Spirit bears witness. Here all is in perfect harmony, for the testimony comes from heaven, just as he to whom the Spirit bears witness has come from heaven.

Gregory of Nazianzus, Fourth century

Scripture Readings

Sunday January 10

Is 42:1-4, 6-7/Acts 10:34-38/Lk 3:15-16, 21-22

Monday January 11

1 Sm 1:1-8/Mk 1:14-20

Tuesday January 12

1 Sm 1:9-20/Mk 1:21-28

Wednesday January 13

1 Sm 3:1-10, 19-20/Mk 1:29-39

Thursday January 14

1 Sm 4:1-11/Mk 1:40-45

Friday January 15

1 Sm 8:4-7, 10-22a/Mk 2:1-12

Saturday January 16

1 Sm 9:1-4, 17-19; 10:1a/Mk 2:13-17

Sunday January 17

Is 62:1-5/1 Cor 12:4-11/Jn 2:1-11

FAMILY LIFE:

TO WALK AS ONE

Life is shaped by all kinds of events, some larger than others. Births, deaths, weddings, school and friends have a great influence. But sometimes, small things can make a big difference. A helping hand or listening ear in time of need, a word of encouragement or simply being accepted for who we are can change the course of our lives. You never know how you will impact someone else with your words and deeds.

Our life of faith is also shaped by large and small events, but no one single event is more important than our Baptism, an event that many of us cannot remember because we were infants. Yet it put us in a special relationship with God and made us members of the Church. Too often it is celebrated more as a social event

than a religious one, yet it has life-defining and life-giving effects.

Since it is such an important time, share with your kids the story of that day. Watch the video. What happened? Why did you choose the godparents you did? Who was the priest or deacon? Were there other children baptized? What happened afterwards? What were you thinking? What were your hopes for your child? With pictures, videos and godparents, you can renew the commitment you made for your children and give them a better understanding of how their faith life began.

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Now, Master, you can dismiss your servant in peace, you have fulfilled your word. For my eyes have witnessed your saving deed displayed for all the peoples to see: A revealing light to the Gentiles, the glory of your people Israel.

Luke 2:29-32

The sun conquers and the steps by which it approaches its zenith show forth a mystery. Lo! It is twelve days since he began to mount upward and today is the thirteenth day. It is the perfect symbol of the Son and his twelve apostles. The darkness of winter is conquered, to show that Satan is conquered. The sun conquers, so that all may know that the only-begotten Son of God triumphs over all.

Ephraem the Syrian

In Word & Deed

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Our Baptism is similar to the Lord's. We end one phase of life and enter into a new relationship with God and with each other. The promises of our Baptism, made for us by our families and which we renew each Easter, open for us the chapter of our vocation, our

mission to teach, preach, heal and forgive. There is no turning back. The Lord calls us to live a life of faith. And the best chapters are yet to be written.

~James Gaffney



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