

During this unprecedented time in our world's history, we offer you the following material for your praying and reflecting on God's Word.

Introduction - January 9, 2022

Today we celebrate the feast of the Baptism of the Lord. In today's Gospel, as in the other Gospel accounts of Jesus' baptism, we hear John the Baptist address the confusion of the people who thought that John might be the Messiah. In response, John contrasts the baptism that he performs with the Baptism that Jesus will inaugurate. John the Baptist says that he has baptized with water, but that someone will come and baptize with the Holy Spirit. The type of baptism that John performed was not yet a Christian Baptism; it was a preparation for Christian Baptism through which sins are forgiven and the gift of the Holy Spirit is received. The baptism of Jesus is considered a manifestation of God in Jesus, another "epiphany." On this, the last day of the Christmas season, our Gospel reveals to us Jesus' relation to God: the son of Mary and Joseph is also God's own Son. Through the baptism of Jesus that we receive, we are saved, renewed and become God's children sharing in his life.

Lectio Divina with the Sunday Gospel

Lectio Divina means 'divine reading'. It is a way to pray using the holy scriptures in a step-by-step process. Gather the entire family around and make the sign of the Cross. Light a candle.

Leader: "Holy Spirit, you inspired the authors of Sacred Scripture to write what you wanted us to know for the sake of our salvation. Inspire us now to hear those words not only with our ears, but our hearts, so that we might know your saving Word for us today."

- Have one person **read** the scripture slowly, out loud and have a few moments of silence afterwards. (It may be helpful for everyone to have a copy of the reading).
- **Read** the scripture again out loud and choose a single word or short phrase that touches, speaks or surprises you. Share with everyone.
- **Read** the scripture out loud one more time and discuss what is happening directly in the text.
- **Meditate** on what God is doing now in our lives through this text.
- **Respond** to what God is doing through prayer.
- **Contemplate** on what God is asking of me through this text and how to use these words as a gift for others through my actions.
- After a period of silence, end with the Sign of the Cross.

(see over)

The Holy Gospel for January 9, 2022

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke.

As the people were filled with expectation,
and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John,
whether he might be the Messiah,
John answered all of them by saying,
"I baptize you with water
but one who is more powerful than I is coming;
I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals.
He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."

Now when all the people were baptized,
and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying
the heaven was opened,
and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form
like a dove.

And a voice came from heaven,
"You are my Son, the Beloved,
with you I am well pleased."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Family Activities

❖ Gather pictures of the day of baptism of all your family members.
Display them throughout the week. If you have Holy Water, also make it available. We are all called, by virtue of baptism, to ongoing conversion of life, perseverance in prayer and selfless witness to the Gospel. We are asked to do this in our homes, our workplaces and communities. The strength and wisdom to accomplish this is given to us in Baptism itself. In what ways are you and your family LIVING out your baptism? Mark yourselves with the sign of the cross with Holy Water.

❖ Renew your baptismal promises:

Leader: Do you renounce sin, so as to live in the freedom of the children of God?

All: I do.

Leader: Do you renounce the lure of evil, so that sin may have no mastery over you?

All: I do.

(see over)

(Family Activities continued...)

Leader: Do you renounce Satan, the author and prince of sin?

All: I do.

Leader: Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth?

All: I do.

Leader: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered death and was buried,
rose again from the dead and is seated at the right hand of the Father?

All: I do.

Leader: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

All: I do.

We can trust that the Spirit will lead us to where God will say, "You are my beloved in whom I am well pleased."

- ❖ What are some traits or mannerisms that you have inherited or learned from your parents? Jesus' behaviour, attitudes, and expectations were governed by his identity as God's beloved Son. Reflect on these characteristics of Jesus; how do they reveal that he is God's Son? By your baptism, you too are children of God. What characteristics do you possess that reveal your identity as God's child?

Prayer: The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.**

Give us this day our daily bread;

and forgive us our trespasses

as we forgive those who trespass against us;

and lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

Amen