



Homily for
THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD
9/10 January, 2016

Deacon Jim's homily follows....

I'm sure you have all heard... "Do the math." (meaning think about it and you can figure it out)

How about this one... "Do the math, count your blessings."

If you counted your blessings where or would Baptism be on your list?

We could call this weekend...this Sunday... **BAPTISM SUNDAY.**

So...it would behoove us to consider the question..."Why is Baptism so important?"

I carried a question with me since my early days in grade school, which was a long time ago, and I often, and I mean often, pondered that question. That question was, "Why did Jesus seek to be baptized?" John's baptism was a baptism of repentance which indicates to me that prior sin was involved. Jesus on the other hand was God...the Son of God...and free from sin. In my mind Jesus did not need baptism. So why did Jesus seek baptism?

GOSPEL (Luke 3:15-16m 21-22)

Imagine the scene. John the Baptist is standing waist deep in the Jordan River baptizing people. He looks onto the shore and sees Jesus waiting His turn for baptism. John says to Jesus, using speech as we use it today, “You gotta be kidding me. You want me to baptize you. If anything you should baptize me.” Jesus responds, “Give in for now for it is the will of the Father.” John baptizes Jesus and the Holy Spirit descends upon Jesus in the bodily form like a dove.

That’s what happened, but it never answered my question as to why Jesus sought baptism from John the Baptist. I have come to the conclusion Jesus sought baptism for several reasons.

Jesus sought baptism:

-in humility...we are told he came in the humbling incarnation.

-in obedience...for He tells John the Baptist it is the will of the Father.

-Jesus came to us to do the will of the Father.

-As one of us He received the Holy Spirit as He was about to begin His public ministry.

-and Jesus did it for us...in His action He shows us the importance of baptism.

In the Prayer after Communion Father will pray, “that...we may be your children in name and truth.” When I hear those words “in name and truth” I hear the application of those words in my life and our lives as “in word and action.” Now I/we need help...lots of help

So in this light let’s continue and look at the first and second reading for this weekend.

READING 1 (Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11)

-We hear that the Lord:

-feeds us

-gathers us

-carries us

-leads us.

-all thunder to us that the Lord takes care of us and provides for us.

In the second reading, the veil of revelation is drawn back, and we can peek in and see a most powerful way the Lord cares and provides for us.

READING 2 (Titus 2:11-14, 3:4-7)

-these words jump out to me.

“He saved us through the bath of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.”

-this could certainly be described as a 14 word definition of the Sacrament of Baptism.

In the Gospel of John Jesus says, “to enter the Kingdom of God we need to be born of water and the Spirit”...

-sacramentally that is what happens in Baptism

-that is why baptism is so important.

-that is what Jesus wants us to hear and understand.

Baptism opens for us the Eucharist at this table...the source and summit of our faith...

the food for our journey...the strength to live our Baptism.

It is in living our Baptism that we live this year of mercy.

It is in living our Baptism that we receive and experience God's mercy.

It is in living our Baptism that we love others

in the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy.

AT 4:00 MASS

In just a few minutes we will have the joy and honor of celebrating with Nora Jean and her family. We will celebrate a baptism.

AT 11:00 MASS

In just a few minutes we will have the joy and honor of celebrating with Elizabeth Irene and her family. We will celebrate a baptism.

We will close our celebration today with a prayer that will include these words,

“that...we may be your children in name and truth.”

-this is baptism alive...this is baptism today...

this is baptism in us and among us...this is baptism through us.

This is why Baptism is so important...

This is why baptism should make our list of blessings...and Jesus showed us the way.