

THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD



The Beloved Son

Father God,
you made known the Sonship of Jesus
at the moment of his baptism
and announced to all
that you were pleased with him.
Certain of your affirmation,
and living in the power of the Spirit,
Jesus would have the fervor to
announce your kingdom:
compassion to forgive sins, heal the
sick, and raise the dead;
and courage to face abandonment,
betrayal, and death.
Awaken us from our indifference
to the total self-giving of Christ.
Change our passivity to passion
so we might have the fervor,
compassion, and courage
to follow in his footsteps.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen

Sunday, January 13, 2019
Baptized and Sent Forth



Today's Readings: Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7; Psalm 29:1-2, 3-4, 3, 9-10; Acts 10:34-38; Luke 3:15-16, 21-22. At Jesus' birth, the sky fills with angels singing his glory and a star to guide kings from a far-off land to adore and bring him precious gifts. After those marvelous events, Jesus spends thirty years leading a quiet life in Nazareth. In God's time, he comes on the scene while John is baptizing and insists that John baptize him. In that moment the Holy Trinity is revealed, as the Spirit of God descends on Jesus in the form of a dove, and the Father's voice from heaven claims Jesus as his beloved Son. Blessed by the Father and filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus embarks on his public ministry. His mandate is to bring justice to the nations: to be "a light for the nations, / To open the eyes of the blind, / to bring out prison-

ers from confinement, / and from the dungeon, those who live in darkness."

At our Baptism, the Holy Trinity is present as God the Father frees us from sin and gives us new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, and we become a new creation clothed in Christ and enlightened by him. We are invited to participate in the very life of the Trinity! The rite of Baptism gives us our mandate: to "walk always as a child of the light." Talk with your family or a friend about what those words might mean for the baptized. What is the work of children of the light? Talk with God about what those words might mean in your life. What is the particular work to which God is calling you?



THIS WEEK AND BEYOND

Thursday, January 24

St. Francis de Sales

Today we celebrate a saint of the late sixteenth/early seventeenth-century who was ahead of his time. St. Francis wrote and spoke about the laity's call to holiness when many people thought only priests and nuns could be holy. We can be thankful for people like St. Francis who paved the way for the Second Vatican Council's renewed call to holiness for all people. *Today's Readings: Hebrews 7:25–8:6; Psalm 40:7–8a, 8b–9, 10, 17; Mark 3:7–12.*

Friday, January 25

The Conversion of St. Paul the Apostle

Before he ascends to the Father, Jesus gives his Apostles the commission to “proclaim the gospel to every creature” and to baptize. Paul did not hear these words, and in fact persecuted early Christians until he was converted by an encounter with the Risen Christ. He went on to become one of the greatest evangelizers of the early Church, responsible for much of its growth. The Lord never ceases calling us to himself. Anyone who responds can be transformed and become a new creation in Christ. *Today's Readings: Acts 22:3–16; Psalm 117:1bc, 2; Mark 16:15–18.*

Saturday, January 26

Sts. Timothy and Titus, Bishops

Paul traveled more than ten thousand miles by land and sea to preach the Gospel and establish Christian communities. Such extensive work required collaborators. Timothy and Titus accompanied him but also traveled alone to early communities in their role as bishops. Timothy died a martyr's death at the hand of unbelievers; Titus lived to be ninety-three years old. *Today's Readings: 2 Timothy 1:1–8; Psalm 96:1–2a, 2b–3, 7–8a, 10; Mark 3:20–21.*

Saturday, February 2

The Presentation of the Lord

In today's Gospel we meet people who have long awaited Jesus, “the consolation of Israel.” Both Simeon, “righteous and devout,” and Anna, who worships “night and day with fasting and prayer,” are filled with the Holy Spirit and recognize the child brought to the Temple. Do you recognize Jesus in the people and events of your life? What can you do to keep the Holy Spirit alive in you? *Today's Readings: Malachi 3:1–4; Psalm 24:7, 8, 9, 10; Hebrews 2:14–18; Luke 2:22–40.*

Thursday, February 14

Sts. Cyril, Monk, and Methodius, Bishop

Sts. Cyril and Methodius were brothers who lived in ninth-century Greece. As missionaries to Eastern Europe, they gained familiarity with Slavic languages and translated the Gospel accounts using an alphabet developed by Cyril. A later version of that alphabet is still in use in Eastern Europe and Russia. On this day devoted to love, we can celebrate the love of Cyril and Methodius for the Slavic people as they worked tirelessly to bring them the Gospel in their native tongue. *Today's Readings: Genesis 3:1–25; Psalm 32:1–2, 3, 4–5; Mark 7:24–30.*

Friday, February 22

The Chair of St. Peter the Apostle

Peter is the first Apostle to confess Jesus as “the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” Jesus, aware that such faith could only come from God, names Peter the rock on which he will build his church. The very human Peter, who will later deny Christ and bitterly regret his sin, accepts his role with humility in a spirit of service. His first letter images early Church leaders as shepherds and urges them to be examples to their flock, remembering that the “chief Shepherd” is Christ. Perhaps Peter, like King David who first prayed Psalm 23, found consolation in the knowledge that God was shepherding him. *Today's Readings: 1 Peter 5:1–4; Psalm 23:1–3a, 4, 5, 6; Matthew 16:13–19.*



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KEEPING THE SEASONS
ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS 2018–2019