

Wednesday Jan 8th for the Baptism of the Lord

OPENING PRAYER: God our Creator, you offered your servant Jesus as Savior to all humankind. His coming among us opened our eyes to the light of justice, peace and salvation. By the river Jordan you anointed Jesus to carry out his mission. Anoint us now with your Holy Spirit so that we can hear the word you are speaking to us. This we pray through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

In the words of Saint Benedict, “Listen with the ears of your heart.”

- Please note a word, phrase, or verse that seemed to really catch your notice.
- A volunteer slowly read aloud today’s passage Afterwards, we have a few minutes of silent reflection.

READING OF THE ASSIGNED GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE Luke 3:15-16, 21-22

15^k Now the people were filled with expectation, and all were asking in their hearts whether John might be the Messiah.

16^{*} John answered them all, saying,^l “I am baptizing you with water, but one mightier than I is coming. I am not worthy to loosen the thongs of his sandals. He will baptize you with the holy Spirit and fire.

17 His winnowing fan^{*} is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”^m

18 Exhorting them in many other ways, he preached good news to the people.

19^{*} Now Herod the tetrarch,ⁿ who had been censured by him because of Herodias, his brother’s wife, and because of all the evil deeds Herod had committed,

20 added still another to these by [also] putting John in prison.

The Baptism of Jesus.*

21^o After all the people had been baptized and Jesus also had been baptized and was praying,* heaven was opened
22* ^p and the holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.”

Notes:

[3:16] He will baptize you with the holy Spirit and fire: in contrast to John’s baptism with water, Jesus is said to baptize with the holy Spirit and with fire. From the point of view of the early Christian community, the Spirit and fire must have been understood in the light of the fire symbolism of the pouring out of the Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 2:1–4); but as part of John’s preaching, the Spirit and fire should be related to their purifying and refining characteristics (Ez 36:25–27; Mal 3:2–3). See note on Mt 3:11.

* [3:17] Winnowing fan: see note on Mt 3:12.

* [3:19–20] Luke separates the ministry of John the Baptist from that of Jesus by reporting the imprisonment of John before the baptism of Jesus (Lk 3:21–22). Luke uses this literary device to serve his understanding of the periods of salvation history. With John the Baptist, the time of promise, the period of Israel, comes to an end; with the baptism of Jesus and the descent of the Spirit upon him, the time of fulfillment, the period of Jesus, begins. In his second volume, the Acts of the Apostles, Luke will introduce the third epoch in salvation history, the period of the church.

* [3:21–22] This episode in Luke focuses on the heavenly message identifying Jesus as Son and, through the allusion to Is 42:1, as Servant of Yahweh. The relationship of Jesus to the Father has already been announced in the infancy narrative (Lk 1:32, 35; 2:49); it occurs here at the beginning of Jesus’ Galilean ministry and will reappear in Lk 9:35 before another major section of Luke’s gospel, the travel narrative (Lk 9:51–19:27). Elsewhere in Luke’s writings (Lk 4:18; Acts 10:38), this incident will be interpreted as a type of anointing of Jesus.

* [3:21] Was praying: Luke regularly presents Jesus at prayer at important points in his ministry: here at his baptism; at the choice of the Twelve (Lk 6:12); before Peter’s confession (Lk 9:18); at the transfiguration (Lk 9:28); when he teaches his disciples to pray (Lk 11:1); at the Last Supper (Lk 22:32); on the Mount of Olives (Lk 22:41); on the cross (Lk 23:46).

* [3:22] You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased: this is the best attested reading in the Greek manuscripts. The Western reading, “You are my Son, this day I have begotten you,” is derived from Ps 2:7.

QUESTIONS FOR SHARING

1. In the Gospel, the “people were filled with expectation” of the Christ. What is an expectant faith and what are some steps we can take to acquire it?
2. All of the baptized have been baptized with the Holy Spirit at their Baptism. Some have received a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit through their involvement in the Charismatic Renewal. What role does the Holy Spirit play in your spiritual life?
3. Name one thing today’s Gospel says to us that we disciples of Jesus need to heed and act on.

Commentary

Luke places Jesus' baptism before the start of his public ministry to identify Jesus as the chosen servant foretold by Isaiah (first reading). Luke's account of Jesus' baptism is striking in that it underplays the actual water event at the hand of John. Instead, it highlights the prayer of Jesus, the descent of the Spirit, and the heavenly voice proclaiming Jesus as God's beloved Son. 14 The Gospel has two distinct but related events. In the first, John disavows that he is Christ. People may have thought that John was the Messiah because Jesus submitted to him for baptism. The second event reports the extraordinary circumstances that followed Jesus' own baptism by John. The two incidents are connected by reference to the Holy Spirit. Luke always presents Jesus as praying before making major decisions. It's no surprise then that we find him praying during his baptism. In response to his prayer, the Holy Spirit descends on him in visible form (as a dove) at the beginning of his mission, just as the Spirit will come in visible form on the apostles at Pentecost at the beginning of their mission. The Father's

voice puts the seal of divine approval on Jesus and on the mission he is about to begin. This Spirit will empower Jesus (and his followers) to do the works of God, i.e., to preach with authority, heal the sick, cast out demons, and obey God to the point of death.

IS THERE A CAUSE FOR GRATITUDE THIS WEEK?

IS THERE A PRAYER REQUEST YOU HAVE?

CLOSING PRAYER - The Lord's Prayer

Bible Sharing Parish Hall and Zoom
Wednesday, Jan 8 6:30 – 7:30pm
Weekly on Wednesday
Zoom Meeting

Description: Blessed Sacrament is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Blessed Sacrament's Zoom Meeting
Time: Jan 8, 2025 06:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Please download and import the following iCalendar (.ics) files to your calendar system.

Weekly: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/tZolduisqDosE923wHRoszXqNBSkCL57ORPg/ics?icsToken=98tyKuGhpjorHtKTthCORpx5Goj4d-jwpiFdj_oPzwjNMS9AeDvnGMBxOZFTRY

Blessed Sacrament is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85136740699?pwd=Q2pXLzdzZFdNNU1NajVpeEtKUohJQTo9>

Meeting ID: 811 6265 5618
Passcode: 280607