

THE AUTHOR OF BAPTISM BAPTIZED!

Today we celebrate one of the most important solemnities in our Christian life. By virtue of Baptism, we become Christians. This is the DOOR to the other seven sacraments in the Catholic Church.

In our first reading today, from the book of Isaiah, he talks of the humility of the servant of God who has been granted the Holy Spirit to bring justice to the Nations referring to the person of Jesus Christ. (Isa.42.1-4) Isaiah continues to speak of HOPE for the people in Exile whom Yahweh has pity on, and He is assuring them of bringing them back and feeding them with plenty of food and drink. There is only one condition, to TURN BACK TO HIM AND REPENT for he is rich in mercy and forgiveness.

This is linked to today's Gospel which gives an account of the Baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ by John in River Jordan. The sinless and the real Author of Baptism subjects himself to repentance. Jesus shows such humility. The sinless becomes like a sinner. He wanted to participate in our journey towards Him. He was one like us in all things BUT SIN. He did not have to be BAPTIZED at all. There are four peculiarities of this Baptism of Our Lord that should be noted. His Baptism was of tremendous importance to Jesus.

It was a moment of decision. Thirty years he worked as son of a carpenter in Nazareth *discharging his duties*, and now, after Baptism, he commits himself to what he came to do on earth, to call sinners back to God. ***Baptism was a moment of Identification; he became one like us. It was a moment of approval, "This is my son of whom I am well pleased."*** The voice of God the Father showing us that Jesus was God. A moment of enlightenment, the role of the Holy Spirit was witnessed in the form of a dove, a sign of humility and gentleness. Jesus was gentle, especially to the WEAK and those WOUNDED BY SIN. What happened to Jesus in Baptism should have happened to us during our Baptism. We are called upon to leave the old ways behind and make the decision to follow him. We are called to identify ourselves with Him, becoming gentle and humble.

This is the call of Baptism to all of us. We must become sons and daughter of God. The Father should say of us today, " ***YOU ARE MY BELOVED SON/DAUGHTER THE ONE I HAVE CHOSEN.***"

By virtue of Baptism, we are chosen as children of THE FATHER. We need to redeem the society in our time. There are so many great men and women in history who have done a lot of positive things in the world. We need to join them to save our world and our society. We need to change our hearts and our attitudes and become like Jesus.

THIS IS OUR BAPTISMAL COMMITMENT, TO BE LIKE JESUS