

HOMILY by Fr. Anthony Davis

“This Is My Beloved Son, With Whom I Am Well Pleased.”

January 12, 2020

Baptism of the Lord Time (Year A)

Is 42:1-4, 6-7; Acts 10:34-38; Mt 3:13-17

The Christmas season, celebrating the Self-revelation of God through Jesus, comes to an end with the feast of the Baptism of Our Lord. Thus, Christmas is the feast of God’s Self-revelation to the Jews, and Epiphany celebrates God’s Self-revelation to the Gentiles. And then, at his Baptism in the Jordan, at the beginning of his public ministry, Christ reveals himself to repentant sinners.

Why did Jesus, the sinless Son of God, receive the "baptism of repentance" meant for sinners?

Jesus’ baptism by John was the acceptance of his Father’s will, and the beginning of his mission as God’s suffering Servant. And so, he allowed himself to be numbered among sinners, who were trooping to John for Baptism. Hence by this gesture, “A new age under the power of God has begun.”

So, what is it about baptism that makes this sacrament so compelling even to be administered to a child?

Parents bathe their children without fancy attire, gathered relatives, or photos taken. Yet we know that baptism is a dramatically more special moment in the lives of individuals and in the life of the faith community.

Hence, all of our 7 Sacraments are moments of Grace, in which the Lord uses the ordinary stuff of life to do something extraordinary. For instance, in the Eucharist, bread and wine become body and blood of Christ (Transubstantiation); in Confirmation, candidates are sealed with the Holy Spirit, through the imposition of the hands and anointing with Oil. And in Baptism, ordinary water is used to draw people into Christ’s life.

In other words, through his Baptism, Jesus opened the waters of baptism for us, creating a bridge between heaven and earth, a way for us to be plunged into his life, death and resurrection. Hence in Jesus’ Baptism, the fulness of the Holy Trinity is manifested-“The Holy Spirit of God descended upon him like a dove, and a voice declared: THIS IS MY BELOVED SON, WITH WHOM I AM WELL PLEASD”.

SIGNIFICANCE: In Baptism, we become members of Christ’ body. Nonetheless, when we sign ourselves with the water of the font, we do more than remind ourselves of our baptism. Through this simple sign, we affirm our readiness to live as disciples, to share the love of God, to give of self, and to sacrifice, as Jesus did, in order to manifest God’s love in the world. Are we then truly ready to accept the challenge to answer Christ’s call, no matter the cost to ourselves?

We are assured that the Spirit will strengthen us and give us courage. Furthermore, at Jesus’ Baptism, the voice of God was heard saying: “You are my beloved son; with you I am well pleased.” Therefore, in Christ, we too are “the beloved of God.” May the choices we make, our actions and attitudes, the things we strive for, and the temptations from which we turn, give glory to God. May we be true to our baptism as members of Christ’s body, the Church, so that God will look at us and say: “You are my beloved son/daughter with whom I am well pleased”.

Amen!!!