

**FOR THE WEEKEND OF JAN 8-9, 2022**

The Baptism of the Lord

**Gospel reading (Lectionary 21)**

Lk 3:15-16, 21-22

The people were filled with expectation,
and all were asking in their hearts
whether John might be the Christ.
John answered them all, saying,
“I am baptizing you with water,
but on 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.”

After all the people had been baptized
and Jesus also had been baptized and was praying,
heaven was opened 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.”

**Intercession**

That consoled by our true identity as beloved sons and daughters of God, we might generously contribute to our diocese’s Annual Diocesan Appeal.

**Copy for bulletin announcement**

Jesus never sinned. So why did he get baptized?

To be close to us. Instead of the waters cleansing Jesus from original sin, we can think of Jesus’s submersion into the river Jordan as *Him* baptizing *the water.* By taking part in this ritual, Jesus elevates it. He raises it to the level of a sacrament, a moment when we know that He will be present, through which we can encounter Him. That’s what happened when each of us were baptized. We became Christ’s brothers and sisters.

And if we’re joined to Jesus in baptism, then what he hears after coming ashore also applies to us: “You are my beloved son; with you I am well pleased.” Through baptism, we become sons and daughters of God. This is our true identity!

Reminding ourselves of this identity—for instance, when we make the sign of the cross with Holy Water—transforms the way we live. If God is Our Father, it means our life is a gift. And it means He’s inviting us into his work of generosity and love. How does this change the way we think about helping our parish community? About volunteering our time and talents? About supporting the Annual Diocesan Appeal? Pray about it and see!

**Copy for pulpit announcement**

Today, we celebrate Jesus’s baptism. Embracing our identity as beloved sons and daughters of God, please consider how Our Heavenly Father might be calling you to participate in Christ’s work by contributing to our Annual Diocesan Appeal.

**Social media post/content**

Photo: Baby being baptized.

Text: We are sons and daughters of God. This is our true identity!

Copy: Through baptism, each of us is a beloved son or daughter of God! Thank God for this gift today, and discern how He might be asking you to build His Kingdom—maybe by supporting our Annual Diocesan Appeal!