**FOR THE WEEKEND OF JAN. 11-12, 2025**

The Baptism of Our Lord

**Gospel Reading**

Lk 3:15-16, 21-22

Now the people were filled with expectation, and all were

asking in their hearts whether John might be the Messiah.

John answered them all, saying, “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.”

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**

Christ began his ministry with his baptism in the Jordan. Let us pray for the courage and strength to continue this ministry today, through prayer and action, in our support for the Catholic Ministry Appeal.

**Copy for Bulletin Announcement**

In baptism, we are washed clean of Adam and Eve’s original sin. We are dressed in white to symbolize our new purity. Our heads are bathed in holy water, and our parents and godparents dedicate our lives to Christ.

Through our baptism, God is proclaiming his deep, abiding love for us, his children, just as he proclaimed his love for Jesus, his son, at the Jordan River: “…a voice came from heaven,” saying, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.”

Baptism can be viewed as a private moment between God and the newly baptized. God has always chosen us; now it’s our turn (or our parents’) to choose God. But ­–baptism is celebrated in public. Jesus went to the crowded banks of the Jordan to have John baptize him *publicly*. God proclaims that Jesus is his son, *publicly*. “Heaven was opened, and the holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove” *for all to see.* With all this visibility, God is reminding us that *we are never alone*.

Belonging to a community of faith reinforces that we are part of his flock. We can emulate the love and care God has for us by extending ourselves to others. We can pray for those experiencing difficulties, bring a meal to an ill friend, and share our good fortune with faith-sustaining initiatives, like the Catholic Ministry Appeal. Please pray for its success and consider contributing to it.

**Copy for Pulpit Announcement**

Humility is an underrated quality in our culture. But it is a quality that is present in Jesus’ baptism. First, there is John, who is so good at preaching that many who hear him believe he is the Messiah for whom they long. Instead of letting the compliment go to his head, he corrects them, saying that “…one mightier than I is coming. I am not worthy to loosen the thongs of his sandals.” Then, we see Jesus humbling himself to John, allowing himself to be baptized even though he is without sin. Jesus is also submitting to God’s will, for with his baptism comes the beginning of his ministry.

As baptized Catholics, we share in this ministry. We are called to proclaim Christ’s message to a world that sorely needs it. We may not be able to solve the problems that populate the evening news, but we can work to transform at least our little corner of creation.

When we support initiatives like the Catholic Ministry Appeal, we bring the healing powers of Christ to those who need his healing, his comfort. Thank you for prayerfully considering giving to this year’s Appeal.

**Social Media Post/Content**

Photo: Image of a dove flying, silhouetted against light

Header: “He will baptize you with the holy Spirit and fire” – Luke 3:16

Copy: May our own baptism fuel our desire to be Christ for others. Through our support of such initiatives as the Catholic Ministry Appeal, we can be modern day disciples who spread the Good News and bring the comfort of Christ to all we meet.