



CHRISTMAS SEASON CONCLUDES

LITURGY BYTES *by Michele Hall*



This weekend the Church celebrates the feast of the Baptism of the Lord which traditionally ends the Christmas season. The beautiful decorations of this season will slowly be removed as we enter Winter Ordinary Time and return to the green color. Some years, the way the calendar falls, the Baptism of the Lord does not fall on a Sunday as it does this year. The Baptism of the Lord Jesus is the great event celebrated after the feast of the Epiphany because it is the occasion of the first public revelation of all the three persons in the Holy Trinity and the official revelation of Jesus as the Son of God to the world by God the Father. It is also an event described by all four Gospels, and it marks the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. This year at the 11:30 Mass, we invited the families who had children baptized here within the past two years to join us for a special blessing.

We know from Scripture that Jesus descended into the Jordan River even though he really did not need to be freed from sin. Jesus conferred on water the power of a true baptism which would remove sin. Many points in Jesus' baptism are symbolic of what has happened at our baptism. At Christ's baptism the Holy Spirit descended upon Him; at our baptism we are baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. At Jesus' baptism, Christ was proclaimed the beloved Son of the Father, and at our baptism we become the adopted sons/daughters of God. Today, let us celebrate our first Sacrament with our families and friends!

Have a blessed, healthy, and peaceful week ahead!