**Christ’s Baptism**

The eternal Son of God was baptized by his cousin the forerunner, John the Baptizer. Jesus’ baptism was not for Himself, but for our sake. Jesus came among us to reveal to us that He is the eternal Son of God who has come among us in our humanity through incarnation. In His desire for us to see Him as one of us, He fulfilled all righteousness including His baptism. He also fulfilled prophecies of prophets of old to manifest Himself to us as the Messiah.

Firstly, His baptism, was part of the eternal plan of God to restore all things to the way God intended them to be, right after He created them. To do this, the eternal Son took on our flesh to be one of us in every way, but sin. Secondly, through His baptism, we are introduced to the Trinity. The Three-in-One manifested Himself to us at the Baptism of the eternal Son of God. Thirdly, it was through His baptism that John the Baptist could identify, and point Him out to us as the Messiah.

In our first reading, God through Prophet Isaiah gave us what to look for in the chosen One, the Messiah. Because of the Spirit of God that would be in Him, the chosen One would bring justice to the world. Because He would come to serve and not be served, **“a bruised reed He would not break.”** This implies, He would not come to judge but to serve until justice is served when He defeats the devil. He has been called for victory of justice over sin and death which are the works of the devil.

According to Isaiah, the chosen one has been sent as a covenant for all, by the shedding of His blood, He would establish the new covenant. Part of His mission would by opening their eyes, He would reveal who God is to those who do not know Him. He would set free, those who had been imprisoned and shackled by sin. Those without hope, or those who despair, such as the Gentiles would be set free from bondage. They would be released from darkness by His light and He would be the light to the nations.

In our second reading, St. Peter’s heart was enlightened by God to see that in the person of Cornelius as a representative of the Gentiles, salvation also belongs to the Gentiles. Peter in amazement, came to the realization that it is not the creed or nationality or status of anyone that matters. Fear of the Lord, acceptance of God’s will, and acting on them in a godly way, is all that matters for us to be become adopted children of God. He found out that God does not discriminate in any way possible. He loves all and wants all to be with Him in His kingdom.

Peter then reminded them that Jesus was sent by God to proclaim peace to the world. He reminded them about Jesus’ baptism and how they witnessed His anointing and manifestation of the Holy Spirit during His baptism. After His baptism, Jesus went about performing miracles, good deeds and bringing about justice through the power of God, to those who were oppressed by the devil.

Three things stand out in this manifestation: the baptism of Jesus revealing His glory to the world, the manifestation of the Holy Spirit, and the mighty works of Jesus we are remembering today during our liturgy. We are being reminded that Jesus is still performing miracles in our lives all the time. All over the world, many people are coming to know Him and accept Him as their Lord and savior. He is also curing us of our disease and freeing us from the hands of the devil.

In our Gospel reading, we hear the account of the baptism of our Lord as recorded by Matthew. Matthew reminds us of how Jesus came to be baptized by John the Baptizer and how John felt unworthy to baptize his God. At the persuasion of Jesus, John did baptize Jesus. Matthew let us know that it was after Jesus came out of the water of baptism, that John saw the heavens parted, a parting similar to the parting of the Red Sea by God for the Israelites.

Then, John saw the Holy Spirit descend like a dove upon Jesus, signifying the beginning of a new life for all humanity, in a similar way Noah came to know that it was time for a new beginning of life on earth after he sent out the dove and it did not return.

Peter then told the Jews that the voice of God the Father, came down rumbling like thunder from heaven proclaiming Jesus as His beloved Son; pleasing to Him in every way because Jesus humbled Himself and did the will of the Father. Yes, my brothers and sisters, it is when we do the will of the God that we will be pleasing to God.

We are all here today to do His will by coming to worship Him as a community in His house. We are obeying His first commandment of not having any other God beside Him. We gather here not to socialize or for any other purpose other than to worship God. The Mass is a place where our focus is entirely on God and not on ourselves or our neighbor. The Mass is about God and not about us.

As we joyfully come to receive Jesus in the Eucharist, let us resolve to focus all our heart, soul and strength on God.