

**For The Bulletin of
January 13, 2019**



THE FEAST OF THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

From Father Robert

The baptism of an infant is the cause of much joy, celebration, and love among family and friends. The baby is welcomed into the Christian community, a community of grace, support, and encouragement in the face of all that life can bring. This ritual action has its roots not only in Jesus but also in John, “The Baptist” who was so named precisely because of this action he performed at the Jordan River. The early followers of Jesus recognized that Jesus’ own ministry began after He was baptized by John, a story first recounted by the Gospel of Mark, which states that John preached a baptism of “forgiveness of sins.” This story is echoed in Luke as well (Luke 3:3).

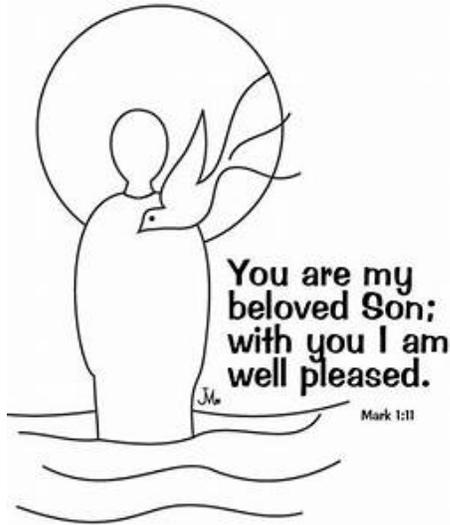
As a result, we (and the early Christians) experience a theological quandary. Why did Jesus, Who is said to be without sin, submit to baptism by John? To what

purpose or to what end is a baptism of forgiveness of sins to one without sin? Responses to this question were as varied as the gospel writers and church fathers themselves. Matthew says that it is “to fulfill all righteousness” (Matthew 3:15). The Gospel of John simply neglects to say that Jesus was baptized by John. Instead, John the Baptist merely testifies to Jesus without baptizing Him at all. Luke places the baptism of Jesus in the passive voice and almost as an afterthought: “After all the people had been baptized and Jesus also had been baptized” (Luke 3:21). Other than the Synoptics, neither Paul nor any other New Testament authors mention Jesus being baptized.

As indicated by the gospels, the ministry of Jesus began at or shortly after His baptism. And Luke shows that the Holy Spirit was active at this time, descending upon Jesus “in bodily form like a dove.” Though Matthew says the Spirit descended upon Him like a dove, only Luke says, “*In bodily form* like a dove.” This phrase reflects Luke’s tendency to objectivize the supernatural and it is something we will notice throughout this gospel. Further, Luke is also the only evangelist to say that Jesus was at prayer during this event. Prayer is another Lukan theme that we will see throughout his gospel: Luke shows Jesus at prayer more than any other evangelist. Luke will also show the early Christian community at prayer in the Acts of the Apostles.

So in these four short verses we have Lukan theology bursting from the page. Jesus is baptized by John (passive voice) though John preaches a baptism of forgiveness of sins. Luke objectivizes the supernatural by saying the Holy

Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove, and Luke shows Jesus at prayer.



Living The Paschal Mystery

When we are about to make an important or life-altering decision we certainly pause to give it some thought. Before accepting a new position, a big move, or making a commitment to someone or something we likely ask God's guidance and wisdom. Some state simply that this is a prayer. And it seems Jesus did the same: He prayed before He embarked on His ministry.

If Luke is certain to show us that Jesus prayed, we are sure to see this as an example for our own lives. We are to pray. Significantly, Luke does not tell us what Jesus prayed only *that* he prayed. And this has ramifications for us too.

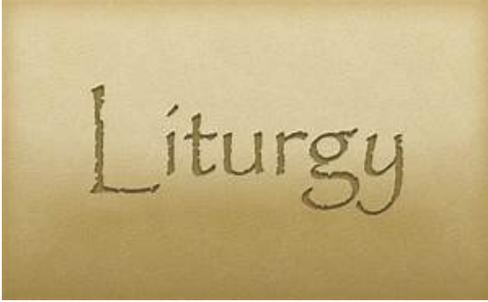
We are to be a people of prayer who consult and communicate with God, seeking direction, guidance, wisdom, and insight before embarking on our way.

When we pray we imitate Jesus and the relationships He lived with the Father.

We also imitate the early Christians. We recognize that prayer is not limited to the liturgy or to formal recitation of memorized texts. Instead it is a reflection of the relationship we have with God.

- On this feast of the Baptism of the Lord, reflect on your own baptism. What do you remember or what have you been told about the day you were baptized?
- This feast day officially marks the last day of the Christmas Season. Looking back on the weeks since December 25th, what has been most meaningful for you this Christmas? What traditions would you like to continue? Looking forward to next year, what would you like to do differently?
- After being baptized, Jesus prays. In Luke's gospel we often see Jesus in prayer. How would you like to enrich your own prayer life in this new year?
- At His baptism Jesus hears the voice of God saying, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well-pleased." Is it easy or difficult for you to believe that you are God's beloved? Why do you think this is?





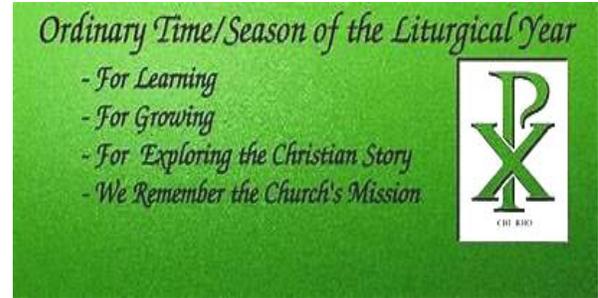
About Liturgy: Epiphany, Part II

In the Eastern Church, Epiphany (or Theophany, meaning “manifestation of God”) evokes three different scenes in the life of Jesus. First is the visitation of the magi and the epiphany that God’s promise is given to all people. Second is today’s manifestation at the Jordan River of God’s chosen one in Jesus. Third is next week’s revelation of God’s glory made visible in the first public miracle of Jesus at a wedding in Cana. This triptych is often seen together in religious art and gives us a profound insight into the meaning of Christmas.

For most people Christmas is a children’s holiday and a time for adults to return to the innocence and joy of their childhood. The emphasis in both secular and religious imagery on the Christ-child in Bethlehem reinforces this idea. However, the Christmas feast of the Baptism of the Lord counterbalances that notion. It reminds us that the child in the manger becomes an adult on mission, and that mission will eventually lead not only to a feast filled with rich food and choice wine but also to suffering and death. This is one reason why it is important that we mark this Sunday as the final day of Christmas.

This triple-revelation gives us a summary of Christ’s mission and, thus, the mission of every disciple who follows Him into those same baptismal

waters. As we memorialize the baptism of Jesus today let us also remember our own baptism and call to mind our participation in Jesus’ mission “to open the eyes of the blind, to bring out prisoners from confinement, and from the dungeon, those who live in darkness and the shadow of death” (Isaiah 42: 7).



Winter’s Ordinary Time

Today marks the conclusion of the Christmas Season and the beginning of Winter’s Ordinary Time (tomorrow). You are invited to join the members of the Art & Environment Committee in transforming our worship environment from the Christmas Season to Winter’s Ordinary Time on Tuesday, January 15th, beginning at 9:00 a.m. Many hands are needed to pack away all the elements that made our Christmas environment so beautiful. Coffee and pastries are served mid-morning and if there is still work to be done into the afternoon, we also provide a simple lunch. This is a wonderful way to become involved and deepen your own liturgical spirituality, participating in the transition of one season to another. Thank you to all those who will join us.





Many thanks to all those who do so much through the week to help with everything that needs to be done to keep the parish running smoothly: those who clean and maintain the church each week: **Jun Bajet, Angela Bueno, Al Cosce, Jean Rogers, Mency Osborne, and Rose Salamanca**; those who clean and maintain the bathrooms in both the church and parish hall: **Steve Rojek, Mary Ewing, Patricia Britton, Harlan Young, and Fr. Robert.**

...to all those who took part and made our celebration of the Feast of the Epiphany both memorable and historic: **John, Janice, and Athena Joy Redosendo, Ed Cissell, Charlie Mirano, Zach DeBuhr; Rose, Lorenzo, and Ally Necor, Therese Buenconsejo, Mary and Joe Clarke, Rima Lalough and Mary Theresa Radovan, Emily Claire Freking, Alliyah Morauda, Keira Dulay, Keanna Cano, Noah Dijanic, Chloe and Nicholas Oncena, Daniel Galvan, Dylan Dayrit, and Edgar Perez.** Many thanks to **Don Pearson** and the **Cantors/Choir**, as well as **Estrella Rusk and Kathleen Clarke** for their help with costumes.

...to **Dilcia Aparicio** who does such an excellent job of washing, ironing, and caring for the Sacred Linens.

...to our Sacristans and Altar Guild who prepare the sanctuary for the celebration of Eucharist each week:

Peter Degl'Innocenti, Pam and Rich Confetti, Vincent Rodriguez, Harlan Young, Monika Kauer, Cynthia

Enrique, Nancy Santos and Rose Salamanca.

...to **our counting teams** who are here every week to count the weekly collections.

...to our volunteers who assisted in the parish office last week:

Alicia Perez, Yvette Young, Harlan Young, Joe Fanfa, Bev Iacona and Paul Riofski.

...to our St. Vincent de Paul and Mobile Mall volunteers who transported last week's donations: **Frank Zamora and Barbara Jackson.**

...to our faithful weekly bulletin assembly team: **Dave Costanza (Lead), Carole Miller, Beth Enea, Richard Enea, Kathy Augusta, Vince Augusta, and Deanna Ribeiro.**

...to our wonderful Parking Lot Security who keeps watch over our vehicles during the weekend Liturgies: **Don Benson, Steve Rojek, and Dave Simpson.**



Parish Hall and Kitchen Project Update

As previously reported, the parish has services agreements with Loving and Campos, Architects (LCA) to provide design assistance and Oliver & Company (Oliver) to assist with the feasibility study and to develop a construction budget. In order for this project to proceed, we must demonstrate to the Diocese that we can complete the expansion solely with parish resources. The Diocese is not in a position to assist

and will not provide any financial assistance. An important provision of our agreement with Oliver is that they will guarantee completion based on an approved construction bid.

Oliver presented an initial construction budget based on the design proposal from LCA and the Expansion Committee. Unfortunately, this first pass construction estimate of over \$1,500,000 far exceeded our available funds of just over \$1,000,000. The budget included a complete retrofit of our existing structure for a fire sprinkler system at a cost of over \$150,000 and food service equipment costs of nearly \$200,000. The construction estimate also did not include water district hookup fees for a large water main to provide sufficient water for a fire sprinkler system.

The Contra Costa County Fire Protection District is the agency that will make the final determination as to whether a retrofit fire sprinkler system is required for our existing building. Clearly, the parish will save significantly if the expansion can be completed without a retrofit. After informal consultations with the Fire District, the Expansion Committee went back to LCA with a design proposal that encloses the kitchen with fire rated walls and doors in lieu of the full retrofit. Once the Committee has drawings showing the fire rated walls and doors, they will go back to the Fire District for further discussions. You can be assured that safety will not be compromised if the fire rated walls alternative is approved.

Oliver's initial construction budget also did not take into account the significance of the 'sweat equity' that we as a parish are willing to contribute to this effort.

The history of St. Ignatius of Antioch is that our parishioners have always been willing to step forward. Parishioner 'sweat equity' made significant contributions to the initial remodel of the parish hall, the worship area remodel, the construction of parish offices, parking lot landscaping, and office reroofing capital projects. **Rich Confetti** will be developing a schedule of 'sweat equity' that the parish is willing to contribute and presenting this to Oliver for consideration in their next construction budget proposal. Rich will also determine which expansion tasks will be open to parishioner participation.

LCA held an informal discussion with Antioch city officials with encouraging results. LCA is presenting this project as a remodel rather than new construction. There is less 'red-tape' associated with a remodel as opposed to new construction. No building permits have been taken out as yet.

Father Robert and the Committee are well aware of the importance of this project and the patience that the community has exhibited. We understand and appreciate the scheduling uncertainty that exists with ministries and organizations that use the hall and kitchen as part of their activities. The Committee will continue to provide updates as milestones in the project are met. The Expansion Committee's primary goal remains unchanged: to provide the parish with significantly expanded seating capacity in the parish hall and a first rate professional-grade kitchen facility. Again, thank you for your patience.

Liturgical Ministers

Evening of Prayer and Reflection

On Monday evening, January 7th, 45 of our Lay Eucharistic Ministers, Lectors and RCIA Catechists gathered in the Parish Hall to share an evening together and focused on the story of the journey of the Magi. The Gospel of Matthew was read and discussed in the large group. They then broke into smaller groups to share on 2 questions – “What star draws me to Jesus?” and “What Gifts to I bring to Jesus?” Once this was completed, those with courage enough shared with the larger group their small group experience. After the reflection, it was then time for fellowship. The array of desserts made it difficult to make a choice. In all the years we have been to receptions, this dessert table beat them all by far. The plan now is to prepare for the Lenten season by focusing on “Our Journey into the Desert and on to Jerusalem.” We will meet again on Tuesday evening, February 19th at 7:00 pm. An appearance by a special guest is anticipated.

Steve and Frances Rojek

