

Deacon Tony's January 9, 2021 Homily

THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

One of my favorite duties as a deacon is to administer the Sacrament of Baptism to the infants of our parish at St Thomas More. Their calling to this lifegiving sacrament comes through their parents. It cannot be ministered without the cooperation of the parents. One of the great blessings of a grandparent is to see their children accept the faith that they were taught and pass it on to their children. It is always heartbreaking to have a grandparent approach me to somehow baptize their grandchild without the consent of the parent. But the parent's cooperation is the beginning of raising their child from the infant stages to age of reason, with God's grace in having a developed spiritual life.

Isaiah tells us about living in a relationship with God as our Father and provider.

This is clearly a message of hope for communities which may at times be discouraged by the meagre results of their evangelization efforts.

The Lord has vowed to quench our thirst and satisfy our hunger.

He asks us why we pursue material things that fail to satisfy us.

He wants us to live in a spiritually productive life in an everlasting covenant with Him. We are called to seek the Lord while He may be found, call to Him because He is near.

Being baptized Catholics should give our lives more meaning.

The baptism itself was a symbolic act which had to be accompanied by an inner change. The word for 'repentance' here is *metanoia* (metanoia) in Greek.

It implies a radical change in the way we look at the meaning and purpose of life and how we live that life ourselves.

Metanoia is much more than just feeling sorry. It calls for a total reorganization of one's attitudes so that such errant or hurting behavior would slowly disappear from one's life.

These are some of the instructions for the newly baptized in Jerusalem in the early Church:

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“Now that you have been baptized into Christ and have put on Christ, [you have become conformed to the Son of God](#)... **since you share in Christ, it is right to call you ‘Christs’ or anointed ones... You have become ‘Christs’ by receiving the sign of Holy Spirit**... When you emerged from the pool of sacred waters you were anointed in a manner corresponding to Christ’s anointing. That anointing is the Holy Spirit... Christ was anointed with... the Holy Spirit... and you have been anointed with chrism because you have become fellows and sharers of Christ.;

It is the gift of Christ... It is applied to your forehead and organs of sense with a symbolic meaning; **the body is anointed with visible ointment, and the soul is sanctified by the holy, hidden Spirit.**”

I think it is fitting for all of now to renew our Baptismal vows and recommit to the evangelical spirit with which we had been called to live.

On your part, you must make it your constant care to bring this new life up in the practice of the faith. See that the divine life that God gives them is kept safe from the poison of sin, to grow always stronger in their hearts. If your faith makes you ready to accept this responsibility, renew now the vows of your own baptism.

Reject sin; profess your faith in Christ Jesus

DO YOU REJECT SATAN? I do!

AND ALL OF HIS WORKS? I do!

AND ALL OF HIS EMPTY PROMISES? I do!

DO YOU REJECT SIN, SO AS TO LIVE IN THE FREEDOM OF GOD’S CHILDREN? I do!

DO YOU REJECT THE GLAMOR OF EVIL, AND REFUSE TO BE MASTERED BY SIN? I do!

DO YOU REJECT SATAN, FATHER OF SIN AND PRINCE OF DARKNESS? I do!

DO YOU BELIEVE IN GOD THE FATHER ALMIGHTY, CREATOR OF HEAVEN AND EARTH? I do!

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DO YOU BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST, HIS ONLY SON, OUR LORD, WHO WAS BORN OF THE VIRGIN MARY, WAS CRUCIFIED, DIED AND WAS BURIED, ROSE FROM THE DEAD, AND IS NOW SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE FATHER? I do!

DO YOU BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT, THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH, THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS, THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS, THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY, AND LIFE EVER LASTING? I do!

THIS IS OUR FAITH.

THIS IS THE FAITH OF THE CHURCH.

WE ARE PROUD TO PROFESS IT, IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD.

AMEN