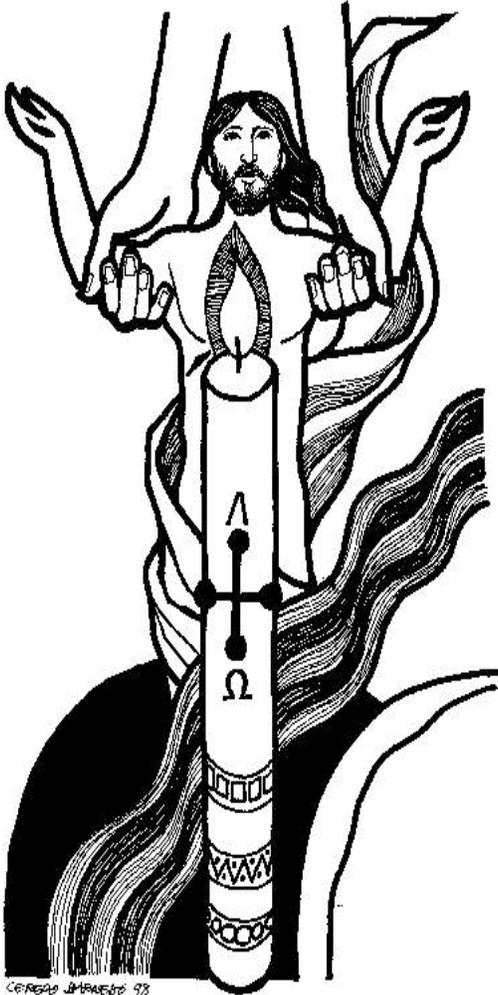


CELEBRATING THE GIFT OF BAPTISM

For all of you who were baptized into Christ
have clothed yourselves with Christ.

You are all one in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 3: 26



PRESENCE OF GOD

(Leader)

Let us pause and remember that the Spirit of the Living God lives within each of us and is present in the Church.

(All)

For In Him we live and move and have our being. Through baptism we have become a new creation. We have died to the old self and have taken on a new life in Jesus. We have been baptized with water and the Spirit. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

HYMN

Keep in mind that Jesus Christ
has died for us
And is risen from the dead.
He is our saving Lord.
He is joy for all ages.

If we die with the Lord,
We shall live with the Lord.

If we endure with the Lord,
We shall reign with the Lord.

In Him our redemption,
In Him all our grace.

In Him our salvation,
In Him all our peace.

PRAYER BEFORE the SCRIPTURE READINGS

O Lord Jesus Christ, open the eyes of my heart, that I may hear Your Word and understand and do Your will. Speak to me of the hidden and secret things of Your Wisdom. On You do I set my hope, O my God. May You enlighten my mind and understanding with the light of Your Knowledge. For You are the Enlightenment of those who lie in darkness, and from You comes every good deed and every gift. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

EPHESIANS 4:4-6

There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope when you were called— one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, Who is over all and through all and in all.

COLOSSIANS 3:12-15

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.

ROMANS 6:3-4

Don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

ACTS 2:38-39

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call."

REFLECTION: Victor A. Shrepherd

Baptism is first of all a public acknowledgement that before the all-holy God our sinfulness has become a horror to us. Not an acknowledgement that we commit sins from time to time; this would be much too superficial. Not an acknowledgement that we have the spiritual equivalent of a rash: slightly unsightly, but scarcely life-threatening; an acknowledgement, rather, that we have blood-poisoning, a systemic disorder. When Peter preached, Luke tells us, men and women were "cut to the heart" and "cried out". They were cut to the heart in that they were suddenly aware that they were disordered in their innermost core. They cried out, in desperation, inasmuch as they knew they could not alter their innermost core themselves. No wonder the gospel struck them as good news!

Baptism is also a public declaration that the "old" man or woman, the person who blindly assumes that the world's game is the only way to live and therefore tries to exploit the world's game for profit; this person has been drowned, is now appropriately buried, and has given way to the new person who walks henceforth in newness of life.

Baptism means something more. Everywhere in the New Testament baptism is public commissioning for Christian service. The service to which all Christians are commissioned is of the same nature as the servanthood of Jesus Christ Himself.

That ministry to which all Christians are commissioned is a ministry of service, not domination. It's a ministry of self-forgetfulness, not personal advantage. It may even entail social rejection rather than public

congratulation. Every time someone is baptized, that person is being commissioned to a ministry which is one with the ministry of Jesus Christ Himself. Such a ministry will unquestionably be effective as surely as it will invariably entail hardship and sacrifice.

Baptism means one last thing. It means solidarity with all Christians everywhere; it means oneness with Christians throughout the world. In a word, it means that we have more in common with fellow-believers in Sri Lanka and Thailand, Ukraine and Uganda, than we have with non-Christians two blocks away. To be sure, the Christian in Thailand speaks a different language, is marked by different skin-pigmentation, knows different customs, eats different food, wears different clothing; unlike us in so many respects, yet identical with us, ultimately, in all respects. That person and we are followers of the same Lord, are invigorated by the same Spirit, aspire to the same obedience, know the same pardon, and have been appointed to the same future; namely, to praise and enjoy God eternally. However much Christians may differ socially, ethnically, linguistically, historically, what we have in common with each other is so profound and so pervasive that it eclipses our commonality with those neighbors who disdain the gospel. Baptism is a public declaration that the most important linkage in our life is our linkage with fellow-believers throughout the world as daughters and sons of a loving Father and sisters and brothers of Jesus.

RENEWAL of BAPTISMAL PROMISES

Let us profess together the faith of the Church.

Leader: Do you believe and trust in God the Father?

**All: I believe in God, the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth.**

Leader: Do you believe and trust in His Son Jesus Christ?

**All: I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our
Lord,**

**Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
He descended to the dead.
On the third day He rose again;
He ascended into heaven,
He is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and He will come to judge the living and the dead.**



Leader: Do you believe and trust in the Holy Spirit?

**All: I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.
Amen.**

BLESSING WITH WATER

As a reminder of our own baptism, each person can approach a bowl of water and after dipping the hand in the water, make a sign of the cross with the thumb on the forehead of the person behind them while saying:

REMEMBER YOUR BAPTISM.

YOU HAVE DIED WITH CHRIST – NOW LIVE HIS NEW LIFE.

VIDI AQUAM

**I saw water flowing from the right side of the temple, alleluia;
and all they to whom that water came were saved,
and they shall say, alleluia, alleluia.**

Praise the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy endures forever. Psalm 117

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.

Amen.

**I saw water flowing from the right side of the temple, alleluia;
and all they to whom that water came were saved,
and they shall say, alleluia, alleluia.**



PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Response: Father of life, make known Your glory in us.

We pray for all who have been newly baptized, all those who are preparing for baptism, and all those involved in teaching the faith. May Your Holy Spirit be with them on their journey of faith. We pray:

We thank You that You have claimed for Yourself those who have been washed in the waters of rebirth.

**Uphold them in this new life,
that they may ever remain steadfast in faith,
joyful in hope, and rooted in Your love. We pray:**

Pour Your blessing on all Your people.

**May our hearts ever praise You,
and find their perfect rest in You.**

**Grant us the freedom of Your service
and peace in doing Your will. We pray:**

The whole creation is filled with the light of Your grace.

**Dispel the darkness of our hearts, and forgive our sins
and negligences that we may come at last to the light of Your glory.**

We pray:

BLESSING

**May God, Who has received us by baptism into His Church,
pour upon us the riches of His grace,
that within the company of Christ's pilgrim people
we may daily be renewed by His anointing Spirit,
and come to the inheritance of the saints in glory.
Amen.**

HYMN

Baptized in Water

Familiar Tune: "Morning Has Broken"

- 1. Baptized in water, Sealed by the Spirit,
Cleansed by the blood of Christ, our King;
Heirs of salvation, trusting the promise,
Faithfully now God's praises we sing.**
- 2. Baptized in water, Sealed by the Spirit,
Dead in the tomb with Christ, our King;
One with His rising, Freed and forgiven,
Thankfully now God's praises we sing.**
- 3. Baptized in water, Sealed by the Spirit,
Marked with the sign of Christ, our King;
Born of the Spirit, We are God's children,
Joyfully now God's praises we sing.**



**You have put on Christ,
in Him you have been baptized.
Alleluia, Alleluia!**

**Live Jesus in our hearts.
Forever!**