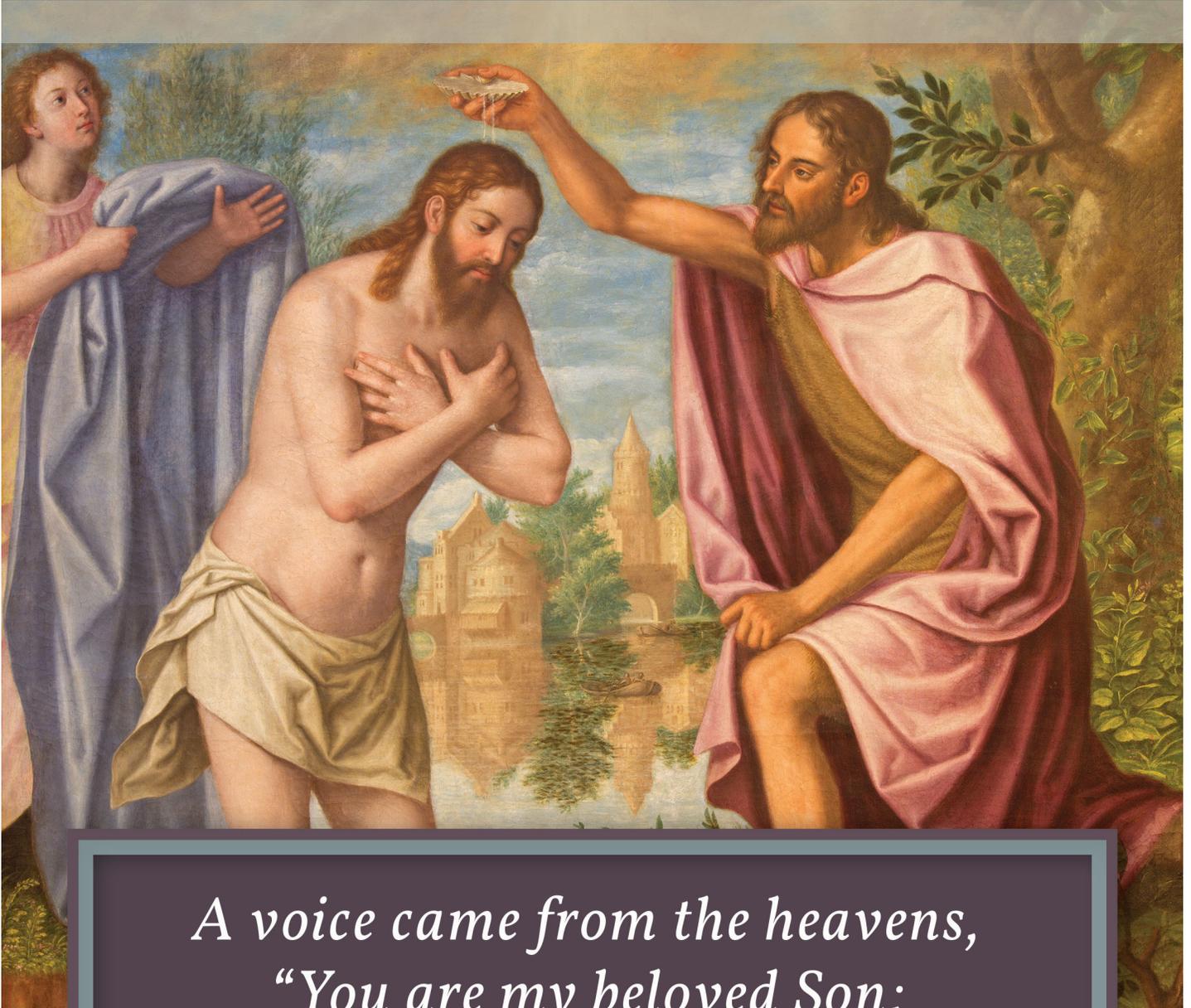


THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

JANUARY 10, 2021



*A voice came from the heavens,
“You are my beloved Son;
with you I am well pleased.”*

Mark 1:11

Feast of Faith

The Sign of the Cross

At the beginning of our prayer, we make the sign of the cross together. This sign, simple and powerful, operates on many levels. We trace the sign of the cross over our bodies, reminding ourselves that the cross of Christ has become our source of resurrection, life, and grace. With this sign, we also profess our faith in the Trinity: the presider does not say “in the names,” but “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit”—three persons, one God. The sign of the cross is also a baptismal reminder, for every sign of the cross echoes the words spoken over us at our baptism, which marked our entry into the saving mystery of Christ. This many-layered sign is also our primary sign of blessing: the cross is traced over people, places, and things upon which we ask God to impart divine benediction.

In blessing ourselves with the sign of the cross at the beginning of Mass, we acknowledge the mystery that has gathered us together: that Christ, the crucified and risen One, is living, and that we are members of his Body. Our response, our Amen, is our yes to all this, our first profession of faith.

—Corinna Laughlin, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

Rehearsal

Psalms are sung in the home and rehearsed in the streets.

—St. Ambrose

The Waters of Baptism

When new sod is put in, it needs constant saturation with water. Landscapers say that this “knits” the sod to the soil. The same when a branch is grafted onto a tree: the poultice that joins them at the splice must be kept wet at all times. Water is the stuff that binds the very cells of our bodies together. No wonder religions throughout all times and cultures have used it so prominently. When Jesus stepped into the Jordan for baptism, he “knit” himself to what had come before him. By going to the Jordan, he made himself one with the people of Israel who had crossed it into their Promised Land. With John the Baptist, Christ wove himself into the prophetic tradition that heralded the coming reign of God. He had become fully human in the waters of Mary’s womb, and by partaking in the rite of the baptism of repentance, Jesus identified himself with our sinful, frail humanity. It is through the waters of baptism that Christ continues to graft new members onto his Body, the Church; through these waters we are cleansed from sin and filled with the promise of grace, given our destiny for eternal life. For us, as for Jesus, it is also the waters of baptism that inaugurate our mission to proclaim the Good News.

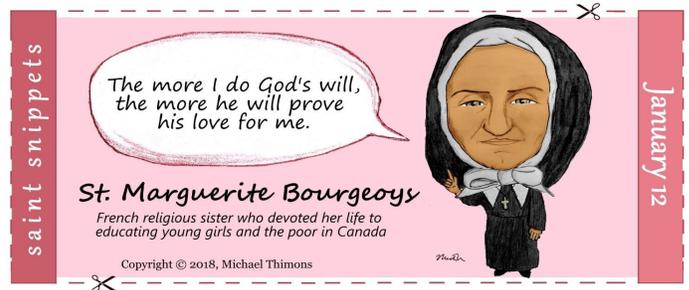
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Readings for the Week

Monday:	Heb 1:1-6; Ps 97:1, 2b, 6, 7c, 9; Mk 1:14-20
Tuesday:	Heb 2:5-12; Ps 8:2ab, 5, 6-9; Mk 1:21-28
Wednesday:	Heb 2:14-18; Ps 105:1-4, 6-9; Mk 1:29-39
Thursday:	Heb 3:7-14; Ps 95:6-11; Mk 1:40-45
Friday:	Heb 4:1-5, 11; Ps 78:3, 4bc, 6c-8; Mk 2:1-12
Saturday:	Heb 4:12-16; Ps 19:8-10, 15; Mk 2:13-17
Sunday:	1 Sm 3:3b-10, 19; Ps 40:2, 4, 7-10; 1 Cor 6:13c-15a, 17-20; Jn 1:35-42

Saints and Special Observances

Sunday:	The Baptism of the Lord
Monday:	First Week in Ordinary Time begins
Wednesday:	St. Hilary
Saturday:	Blessed Virgin Mary



An Ancient Baptistery

One of the most ancient and enduring sites for baptism in Rome is the church of San Giovanni in Fonte. This church is in fact a baptistery, and houses the font for the Lateran Basilica, the cathedral of Rome. The Emperor Constantine sponsored its construction in the year 315, and it is therefore the oldest baptistery in the world. It is the model for nearly all later baptisteries, including perhaps the font in your own parish church.

—Rev. James Field, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

Today's Readings

First Reading — Behold my servant with whom I am pleased; he shall bring forth justice to the nations (Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7) or Isaiah 55:1-11.

Psalm — The Lord will bless his people with peace (Psalm 29) or Isaiah 12:2-6.

Second Reading — God anointed him with the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:34-38) or 1 John 5:1-9.

Gospel — You are my beloved Son, with you I am well pleased (Mark 1:7-11).

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The Baptism of the Lord January 10, 2021

All you who are thirsty, come to the water!
—Isaiah 55:1

PRAYER TO OUR LADY, HEALTH OF THE SICK DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

O Mary,

You shine continuously on our journey
as a sign of salvation and hope.

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We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick,
who, at the Cross,
united with Jesus' pain,
keeping your faith firm.



You, Salvation of the Roman people,
know what we need,
and we trust that you will provide for those needs so that,
as at Cana of Galilee,
joy and celebration may return
after this moment of trial.

Help us, Mother of Divine Love,
to conform ourselves to the will of the Father
and to do what Jesus tells us.
He who took our suffering upon Himself,
and burdened Himself with our sorrows
to bring us, through the Cross,
to the joy of Resurrection. Amen.

We seek refuge under your protection, O Holy Mother of God.
Do not despise our pleas — we who are put to the test —
and deliver us from every danger. O glorious and blessed Virgin.

—Pope Francis, March 11, 2020
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Treasures From Our Tradition

Valentine's cards have appeared at the shopping mall, but in the Church it is still Christmas. Today's feast spun off from Epiphany. Originally, a blessing of holy water was an important feature of the Epiphany feast, and in the Greek Church, this was a day for leaping into the sea in grateful recollection of baptism. The gratitude may not be quite as profound among the Orthodox Christians who have to chop holes in the ice to plunge into the waters!

Still, there are few better days to celebrate a baptism, and to plunge our hands into the waters of the font. Jesus found the waters of the Jordan irresistible because of what had been done in those waters: people had confessed their sins, and had acknowledged their need to be forgiven and healed. Today, we are the people in the water, and Christ comes to be with us. You won't have to chop a hole in the ice to celebrate your baptism. A beautiful bowl of water on the table tonight, a toast with sparkling water at dinner, or even a leap into the shower with a sign of the cross and a prayer of thanksgiving will suffice!

—James Field, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

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