

**Sunday, January 10, 2010 – Deacon Joe Schmitt**  
**The Baptism of the Lord**  
**Cycle C**

**Isaiah 42:1 – 4, 6 – 7**

*The glory of the Lord shall be revealed: there will be a New Jerusalem, and all peoples will see it.*

**Titus 2: 11 – 14; 3: 4 – 7**

*Jesus saves us through a bath of rebirth & the Holy Spirit.*

**Luke 3: 15 – 16, 21 – 22**

*“You are my beloved child; with you I am well pleased.”*

God is good. **All the time.** All the time. **God is good.**

Today we celebrate a major feast in the Church year! It's the feast of the Baptism of the Lord. Similar to the newly released motion picture *“It's complicated,”* this feast draws its meaning and interpretation from a multiple dimensions: Christmas (birth), the Presentation in the Temple (Simeon's & Anna's songs of praise), the Epiphany (gifts of the Magi), Jesus being lost in the Temple (about his Father's business), and the Wedding feast at Cana (water changed to fine wine) as well as John the Baptist and today's episode at the river Jordan. As you can see it covers a wide span of early life of Jesus. It's quite complicated, complex and loaded with implications for our faith in the Messiah and our savior.

When you really stop to reflect on its meaning, it is most multifaceted. It is the official end of the Christmas season. It is the marking point, that event which manifests the beginning of the public ministry of Jesus. In the Gospel of St. Luke, around which our current cycle C focuses, the journey to Jerusalem begins now. It also serves, for me, as an annual reminder of my own Baptism, and what that means for my journey on this earth. It has a very paschal (Easter) mystery meaning for me. My summary would be this is all about rebirth, and new creation, a new Passover, a New Jerusalem, and God's abundant and limitless love for us. This event symbolizes Jesus' purpose for taking on our human nature as well as our purpose as Christ's brothers and sisters.

Although Jesus' Baptism was not the same sacramental one that each of us experienced; his experience with John in the Jordan that we heard about in the Gospel certainly has a direct impact on it. Our Baptism marked our own rebirth and the beginning of our Christian lives. God the Father looked lovingly and with great pride on each of us and declared, “You are my beloved children, my sons and daughters, upon whom my favor rests.”

Because we are sisters and brothers of Jesus as part of God's family, we share his destiny as well. Baptism is the beginning of our journey up to Jerusalem with Christ to share in the Paschal Mystery. This journey will culminate for us, as it did for Jesus, with death and resurrection. In the mean time, however, our Christian Life is a relentless journey with Christ and our brothers and sisters up to Jerusalem. So we are faced daily with the same question that confronted Jesus: if I am a child of God, how must I live?

In many senses, I see the Church, our place of worship, as my Jerusalem. Gathering, at least, every Sunday to offer praise and thanksgiving together with our brothers and sisters is an enduring characteristic of a child, a son or daughter, of God. This Eucharist is our paschal sacrifice, our sacrament of sharing in the death and resurrection of Christ. “Did you not realize that on the Lord's Day, you would find me in my father's house?”

As we entered this space tonight (this morning) we walked by the baptismal font: a great symbol, reminder, of our own baptism. Some of us may even have blessed ourselves with the water as a reminder of that great transformational event that brought us into God's family and formed us into such an intimate union with the Son of God, Word made Flesh, that Jesus' destiny is our own. I would ask each of us to pause in great silence right now and listen to sound of that font's running water, and listen with our hearts to God's love for us, and answer the question, how must I live?

*(Pause and listen)*

God is good. **All the time.** All the time. **God is good.**

