

FROM THE PASTOR

My brothers and sisters,

Today we celebrate the Baptism of the Lord. Sometimes people question why Jesus needed to be Baptized since He was without sin, and so often we think of Baptism as washing away all sin (both actual sin – sins we commit – and original sin – the sin passed on to us from Adam and Eve). The difference between Jesus' baptism and our own is that we were baptized for ourselves, Jesus was baptized for us. He went into the waters of baptism to prepare them for us so that what we happened to Jesus in Baptism happens (-ed) to us.

The Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus, and so He descends upon us when we are baptized – into our hearts and souls. This is the first Sacrament of the Holy Spirit, where we enter into relationship with God, as we receive His Spirit who makes us one with Him!

Jesus also heard the voice of the Father speak to Him: “This is my Son, my beloved, with whom I am well pleased.” So also, God the Father speaks to each of our hearts in Baptism: “You are *mine*, my beloved, my precious son/daughter. I'm pleased with you.” Have you thought that recently? A lot of times we might think that God is indifferent to us, or that He is disappointed in us. The truth is that He is pleased with us (even if He isn't pleased with some of the things we do). Do you get this? Our worth – yours and mine – is not based on what we do, or what talents we have, how beautiful we are or how much stuff we have acquired, but on the fact that we are loved by God! That we are pleasing to Him!

At core, what we see happening in Baptism is that we become God's daughters and sons. It is not simply a ritual action, or initiation into the “Catholic Club.” Rather, it is an adoption process, where we become – we are made to be – God's precious daughters and sons! **THIS IS EVERYTHING!!!** He has made us FULL HEIRS OF THE KINGDOM! What grace! What blessing! We are given the Spirit to call God *Abba, Father, DADDY!* And your Daddy is fond of you. Your Daddy is pleased with you. Your Daddy is proud of you.