

BAPTISM OF THE LORD Year A

Last week we celebrated the Epiphany

I said that Epiphany = a revelation – a new understanding

Magi have an epiphany – a new understanding of God in the infant Jesus

Baptism of JC we have another epiphany – there is a new understanding of Jesus –

We hear God say, “*You are my beloved Son, with You I am well pleased*”

Let’s see if we can have another epiphany about baptism.

How many kinds of baptism does today’s Gospel talk about?

2 – The first is baptism by water

The second is the baptism ‘**with Holy Spirit and fire**’

How does this happen?

When can we receive baptism of fire?

Listen:

- John went all around the country telling people to repent and to ask God for forgiveness.
- After they repented of their sin and received God's forgiveness, then John baptizes them.
- They were baptized to show that God had forgiven their sins & given them a fresh start.
They were washed clean, & called to a new way of life

- Jesus stood before John the Baptist and saw those who had been baptized before Him
 - People who realized that the change had to begin with themselves.
 - Imagine the long line of people coming to John – *and JC last in line.*
“**After all the people had been baptized ...**”
& The Holy Spirit descends on Him in the form of a dove & they hear:
“You are my beloved Son, with You I am well pleased”

- Jesus is baptized & the HS comes upon Him
 - So the 1st baptism in today’s Gospel is Jesus’ baptism in water
 - The 2nd baptism in today’s Gospel is – with HS
 - **NB** J the B says “He will baptize you with the HS & fire” What? How?
 - Remember Pentecost? Wind of HS blows thru house & tongues of fire!
 - What does fire do? – it purifies (sterilize a needle) – **cleaner than water!**
 - Apostles – filled with HS, are filled with that fire and it spreads.

- Today, it’s our turn
- We need Jesus – and we need to release the power of HS we receive in baptism!
 - *In baptism we receive cleansing of water – and purifying power of the fire*

- We can join Jesus in the Jordan River **AND** the Apostles in the Upper Room
 - We can receive that same fire of the HS
 - & it is our turn TO SPREAD THE FIRE.

NB:

- Baptism is (1) an **Initiation** into People of God (2) a **Call** to discipleship & (3) a **Commission** to ministry **AND** Just like Jesus – In Baptism **WE** are **initiated, called and commissioned.**

- As you dip your hands into those miniature baptismal fonts coming into church remember:

YOU are INITIATED, CALLED and COMMISSIONED, to be a Catholic Christian

- Father says to us: “You are my beloved, in whom I am well pleased – Go and be my disciple”