



St. Anne  
CATHOLIC  
COMMUNITY

## January 10, 2010 Solemnity of the Lord's Baptism

*'After all the people had been baptized and Jesus also was baptized and was praying and heaven was opened...'*—Luke 3:21

Dear Friends;

The baptism of John was a baptism of repentance from sin, so why would Jesus (God's beloved Son) have need of such a baptism? This is the question with which all the Gospels wrestle. The only answer lies in the reason for Jesus coming to us in the incarnation (becoming flesh)—solidarity with human kind.

God so loves us that his desire is to be one with us. This is the starting point of salvation—not human sin, or the need for paying some sort of price for sin. The starting point is the love of God and God's desire to be one with us. Jesus is the divine shining through our humanity.

Today is a good time to recall our own baptism. In baptism we stand in solidarity with one another in all our humanity. We are mortal yet we have immortal value. We are weak and sinful, yet we are loved. We are broken yet never alone.

The Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) re-emphasized the importance of baptism as the foundational sacrament of the Church. As baptized members we are part of the body of Christ, who was both human and divine. We share in his divine mission to stand in solidarity with all humankind.

And this includes the ordained who were also baptized into the priesthood of all believers and who were ordained to assist the baptized—not to be over and above them. In this year of the priest it is good for all of us lay and ordained to recall the foundation of our faith life—baptism into Christ. St. Augustine (5<sup>th</sup> Century) told his own community, “With you I am baptized, for you I was ordained.”

The meaning of the incarnation and the meaning of Jesus' baptism is that the human and the divine are intertwined. Too often clergy and other members of the Church have seen themselves or the Church as 'above' human intervention and critique. A Church that reflects a Jesus who is both human and divine has much to learn from human experience, insights from the human arts and sciences, as well as, from divine revelation.

Jesus' baptism reveals that God comes to us not in power, control, or bombast, but in meekness and humility. Jesus teaches us that as a Church it may be more important to listen rather than to say we know it all. Our baptism calls us to be like Jesus; we too need to listen so that we can stand in solidarity with others—especially the least and lowliest. Today, let us lay and ordained together renew the meaning of our baptism.

Peace,

*Fr. Ron*