

## Today's Catholic Teacher Prayer Service

### BAPTISM OF THE LORD

We celebrate the Baptism of the Lord by renewing our baptismal promises.

**Materials needed:** holy water; aspergillum (optional)

LEADER: Dear Lord, thank you for the gift of Baptism. Jesus offered this sacrament to us as a means of turning from the Original Sin of Adam and Eve and once again securing eternal salvation. We need to be baptized only once in our life. Most of us have been blessed with holy water poured over our heads in three intervals with prayers to the Trinity. An addition to the ritual for RCIA Easter vigil is immersion, just as John the Baptist did for Jesus, the Messiah, in the River Jordan. Together, let us read the story of Jesus' baptism from the Gospel of Luke.

ALL: John the Baptist said, "I am baptizing you with water, but one mightier than I is coming. I am not worthy to loosen the thongs of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.' After all the people had been baptized and Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.'"

LEADER: Water is symbolic of the soul being washed free of the dirt of our poor choices. We can sparkle and our souls can be brilliant. In the moment at the River Jordan, there were no trumpets blaring and fanfare. John the Baptist and Jesus quietly waded into the water followed by a momentous happening from the heavens, as Paul described in his Letter to Titus.

ALL: "When the kindness and generous love of God our savior appeared, not because of any righteous deeds we had done but because of his mercy, he saved us through the bath of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit."

LEADER: Throughout the year the baptism of babies and young children often take place on Sundays. The Dear Lord wants them welcomed into the family of the Church and made part of our community. Those already baptized renew their baptismal promises. Let us now renew our baptismal promises, speaking for ourselves and uttering what we feel in our hearts.

LEADER: Do you renounce Satan and all his works and all his empty promises?

ALL: I DO.

LEADER: Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth?

ALL: I DO.

LEADER: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered death and was buried, rose again from the dead and is seated at the right hand of the Father?

ALL: I DO.

LEADER: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the Communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

ALL: I DO.

LEADER: May almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has given us new birth by water and the Holy Spirit and bestow on us forgiveness of our sins, keep us by his grace, in Christ Jesus our Lord, for eternal life.

ALL: Amen.

(Come forward as if for Communion. Leader will make the sign of the cross on each person's forehead with holy water, or sprinkle the group with water from an aspergillum.)

ALL: I believe and profess all that the holy Catholic Church believes, teaches, and proclaims to be revealed by God.

LEADER: O God, who wonderfully created human nature and still more wonderfully redeemed it. Grant us, we pray, to set our minds against the enticements of sin, that we may merit to attain eternal joys, through Christ our Lord.

By Jean Grant, a retired teacher from St. Charles, Missouri.

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