Baptism of the Lord — January 10, 2021

From the Desk of Fr. Leo

There was no need for Jesus to be baptized by St. John for he is God's beloved Son, the spotless lamb of God whom John will soon proclaim as the One who will take away all sins from fallen humankind. But his purpose in descending into the waters is twofold.

First, he has always submitted to the Law as a true Israelite and how he wishes to humble himself before the eyes of all and receives the baptism of St. John the Baptist. Like all the rest, he allows them to think him to be also a sinner. In reality, he is taking all humankind with him and plunging it into his Paschal Mystery. The sinless One embodies in himself all humankind, so as to cleanse them from defilement. The bystanders see Jesus of Nazareth as a sinner like themselves, but in reality, he is the Lamb covered with the sins of humankind, though spotless and sinless himself.

But water is not the only symbol of cleansing. It is chiefly the sign of new life. Without water, the life of plants and animals and even human beings eventually dies. But with water, life comes again. Even in the Book of Genesis (Genesis 1:2) the author sees living creatures first emerging from waters. (For him, only creatures with blood were considered living.) Jesus descends into the water to sanctify it, as the sacred element which he will designate for the rebirth of all humankind, the sacred sign of Christian baptism. In the waters that Jesus has sanctified, all who accept him will be born anew with a rebirth that is marvelous, making humankind the very child of God.

Second, in baptism, the child is immersed into a totally new atmosphere, that of the Most Blessed Trinity. This is the Christian atmosphere which surrounds and envelops every one reborn in Christ. Again, the Father looks down, and says of the newly baptized child: "This is my beloved child, my favor rests on him". Again, the Spirit comes to possess the newly baptized, and dwell in it as in his Holy Temple. He is the Spirit of love and mercy, of gentleness and purity, all of which is symbolized by the image of the dove. Impelled by that Spirit, which is the identical Spirit of Jesus, the Christian's aim in life is to spread the fragrance of the Christ-life, which is that of love and mercy, gentleness and purity of heart.

The Feast of Our Lord's Baptism ought to re-awaken in us the earnest desire to appreciate our own baptism and carry out faithfully our baptismal commitment. This we can only do with the help of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Fr. Leo Alban Asuncion

Though we are not able to meet together during this week, please keep these intentions in your personal prayers, as Father will continue to include them in his private masses.

Mass Intentions for the Week

Tues.	**January 12**	**N/A**
Special Intentions		
Wed.	**January 13**	**N/A**
Carolina O. Mariano (birthday/thanksgiving)		Mariano Family
Thur.	**January 14**	**N/A**
Robert Pallotta †		ICF #14
Fri.	**January 15**	**N/A**
Joe Quiapo †		Combong Family
Sat.	**January 16**	**4:30PM**
People of the Parish		
Sun.	**January 17**	**9:00AM**
Albert & David Ponti †		Franca
Port Costa		**11:00AM**
Robert Pallotta †		Mr. & Mrs. Donald Angotti

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