

The Baptism of the Lord

Cycle A | January 11, 2026

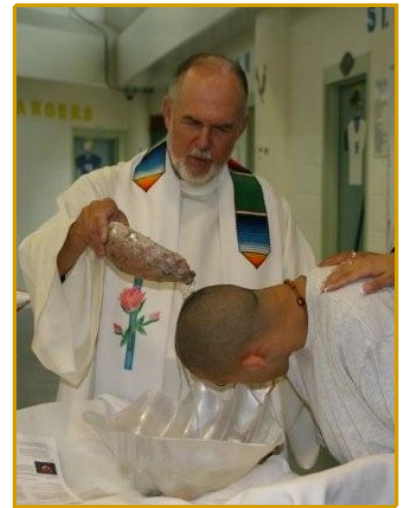
WISDOM FROM THE CELLS

I remember the best day for me locked up was the day I decided to disassociate myself from my involvement with gangs. I remember being scared that a hit would be placed on me for leaving the gang but doing so anyway because I was tired of putting the gang ahead of God and my family.

I remember thinking that now that I've put this gang behind me, I don't have to fear letting God into my life. I remember feeling for the first time in my life like I no longer had to put on a front for others so I would be liked and accepted. I remember feeling better than I've ever felt before and coming to that point in realizing that being in prison is not the sum of my life.

I remember the best day for me locked up was the day I came to the realization that God still loves me and wants me to spend eternity in heaven.

- Jeff, who is in a California State Prison.



Picture: Fr. Mike baptizing a JRJI participant.

PENITENTIAL RITE

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins and bring us to everlasting life.

R. Amen.

OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray:

God our Father,
You led your Son Jesus to the Jordan River to get baptized by John. Lead us to renew our baptism in choosing new life in Jesus.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord. **R. Amen.**



LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading: Isaiah 42: 1-4, 6-7

Thus says the LORD: Here is my servant whom I uphold, my chosen one with whom I am pleased, upon whom I have put my spirit; he shall bring forth justice to the nations, not crying out, not shouting, not making his voice heard in the street. a bruised reed he shall not break, and a smoldering wick he shall not quench, until he establishes justice on the earth; the coastlands will wait for his teaching. I, the LORD, have called you for the victory of justice, I have grasped you by the hand; I formed you, and set you as a covenant of the people, a light for the nations, to open the eyes of the blind, to bring out prisoners from confinement, and from the dungeon, those who live in darkness.

The Word of the Lord.

R. Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 29: 1-2, 3-4, 9-10

R. The Lord will bless his people with peace.

Give to the LORD, you sons of God,
give to the LORD glory and praise,
Give to the LORD the glory due his name;
adore the LORD in holy attire.

R. The Lord will bless his people with peace.

The voice of the LORD is over the waters,
the LORD, over vast waters.
The voice of the LORD is mighty;
the voice of the LORD is majestic.

R. The Lord will bless his people with peace.

The God of glory thunders,
and in his temple all say, "Glory!"
The LORD is enthroned above the flood;
the LORD is enthroned as king forever.

R. The Lord will bless his people with peace.

Second Reading: Acts 10: 34-38

Peter proceeded to speak to those gathered in the house of Cornelius, saying: "In truth, I see that God shows no partiality. Rather, in every nation whoever fears him and acts uprightly is acceptable to him. You know the word that he sent to the Israelites as he proclaimed peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all, what has happened all over Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached, how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power. He went about doing good and healing all those oppressed by the devil, for God was with him."

The Word of the Lord.

R. Thanks be to God.

Gospel: Matthew 3: 13-17

Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. John tried to prevent him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and yet you are coming to me?" Jesus said to him in reply, "Allow it now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he allowed him. After Jesus was baptized, he came up from the water and behold, the heavens were opened for him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming upon him. And a voice came from the heavens, saying, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

The Gospel of the Lord.

R. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.



MEDITATION: A GOOD BEGINNING

after walking
for two days
my feet
every part of me
yearning for
some coolness
walking towards
the river
blue running water
curving through
tan mounds
sun burning the sand

arriving to crowds
and crowds of people
waiting to enter
the water
standing at the top
of the hill
also waiting
waiting for what?
watching the faces
of many
as they came out
of the water

wondering
what was going
to become
of my life if i enter
these waters
the river twisting
and turning

and at a large spot

my cousin john stood
speaking
many approaching him
his voice drifted
to where i stood
it was as if
a trembling began
in him
shaking him

jesus
every person
that i meet
every face that
i see searching
thinking
is this the one?
all my life
i waited
for this moment
i have been preparing
for your arrival

i gazed
again and again
at the colors
of the river
as it flowed
and flowed
through this land
somehow inside me
words inside me
ready to begin
kept echoing

john
i desire to enter
the waters
that you baptize me

jesus
i could never do
that you are the one
that should
baptize me

no john
i desire to
enter the waters

slowly
wading
to where
it was deep enough
john took me
by the shoulders
and submerged me
into this jordan water

my whole body
felt power
under this water
i could not
see anything
i was immersed
in complete darkness
it was as
if i were in a time
i struggled for breath
as if i were handing

over my life
to my abba
as if i were now
receiving in
this darkness
the strength
to struggle
to build this reign
kingdom

my life was changing
my own desire plans
were dying
and this path of
my abba
was being accepted
this is the beginning
i surrendered my life
to you
abba
i will do your work

suddenly
bursting through
the surface of the river
voice strong
vibrating from
every direction
you are
my beloved son



REFLECTION: I remember when I decided to change my life or my ways... I remember...
I remember...

OUR FATHER

Let us pray with confidence to the Father
in the words our Savior gave us:
**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy Kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against
us, and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

**R. For the kingdom, the power and the
glory are yours, now and for ever.
Amen.**

SIGN OF PEACE

Jesus, you said to your apostles: "I leave you
peace, my peace I give you. Look not on our
sins, but on the faith of your Church, and
grant us the peace and unity of your kingdom
where you live forever and ever. **Amen.**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.
R. And with your spirit.

LAMB OF GOD

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:
grant us peace.

This is Jesus, the Lamb of God, who takes away the
sins of the world. Happy are we who are called to
his supper.

**Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter
under my roof, but only say the word and
my soul shall be healed.**

COMMUNION

CLOSING PRAYER

Let us pray:

God our Father,
You call us to be your beloved sons and daughters
and with him you give us the mission to be humble
and dedicated servants. Help us to live like Jesus,
to go about doing good as he did, and be faithful
and just to God and to others.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord. **R. Amen.**

