

# Our Household Church: We are Covenanted in Fire

## Baptism of the Lord: 2022 January 9<sup>th</sup>

**All:** In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Eldest:** Creator God, you have brought us here together. **All:** We can give you thanks and praise for all the wonderful things you do with us, for us and through us for one another.

**Youngest:** We thank you for all that is beautiful in the world and for the happiness you have given us.

**Women:** We praise you for daylight and for your word which lights up our minds.

**Men:** We praise you for the earth, and all the people who live on it,

**All:** and for our life which comes from you. We Praise You! We Thank You! We Serve You!

**Youngest:** We know that you are good. **Eldest:** You love us and do great things for us.

**Fathers:** Father, you are always thinking about your people; **All:** you never forget us.

**Mothers:** You sent your Son Jesus, who gave his life for us and who came to save us.

**Children:** He cured sick people; he cared for those who were poor and wept with those who were sad.

**Eldest:** He forgave sinners and taught us to forgive each other.

**All:** He loves everyone and showed us how to be kind. He took children in his arms and blessed them.

God our Father, all over the world your people praise you. So now we pray with the whole Church: with (*Francis*), our pope and {N}, our bishop. We pray for {N}, our pastor, [for {N (and N) our deacon(s)}].

**Women:** In heaven Mary, Mother of the Church, the apostles, all the saints and some of our family members {name some} always sing your praise. **Men:** Now we join with them and with the angels to adore you as we say: **All:** We Praise You! We Thank You! We Serve You!

### BREAKING OPEN THE WORD

*Today's Readings provide two options each for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Readings. The two I have chosen are: **Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7, and Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7.** The Gospel for the Solemnity of John the Baptist is from **Luke 3:15-16, 21-22.** While someone reads the Scripture(s), listen well. BE ATTENTIVE TO THE IMAGE BEING PAINTED, OR THE STORY BEING TOLD. DOES THE STORY OR THE IMAGE CALL TO MIND ANYTHING SIMILAR IN YOUR OWN LIFE EXPERIENCE? After the reading, share your impressions of the reading(s):*

- ✓ What is the role of a prophet? Name a couple prophets from the Old Testament/Hebrew Scriptures. What can you say about them? ...their message?
- ✓ Who have been/are some modern-day prophets? What has their message been?
- ✓ Was Jesus a prophet in the line of John the Baptist: or was his role totally different?

Here is an image the Lectionary lays out for us in the text from Isaiah:

**I HAVE...SET YOU AS A COVENANT OF THE PEOPLE, A LIGHT FOR THE NATIONS.**

- ✓ How can a human being be “*SET AS A COVENANT?*”
- ✓ What “Covenants” have you entered with someone else?
- ✓ How can a human being be “*SET AS A LIGHT?*”
- ✓ When have you found yourself being Light for someone else? ...someone as a Light for you?

Here is the image placed before us by John the Baptist in the Gospel of Luke:

**...one MIGHTIER THAN I is coming. HE WILL BAPTIZE YOU WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT AND FIRE**

- ✓ With what did John the Baptist baptize?
- ✓ What difference could there be between a “Baptism of Water” (*John's Baptism*) and a “Baptism of Fire” (*with the Holy Spirit*)?
- ✓ You have heard the phrase: “A Baptism of Fire!” What does that mean?
- ✓ If you have had a Baptism of Fire, what was the situation? Who “prevailed:” the situation or you?

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**Titus combines the images of the 1<sup>st</sup> Reading and Luke's Gospel.**

**GOD...SAVED US THROUGH THE BATH OF REBIRTH AND RENEWAL BY THE HOLY SPIRIT**

**Titus recognizes the bath (*Baptism of rebirth*) and the renewal (*purged by Fire*) by the Holy Spirit**

**THAT WE MIGHT...BECOME HEIRS IN HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE.**

- ✓ **Have you ever inherited anything (*by legal bequest or just a human-to-human gift*)?**
- ✓ **What was that like? Were you surprised? ...humbled? ...felt it was owed to you?**
- ✓ **What could be the personal commitment to the styles or life of the one from whom you received the gift/bequest?**

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**It looks like we are in a covenanted relationship. Jesus' Baptism is with fire and spirit.**

- ✓ **The covenant in Christ is offered to us to be "*justified by God's grace and become HEIRS IN HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE.*"**

**It seems that our only commitment to the covenant is to keep moving forward – no backsliders!!**

- ✓ **The covenant from God is to justify [us] "*by God's grace and become HEIRS IN HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE.*"**  
**the kindness and generous love of GOD saving all, not because of any righteous deeds we had done but BECAUSE OF HIS MERCY**
- ✓ **With such a generous covenant, *what is there to fear?***

### **BREAKING AND SHARING BREAD (*some do this in the context of a meal*)**

**All:** God our Father, you are most holy, and we want to show you that we are grateful.

**Elders:** We do now what Jesus told us to do. **Youngest:** We invite you Father and Jesus to our table.

**Women:** We break and share this bread longing for the bread that gives us life. **All:** Help us share our table with the poor, refugees and people without homes. [*Pass some form of bread from person to person. After everyone has had a chance to eat the bread, continue:*]

**Men:** We also share something to drink at our table. It represents our longing for the cup that saves us. [*Pass a pitcher with a beverage. Have everyone pour for the next person. After everyone has had a chance to drink the beverage, continue:*]

**Elders:** Jesus brings us to you. **Youngest:** Welcome us as you welcome him. **All:** Help us welcome others as you welcome us. Let us seek Peace together and follow in her way.

### **My Lord and My God.**

**Youngest:** Father, because you love us, you invite us to come to your table.

**All:** Fill us with the joy of the Holy Spirit as we share the body and blood of your Son in our actions.

**Parents:** Lord, you never forget any of your children.

**All:** Help us respond to the need of children without homes.

**Elders:** Remember everyone who is suffering from pain or sorrow.

**All:** Inspire Christians everywhere and all other people in the world.

**Elders:** We are filled with wonder and praise when we see what you do for us through Jesus your Son,

**All:** We Praise You! We Thank You! We Respect You!

**All:** Our Father, who art in heaven...

**All:** In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen!

Charles McCarthy, Franciscan: [www.swfranciscans.org](http://www.swfranciscans.org)

The prayer is based on Eucharistic Prayer for Children I, Dublin Archdiocese, 2012  
<http://litmus.dublindiocese.ie/2012/01/eucharistic-prayer-for-children-1-2/>