

THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD – 11 JANUARY 2026
From the Baptism of Jesus to Christian Baptism

The Feast of the Baptism of the Lord celebrates, first and foremost, the manifestation—the epiphany—of Jesus’ dignity as the Son of God, beloved of the Father. The Gospel of Matthew also discreetly invites us to reflect on the baptism that the Lord instituted and the command he gave to his disciples to “make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19).

How could one not make the connection between this final command of the risen Christ and his very first action at the beginning of his ministry—his submission to the baptism of John? The Church’s practice of baptism is reflected in the careful and deliberate formulation of the Lord’s command, just as the faith of the Church leaves no doubt about the meaning of “Son of God,” a truth further revealed to us after the Lord’s baptism. Later theological developments are grounded in this very connection.

Coming out of the baptismal waters, one confesses Jesus Christ as the only Son of God, receives the Spirit who rests upon him or her “as it rested on Jesus,” and is raised to the dignity of an adopted child of God, whom we have the right to call “Father.”

The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that “the baptized must participate in the apostolic and missionary activity of the People of God” (CCC, no. 1270). Living out one’s baptism is a lifelong responsibility. Growing in holiness and discipleship requires a willingness to continue learning throughout one’s life about the faith and how to live it fully.

We who have been initiated into the Church have been made sharers in Christ’s mission as priest, prophet, and king.

So, how are YOU living out your baptismal mandate?
How are YOU making disciples of all nations through your words and actions?

Pax Christi,

Fr. Dave O’Leary
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