

JANUARY 11, 2015



FEAST OF THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD



ISAIAH 42:1-4, 6-7

PSALM 29:1-2, 3-4, 3, 9-10

ACTS 10:34-38

MARK 1:7-11

REFLECTION

Have you ever looked for a sign from God, something that would tell you what decision to make or at least that you're headed in the right direction? Especially when we're starting something new, a little bit of a divine thumbs up would be nice, right? Jesus gets that in a big way in this Gospel reading. He is about to begin his public ministry, which must have involved some serious soul searching. The sky opens up, there's a dove, *and* a voice! Each of those symbols declares that this is the one we've been waiting for. In the Book of Genesis, the Spirit hovers over the water at the beginning of creation. God is re-creating the world. God is doing something new. Baptism, then and now, meant a rejection of sin; a turning away from the old way and toward doing things in a new way. Jesus wasn't a sinner but this was a sign of his commitment to follow through with God's desire for him to be a part of this re-creation. Today is a good day to recommit ourselves to participating in God's plan for our own lives and recreating the world.

ACTION

Visit a nearby body of water (if you can't get to water look up some Jordan River images online) and imagine yourself witnessing the Baptism of Jesus. Imagine yourself as a member of the crowd, then as John the Baptist, then as Jesus. Imagine the smells and sounds, the conversations before and after, and the amazement—maybe even fear or joy—that each person must have felt. Take a minute to thank God for this event and for your own Baptism and remember that you too are a beloved child of God.



A clip of a Catholic Baptism and information about why we are baptized.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=GBQaxJHFRyA

JOURNALING QUESTIONS

- Are you in the middle of a big decision or do you have one looming? Write out the pros and cons of your different options then look at the list again with the eyes of faith. If your goal is to participate in God's plan, how would that influence the choices you make?
- Is there an area of your life that could use a fresh start? Write about what's wrong and invite God to re-create and bring newness to it.