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9 SUNDAY

BAPTISM of OUR LORD

Isaiah 42: 1-4, 6-7

Ps 28: 1-4, 9-10

Acts 10: 34 - 38

Matt 3: 13 - 17

At His baptism, Jesus saw the Spirit of God descending on Him. Today's liturgy also refers us back to Isaiah's prophecy about how the Lord would put His spirit on His chosen servant, to bring justice and healing and be a light for the nations. Jesus' baptism was the start of His public ministry, His dedication to doing the work of His Father.

As we celebrate this important event of Jesus' life, let's pray for a deeper understanding of its mystery, and of its relevance to ourselves. It is a sign and symbol of something new in the world, God among us gently and quietly bringing change of heart and life. It is an invitation for us to share in that relationship of Jesus with His Father, announced from the heavens.

For all of us who have been baptized, that event in our lives was much more than a ceremony making us members of Christ's body, the Church. Whether we remember the day or not, we reflect on its meaning, the meaning of being baptized into Christ, into His death and rising, becoming part of His mission.

As for Him at the Jordan river, the Spirit of God was given also to us then. We have been committed to the Lord's work, and to do this we have received a power beyond anything we could dream of, a power that perhaps we undervalue, underestimate. The Holy Spirit is in us, making us holy. And we've been commissioned to be light for all peoples, justice and healing for the world. Our Christian mission, in the Lord's power, not our own.

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