

Dear Brothers & Sisters,

January 9, 2022

This Sunday, January 9<sup>th</sup>, we celebrate the *Solemnity of the Baptism of the Lord*, which each year brings the festive *Season of Christmas* to a culmination & conclusion. The infancy narratives found in the first couple of chapters in the Gospels of Luke & Matthew furnish us with a very clear and meaningful image of the birth of Our Lord & Savior Jesus Christ. The details given to us in these infancy narratives help shape the Church's liturgical celebrations and inspire us to create beautiful and accurate manger scenes. Interestingly, from a historical perspective not much is really known about the life of Jesus after His infancy until the moment of His Baptism, which most Biblical scholars believe took place when Jesus was around 30 years of age. All four Gospels describe with striking similarity



the event of the Baptism of Jesus. In the liturgy this particular year, we read through the Gospel of Luke's brief description of the event... **“and Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.”** (Luke 3:15-16, 22-23) As disciples, we know that the Holy Spirit that descended upon and anointed Jesus at His Baptism is the same Holy Spirit that has been given to each of us. The Spirit of God continually fills our hearts & guides us in our efforts to be faithful to all that the Lord calls

us to be & to do. When we pray, we open ourselves to the power and the influence of the Spirit. We also believe that the words spoken by the Father at the baptism of Jesus, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased”, are the same words the Heavenly Father also speaks to us... for we are His beloved sons & daughters and with us He is well pleased. As we begin this new year of 2022, may we continue to open our hearts to the presence of the Holy Spirit, especially through prayer, and allow Him to always guide us and strengthen us.

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year,

Father John Large