

January 10, 2021  
1 Epiphany B: The Baptism of our Lord  
St. Mary's-in-the-Valley Episcopal Church  
P.O. Box 491, Ramona, CA. 92065

Open Song: As I Went Down to the River to Pray  
Sung and played by Dr. Joshua Charney

As I went down in the river to pray  
Studying about that good ol' way  
And who shall wear the starry crown  
Good Lord, show me the way

O sisters, let's go down  
Let's go down, come on down  
O sisters, let's go down  
Down in the river to pray

As I went down in the river to pray  
Studying about that good ol' way  
And who shall wear the robe and crown  
Good Lord, show me the way

O brothers, let's go down  
Let's go down, come on down  
Come on, brothers, let's go down  
Down in the river to pray

As I went down in the river to pray  
Studying about that good ol' way  
And who shall wear the starry crown  
Good Lord, show me the way

O fathers, let's go down  
Let's go down, come on down  
O fathers, let's go down  
Down in the river to pray

As I went down in the river to pray  
Studying about that good ol' way  
And who shall wear the robe and crown  
Good Lord, show me the way

O mothers, let's go down  
Come on down, don't you wanna go down?

Come on, mothers, let's go down  
Down in the river to pray

As I went down in the river to pray  
Studying about that good ol' way  
And who shall wear the starry crown  
Good Lord, show me the way

O sinners, let's go down  
Let's go down, come on down  
O sinners, let's go down  
Down in the river to pray

BCP, page 355

Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.  
People And Blessed be God's kingdom now and forever. Amen.

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known and from you no secrets are hid:  
Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly  
love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Baptismal Versicles

Celebrant: There is one Body and one Spirit;  
*People* There is one hope in God's call to us;  
*Celebrant* One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism;  
*People* One God and Father of all.

The Celebrant then says  
The Lord be with you.  
People And also with you.  
Celebrant Let us pray.

Collect

Father in heaven, who at the baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan proclaimed him your  
beloved Son and anointed him with the Holy Spirit: Grant that all who are baptized into his  
Name may keep the covenant they have made, and boldly confess him as Lord and Savior;  
who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. *Amen.*

## **Genesis 1:1-5**

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people  
*Thanks be to God*

## **Psalm 29**

### *Afferte Domino*

- 1 Ascribe to the LORD, you gods, \*  
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.
- 2 Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his Name; \*  
worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.
- 3 The voice of the LORD is upon the waters;  
the God of glory thunders; \*  
the LORD is upon the mighty waters.
- 4 The voice of the LORD is a powerful voice; \*  
the voice of the LORD is a voice of splendor.
- 5 The voice of the LORD breaks the cedar trees; \*  
the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon;
- 6 He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, \*  
and Mount Hermon like a young wild ox.
- 7 The voice of the LORD splits the flames of fire;  
the voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness; \*  
the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.
- 8 The voice of the LORD makes the oak trees writhe \*  
and strips the forests bare.
- 9 And in the temple of the LORD \*  
all are crying, "Glory!"
- 10 The LORD sits enthroned above the flood; \*  
the LORD sits enthroned as King for evermore.

11 The LORD shall give strength to his people; \*  
the LORD shall give his people the blessing of peace.

### **Acts 19:1-7**

While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul passed through the interior regions and came to Ephesus, where he found some disciples. He said to them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?” They replied, “No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.” Then he said, “Into what then were you baptized?” They answered, “Into John’s baptism.” Paul said, “John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus.” On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. When Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied— altogether there were about twelve of them.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s people

*Thanks be to God*

### **The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Mark**

Glory to you Lord Christ

### **Mark 1:4-11**

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.”

The Gospel of the Lord  
Praise to you Lord Christ

Sermon:

1 Epiphany B January 10, 2021

Genesis 1:1-5 Ps. 29

Acts 9:1-7 Mark 1:4-11

Today on this first Sunday after the Epiphany, also the Baptism of our Lord and one of the four liturgically designated days for baptism, it behoves us to look at the meaning of baptism. And first, we might distinguish between the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist, and the baptism which we Christians have practiced for centuries.

What does the Greek word for baptism mean? It means to immerse. When one is plunged into water, one disappears and it appears that one has been lost in becoming one with water. One appears to have become the water.

What does the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist mean? It symbolizes the identity of the divine with the human which happened in Jesus Christ. For many centuries, seers, prophet and sages had been speaking about God using human words. What was behind the use of human words about the great and more-than-human God? There was the assumption that men and women could speak anthropomorphically about God using human words, human analogies, and human attributes for the divine.

The life of Jesus as representing the fullness of God and humanity in one Being, validated that ancient practice of using human words about God. Jesus validated that human experience is an accepted way of knowing about God.

So, the baptism of Jesus was a significant moment in his life of the life of God being baptized into an identity with human life. In Jesus, we celebrate the direction of God toward humanity. One of the names from Hebrew Scriptures with which Jesus is identified is Emmanuel, which means God with us. How much is God with us? Completely with us as is seen in the life of Jesus.

In the words of the Pauline writings, Jesus is God emptied into human form. In the words of the Gospel of John, Jesus is the Eternal Creating Word of God made flesh.

Jesus was baptized, immersed completely into human life. His baptism by John the Baptist is one of many events of the solidarity of Jesus with human life within a particular human community. So, how far did the baptism of Jesus go? What happens when someone is held under the water? They die through drowning. Immersion in water symbolizes a death. In the case of Jesus, it was death to grasping a sole divine identity and coming out of the water, one can see his embrace of his full human identity. This entire transaction is symbolic of what we profess in the incarnation, namely, that human experience is a valid way to come to know about God. And as we know, the identity of Jesus with human experience took him into death. To be

fully human, one must die, and that is the identity which Jesus took with humanity. And so, we confess him to be a most capable and valid representative for us before God on our behalf.

If this is the baptism of Jesus, what is the nature of your baptism and mine? In our baptismal immersion, we express our identity with Jesus. Immersed in the waters of baptism, we die with Christ and confess like St. Paul, "I have been crucified with Christ." Raised from the waters of baptism, we confess, "I have been raised with Christ, to be part of a new creation, a new humanity, a new fellowship of people."

Today, let us remember our baptismal covenants, which we will renew today, as we use the Apostles Creed, the baptismal Creed as a confession of our vows.

Today, is a good day to cite the orthodox statement often called "theosis" or divinization. It expresses the reverse identities which is expressed in the baptism of Jesus and in our baptisms.

The statement is: "In Christ God become human or hominized, so that humans might be divinized or made godly." To state it in another way on the day of baptism: Jesus became baptized fully into humanity, so that we might be baptized into Christ as sons and daughters of God.

Let this day be a birthday anniversary for each of our baptisms, as we offer our thanksgiving to God for Jesus Christ, as Emmanuel, God with us, who became baptized fully into identity with our humanity, so that we could be raised to know ourselves as sons and daughters of God, brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### The Renewal of Baptismal Vows

Through the Paschal mystery, dear friends, we are buried with Christ by Baptism into his death, and raised with him to newness of life. I call upon you to renew the solemn promises and vows of Holy Baptism, by which we once renounced Satan and all his works, and promised to serve God faithfully in his holy Catholic Church.

*Celebrant* Do you reaffirm your renunciation of evil and  
renew your commitment to Jesus Christ?

*People* I do.

*Celebrant* Do you believe in God the Father?

*People* I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.

*Celebrant* Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

*People* I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.  
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit  
and born of the Virgin Mary.  
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.  
He descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again.  
He ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

*Celebrant* Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

*People* I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting.

*Celebrant* Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and  
fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the  
prayers?

*People* I will, with God's help.

*Celebrant* Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever  
you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

*People* I will, with God's help.

*Celebrant* Will you proclaim by word and example the Good  
News of God in Christ?

*People* I will, with God's help.

*Celebrant* Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving  
your neighbor as yourself?

*People* I will, with God's help.

*Celebrant* Will you strive for justice and peace among all people,  
and respect the dignity of every human being?

*People* I will, with God's help.

*The Celebrant concludes the Renewal of Vows as follows*

May Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who  
has given us a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, and  
bestowed upon us the forgiveness of sins, keep us in eternal  
life by his grace, in Christ Jesus our Lord. *Amen.*

Prayers of the People:

The Peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: And also with you

Hymn: Blessed Assurance

Played by Stanley V. Smith, Jr. on the Hammer Dulcimer

1 Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!  
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!  
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,  
born of his Spirit, washed in his blood.

Refrain:

This is my story, this is my song,  
praising my Savior all the day long.  
This is my story, this is my song,  
praising my Savior all the day long.

2 Perfect communion, perfect delight,  
visions of rapture now burst on my sight.  
Angels descending bring from above  
echoes of mercy, whispers of love. [Refrain]

3 Perfect submission, all is at rest.  
I in my Savior am happy and bless'd,  
watching and waiting, looking above,  
filled with his goodness, lost in his love. [Refrain]

Doxology: Sung by Rob and Deb Lewallen

**Eucharistic Prayer A**

The Lord be with you.  
*People* And also with you.  
*Celebrant* Lift up your hearts.  
*People* We lift them to the Lord.  
*Celebrant* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
*People* It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. Because in the mystery of the Word made flesh, you have caused a new light to shine in our hearts, to give the knowledge of your glory in the face of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

*Celebrant and People*

Sanctus  
Sung and played by Rob and Deb Lewallen

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full, full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.

Celebrant: Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself; and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Memorial Acclamation:

Sung and played by Rob and Deb Lewallen

Christ has died.  
Christ is risen.  
Christ will come again.

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ. By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. AMEN.

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

Led by Rob and Deb Lewallen

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy Name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.  
The Breaking of the Bread

The Breaking of the Bread

Celebrant: Alleluia! Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;  
People: Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia

Celebrant: The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

Communion Hymn: Taize, *Jesus Remember Me*  
Played and sung by Rob and Deborah Lewallen

Jesus remember me, when you come into your kingdom.

Post Communion Prayer (BCP, page 365)

Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Benediction:

Dismissal:

Let us go forth in the name of Christ.

People: Thanks be to God!

Closing Song: *O Beautiful for Spacious Skies*  
Play by Joshua Charney, Ph.D

Offering in hopes of the rededication of our “temple of democracy,” The Capitol that experienced the desecration of the site of our justice ideals

Our Prayer: America, God mend thine every flaw!