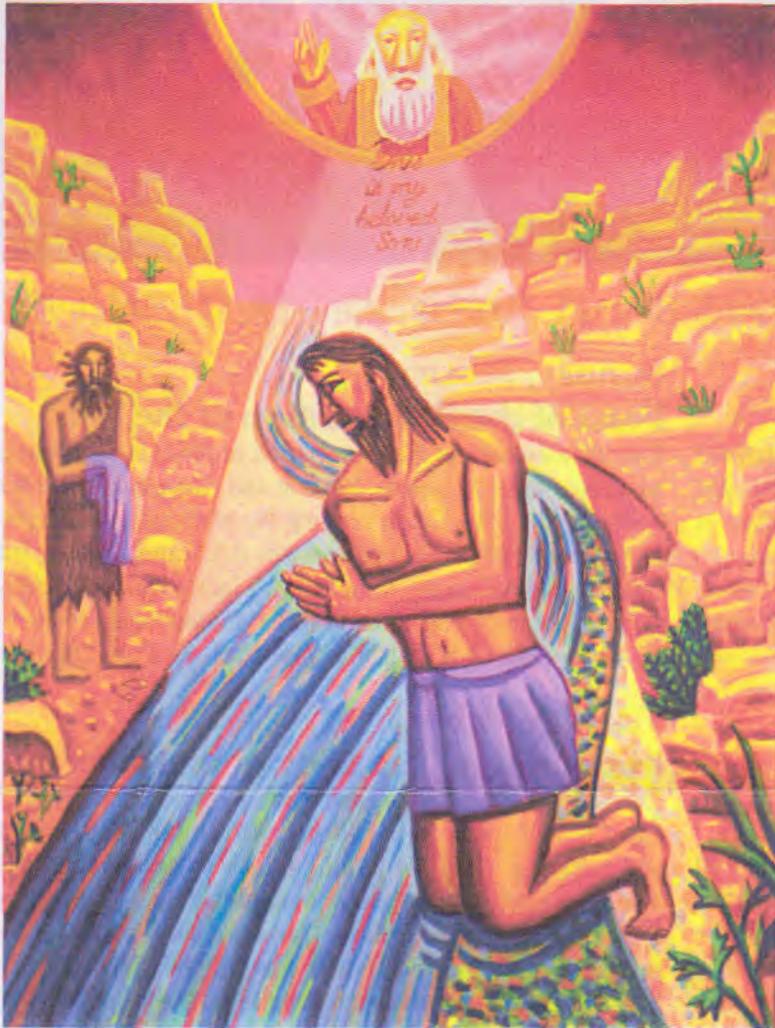


# BAPTISM OF THE LORD



## Christ, the Beloved Son

Father of new birth,  
today your beloved Son  
is baptized by John in the River  
Jordan.

May our world embrace  
the peace that Christ gives,  
and may we seek after justice  
for all the nations.

As you anointed Jesus with the Holy  
Spirit and power  
so his disciples are anointed with  
the Spirit  
so that we may do good as he does  
and advocate for those who face  
oppression.

Recalling our Baptism into the life  
of Christ,  
may we never cease to proclaim your  
light to the nations.  
We ask this through Christ our  
Lord. Amen.

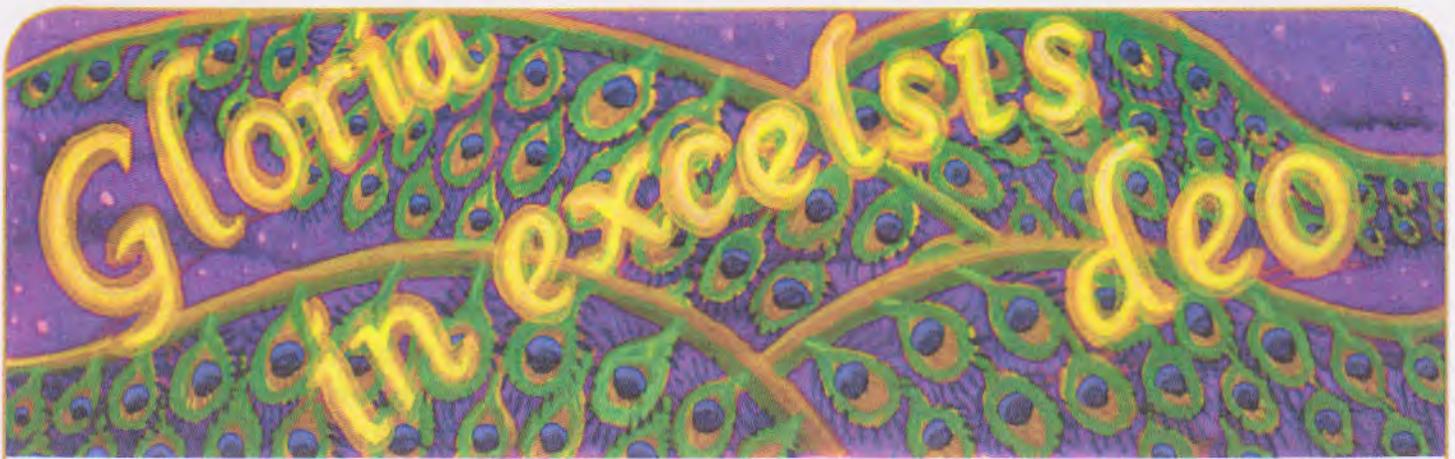
**Sunday, January 12, 2014**  
**The Son Revealed**

Today's Readings: Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7; Acts 10:34-38; Matthew 3:13-17. The baptism of Jesus is truly an inaugural event in today's Gospel account. John seems to realize that this will not be a baptism of repentance; rather it is a demonstration of Jesus's solidarity with humankind and a sign (for Matthew and his audience) of Jesus's relationship to the Father.

In this scene, the Gospel writers show us Jesus's credentials for the work that will follow. The Alleluia verse for today's liturgy is not taken from Matthew's Gospel, but rather from Mark 9:16, the scene of Jesus's Transfiguration. At this moment of baptism, the Church reminds us of another moment in which the Father revealed the Son's identity and hinted at his destiny: the Transfiguration. In both

events, God reveals his power through the Son, who willingly submits himself as servant of the Father and servant of all humanity. Today's psalm reminds us that just as the Holy Spirit descends "like a dove" on Jesus in today's Gospel, the Spirit, or "wind" "swept over the face of the waters" at Creation (Genesis 1:2). The Holy Spirit is always and everywhere the active, transforming agent at work in the Church, calling us to cultivate holiness, and challenging us to change our lives.

Our Baptism, unlike Jesus's, was a Baptism of repentance and cleansing, befitting us for union with him. In the waters of Baptism we were joined to him, and with him, as adopted children, we enjoy the dignity of belovedness and mission.



## THE WEEK AT HOME AND BEYOND: ORDINARY TIME IN WINTER; SPECIAL DAYS

### Monday, January 13

#### Counted Time

Today we return to the season of Ordinary Time, derived from *ordinal*, meaning counted time. We move from Sunday to Sunday: second, third, fourth, and so forth. Yet there is nothing ordinary about Ordinary Time, for each Sunday we celebrate *Dies Domini*, the Day of the Lord. In July of 1985, the late Blessed Pope John Paul II issued an apostolic letter on the Lord's Day. Let's try to remember the psalmist's words as we begin each Sunday: "This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it."

### January 18–25

#### Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

On January 25, 1958, Blessed Pope John XXIII announced the convening of a major Ecumenical Council in the Church. It would begin in 1963. One of the greatest fruits of the Second Vatican Council was the strengthening of unity among the Christian Churches. As we observe the 50th anniversaries of the council documents, read the Church's Decree on Ecumenism ([http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_decree\\_19641121\\_unitatis-redintegratio\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19641121_unitatis-redintegratio_en.html)), *Unitatis Redintegratio* and pray that "all will be made one."

### Wednesday, January 22

#### Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children

The Third Edition of the Roman Missal now includes a day of prayer and penance for abortion. On this day we give thanks to God for the gift of human life and recall a central teaching of the Church that upholds the dignity of each human person. If you have been setting aside change (see entry for December 6), take this money to an agency that advocates on behalf of the unborn. Readings: 1 Samuel 17:32–33, 37, 40–51; Psalm 144:2, 9–10; Mark 3:1–6.

### Sunday, February 2

#### Feast of the Presentation of the Lord

This feast celebrates the presentation of Jesus in the Temple when two wise old people, Simeon and Anna, recognize his holiness. Since the eighth century, the blessing and distribution of candles has been part of this celebration, giving the feast its popular name: Candlemas. Light a candle this day for the peace of Christ in the world. Readings: Malachi 3:1–4; Psalm 24:7, 8, 9, 10; Hebrews 2:14–18; Luke 2:22–40.

### Tuesday, February 11

#### Memorial of Our Lady of Lourdes

Fittingly, on this day designated as an optional memorial of Our Lady of Lourdes, we also pray for those who are sick and suffering. Consider joining efforts to care for the sick and the homebound in your community. Take a day to give a caregiver some free time. Come forward to bring the Eucharist to the sick and homebound in your parish or in a local hospital or care center. Readings: Isaiah 66:10–14c; Psalm: Judith 13:18bcde, 19; John 2:1–11.

### Tuesday, March 4

#### Mardi Gras

Known as Carnival or Shrove Tuesday, the day before Ash Wednesday is celebrated with parades and feasting, dancing, music, and colorful masks. Tradition calls for pancakes on this day as the Church burns last year's palms for Ash Wednesday. (Encourage the children in the parish school or religious education program to participate in this ritual). As you approach Lent, what traditional practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving will you embrace this year? Today the Church cries out "Let us bless the Lord, alleluia, alleluia. Thanks be to God alleluia, alleluia." Today's Readings: 1 Peter 1:10–16; Psalm 98:1, 2–3ab, 3cd–4; Mark 10:28–31.



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Keeping the Seasons

Reproducibles for Advent-Christmas 2013–2014