

# January 15, 2017

## 2nd Sunday after the Epiphany

Texts for this week's Blended (Traditional) Service:

Isaiah 42:1-7 (NIRV)

Romans 6:1-11 (NIRV)

Matthew 3:13-17 (ESV)



### The New Song of Baptism

- A Reflection on the Significance of Our Lord's Baptism

*"Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations."* (Isaiah 42:1)

Intro – Baptism is the entry sacrament into the Christian faith. The heart of baptism is the washing of regeneration – through the water and Word, we are made new. But why did Jesus step forward to be baptized? He was already perfect!

#### I. The Baptism of Our Lord

- a. At his baptism, Jesus saw "the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him and behold, a voice from heaven said, 'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased'. (Matthew 3:16-17) The Isaiah text is fulfilled in Jesus – "Behold my servant..." And not just this text, but the others, as well (49:1-7; 50:4-9; and 52:13-53:12).
  - b. When Jesus was baptized, he took our place, as sinner, so that on the cross, his death satisfies the just demands of God. Now, to experience the redemptive power of God on the cross, we let the waters of holy baptism (or their remembrance) wash over us!
- ✓ **Key Point** – The baptismal font, shaped as a cross, says it all. It is the great exchange in which his suffering and death brings us life.

#### II. The Baptism of the Christian

- a. By the waters of holy baptism poured over us, the condemnation due us, as sinful people, is washed away! "There is now NO condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus," writes Paul in his Letter to the Romans.
  - b. In Christian baptism, we die with Christ at the cross, and we are born again, with Christ, at the empty tomb. See Romans 6: ...all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death. We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in the newness of life.
- ✓ **Key Point** – We are saved by Jesus, who suffered and died on the cross. We are washed clean in the waters of holy baptism, through which the Spirit of God ignites faith in our hearts!

Closing – As we daily remember our baptism, we live each new day in Christ. In one sense, baptism is an epiphany – it happens once and it is life changing. On the other hand, it is a spiritual discipline that happens EACH AND EVERY DAY as we pause, make the sign of the cross, and look to God's Servant, Jesus, for strength and hope for the day. As we do that, the Spirit of God daily makes us new, and opens our lips to sing the new song of Christ!

All Glory to God alone!

Pastor Neil Buono

**January 15, 2017**  
2nd Sunday after the Epiphany

Texts for this week's Contemporary Service:  
Romans 6:1-11 (NIRV) Matthew 3:13-17 (ESV)



**The New Song of Baptism** - A Reflection on the  
Significance of Our Lord's Baptism

*Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. (Romans 6:3-4)*

Intro – The baptism of our Lord gives us opportunity to reflect on what happens in baptism, and, in such reflection, to embrace the sacramental life that is ours in Christ.

I. Jesus' Baptism

- a. At the baptism, we hear the voice of God – “You are my Son.”
  - b. The baptized Son is fully God. He was baptized with water, as we sinners are baptized, that he who knew no sin might become sin for us and fulfill all things.
  - c. His baptism anticipates his suffering and death in our place, as well as his resurrection from the dead. At our Lord's baptism, he takes on our sin. At the cross, he dies in our place for that sin. After his death, he is raised to new life.
- ✓ **Key point** - Our Lord's baptism begins his journey to the cross and the empty tomb in our place.

II. Our Baptismal and Sacramental Life Today

- a. The apostle's words invite us to see, in baptism, our own death and resurrection. Paul writes, “So you must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.”
  - b. Our life of faith is launched in baptism and traveled in Christ. As we daily remember our baptisms, we live each new day in Christ. On the good days, we thank God for the gift of life that is ours. On the bad days, we call upon God and draw strength for whatever we might be facing. Where we have sinned, we receive forgiveness. And where we seem lost, we find our way through him.
  - c. For regular strengthening, we come to the table where we receive Christ's body and blood – another gift of healing and life.
- ✓ **Key point** – We are not alone in our life of faith, and we are not without God's strengthening presence along the way. Through Word and Sacrament, Christ's Spirit comes with God's healing and life.

Closing – As we daily remember our baptism, we live each new day in Christ. In one sense, baptism is an epiphany – it happens once and it is life changing. On the other hand, it is a spiritual discipline that happens EACH AND EVERY DAY as we pause, make the sign of the cross, and look to God's Servant, Jesus, for strength and hope for the day. As we do that, the Spirit of God, daily, makes us new, and opens our lips to sing the new song of Christ!

All Glory to God alone!      Pastor Neil Buono