

BAPTISM OF OUR LORD



Jesus' baptism points to a way of life.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Luke 3:15-17, 21-22	The baptism of Jesus
Monday	Isaiah 43:1-7	Restoration and protection
Tuesday	Acts 8:14-17	Receiving the Holy Spirit
Wednesday	Matthew 3:13-17	Jesus' baptism
Thursday	Colossians 3:12-17	New life in Christ
Friday	Ephesians 4:1-6	Unity in the body of Christ
Saturday	Psalms 29	The voice of the Lord
Sunday	John 2:1-11	The wedding at Cana

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. Luke 3:21-22a (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Come Lord Jesus, come, Holy Spirit, strengthen us in our baptismal life and feed us with your power to believe that we are loved by God. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

May the gift of this food strengthen us to live in peace and faith in Christ. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May God bless you to know you are loved and precious.



HYMN OF THE WEEK

*Change My Heart,
O God*



WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

CARING CONVERSATIONS



Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- When have you received criticism that helped you?
- How can the judgment of another—or of God—be a blessing to you?

DEVOTIONS



Read: Luke 3:15-17, 21-22.

In this passage we receive important themes that will continue later in the Gospel. In Luke (and Acts written by Luke), the Holy Spirit plays a large role in connecting Jesus with the church and the church with God. At Jesus' baptism, he is doing something that often happens during significant moments in his ministry in Luke: he is praying. Prayer and the work of the Spirit belong together for Jesus and for us as we are brought into the work of his eternal reign. John the Baptist speaks of a winnowing fork that separates wheat from chaff. As Luke continues to tell the story of Jesus, that separation is not about divine vengeance, but a judgment that cleanses us from our chaff, our sin, and leads us to be the church, the wheat in the world that feeds the world with God's grace. John's vision of Jesus, like ours, will change and grow. In Luke 7:19 John is perplexed by Jesus' words and actions and wonders if Jesus is the one, or should he (and we) look for another Messiah. In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus' baptism points to our baptism and a life of prayer, repentance, forgiveness, and growth in Christ.

Discuss: How does baptism free you to pray, seek forgiveness and grow in faith and love?

Pray: Lord Jesus, may we grow in grace as we live out our baptismal life with prayer, humility, and the desire to serve you and the world in love. Amen.

SERVICE



Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings and theme this week, how does your way of life show God's love to others?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



Jesus' baptism sets the stage for the beginning of his ministry, just as our baptism establishes our life as a follower of Jesus. When Jesus was baptized, he was also praying. Use prayer as a way to recall and live your baptism. Dip your fingers into a bowl of water, make the sign of the cross on your or another's forehead or hand, and say: **[I am/You are] baptized and God's beloved child.** Then close by praying the Lord's Prayer and any other prayers you may wish to add.

