Christmas Weekday: January 6th

Gospel text (*Mk* 1:7-11): This is what John the Baptist proclaimed: "One mightier than I is coming after me. I am not worthy to stoop and loosen the thongs of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

It happened in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized in the Jordan by John. On coming up out of the water he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit, like a dove, descending upon him. And a voice came from the heavens, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

"You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

Fr. Josep VALL i Mundó
(Barcelona, Spain)

Today, the Church celebrates the feast of the Baptism of the Lord. That day, the world's waters were purified and were given the power to clean away sin. Although the Baptism administered by John had only the implication of our conversion and acceptance of our sinfulness, Jesus, solidary with all men, decided to go through it too, as the Leader of a renewed Manhood. He "For our sake he made him to be sin who did not know sin, so that we might become the righteousness of God in him" (2Cor 5:21). Jesus will establish the new Baptism that will make us become children of God in Him and will reconcile us unto the Father: He will be the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

"Today —writes St. Gregory of Nazianzus— Christ is illuminated; let this divine light penetrate inward. Christ is baptized; let us follow him to the water, to be able, later, to ascend with Him". That day, at the river Jordan, the Holy Spirit was seen to come down on the Lord and the Father's voice was heard saying: "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." (Mk 1:11). Saint John Paul II says: "Rising from the waters of the baptismal font, every Christian hears again the voice that was once heard on the banks of the Jordan River: 'You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.' (Lk 3:22). From this comes the understanding that one has been brought into association with the beloved Son, becoming a child of adoption (cf. Gal 4:4-7) and a brother or sister of Christ"

St. Cyril of Jerusalem asks us to mull over this supernatural feat, when saying: "If you have sincere piety, the Holy Spirit will descend on you also and you will hear the voice of the Father saying to you from above: 'This was not my son, but now, after Baptism he has been made my son'". As of now, we are all

invited to follow the Path of Christ to know His Truth and to live His very Life. We have been chosen, consecrated and sent out to collaborate in the apostolic mission. We are also beloved and favorite sons, and the Father will be well pleased with each one of us.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “Baptism has freed us from all evils, which are the sins, but with God's grace we must fulfill all goodness.” (Saint Caesarius of Arles)

- “You parents have a baby boy or girl to baptize. Such is the chain of faith: you have a duty to hand on the faith to these children. It is the most beautiful inheritance you will leave to them. Think about this.” (Francis)

- “Although it is proper to each individual, original sin does not have the character of a personal fault in any of Adam's descendants. It is a deprivation of original holiness and justice, but human nature has not been totally corrupted (...). Baptism, by imparting the life of Christ's grace, erases original sin and turns a man back towards God, but the consequences for nature, weakened and inclined to evil, persist in man and summon him to spiritual battle.” (Catechism Of The Catholic Church, Nº 405)