

FROM THE DESK OF **Fr. Julius**



Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Today's Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord concludes the liturgical celebration of the season of Christmas. As the only Sacrament mentioned by name in the Creed, the Baptism of Our Lord is one of the pivotal events in the life of Jesus. New Testament scholars maintain that all four Gospel writers attest to the manifestation of the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity. What a great joy to see God the Father introduce God the Son with the manifestation of the Holy Spirit!

We know that God spoke to His people by many events, precursors of the future mystery of Baptism. Today in the First reading the prophet Isaiah describes the messianic coming of a *comforter* who would deliver the people from servitude, guilt, sin and sorrow. A Voice tells us to cry out for all to hear, that we are to prepare the way of the Lord. In the Second reading, written to mentor the young Titus, St. Paul acclaims how God's grace is now for the salvation of all mankind, who out of His mercy would save us "through the bath of rebirth."

In St. Luke's Gospel, "we behold" the people surrounding St John the Baptist. One can only imagine their response in hearing the Voice of the Father, observing the descent of the Holy Spirit confirming this new baptism, sanctified by the Christ! God the Father's approval provided Jesus with the beginnings of his public ministry. This is that second manifestation we spoke about in Epiphany, that had originated with the silent testimony of the star.

Fortunately it is a day to renew our baptismal promises and emulate Christ's traits of love, mercy, service and forgiveness. As we enter and leave the church, dipping our fingers into the holy water, we can always be reminded of that wonderful *living water* when the Trinity was first manifested at the banks of the Jordan. But the story is still unfolding; God is even now creating and has declared us co-creators, co-authors, of the next chapter. We all long for the time when we can hear the Father say, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." Indeed we are, no matter the situations we may find ourselves, let us never doubt his love for us, because God is love and he enjoys sharing his being with his sons and daughters.

BLESSED SUNDAY!