

January 7-13
The Baptism of Our Lord B

Church Begins at Home

A Verse for the Week

As Jesus emerged from the water,
a voice came from heaven,
“You are my Son, the Beloved;
with you I am well pleased.” (Mark 1:11)



Daily Readings

SUNDAY'S GOSPEL Mark 1:4-11

The season of Epiphany began on Friday, January 6. That is the Festival of the Epiphany, the day we remember the magi coming to worship the newborn king. “Epiphany” means “manifestation”, and the readings of the season that follows show the various roles in which Jesus is manifested, or revealed — prophet, teacher, healer, priest, and king. Today’s gospel recounts the beginning of Jesus’ public ministry, when he was baptized by John in the Jordan River and heard God speak to him confirming that Jesus is His son.

MONDAY Genesis 17:1-14, 23-27

Jesus’ baptism (and our baptism!) is God speaking words of promise and establishing a covenant. This passage recounts God establishing a covenant with Abraham. The sign of the covenant with Abraham is not baptism, but circumcision.

TUESDAY Exodus 30:22-38

Another way of indicating a covenant has been made is by anointing a person with oil. This passage describes Aaron (Moses’ brother) and his sons being consecrated as the priests for the people of Israel. In some Christian traditions, anointing with oil is part of the Sacrament of Baptism.

WEDNESDAY John 1:29-34

This is John the Baptist’s testimony about Jesus and what he saw occur at Jesus’ baptism. You will recognize John’s opening words from our Sunday morning worship. During communion we sing “Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.”

THURSDAY Genesis 1:1-5

The use of a dove serving as a symbol for God’s Spirit has Old Testament roots going back to these opening words of Genesis. In v. 2, the “wind of God” can also be translated “spirit of God”. In some translations, this spirit of God is described as “hovering” over the face of the waters, like a bird hovering over an area.

FRIDAY Acts 22:2-16

This passage describes what happened at the “Council of Jerusalem”, a meeting of early church leaders about 50 A.D. convened to decide whether or not Gentiles could be followers of Jesus without first obeying the Jewish laws. Paul insisted that the law was no longer obligatory for Christians. In giving his testimony before the council, he begins by recounting his own baptism.

SATURDAY John 1:43-51 (Tomorrow’s Gospel)

Our readings for next week are “call” stories, beginning with this account of Jesus calling his first disciples.

Catechism Corner

(from Martin Luther’s *Small Catechism*)

The First Petition

Hallowed be your name.

What is this?

It is true that God’s name is holy in itself, but we ask in this prayer that it may also become holy in and among us.

How does this come about?

Whenever the Word of God is taught clearly and purely and we, as God’s children, also live holy lives according to it. To this end help us, dear Father in heaven! However, whoever teaches and lives otherwise than the Word of God teaches, dishonors God’s name among us. Preserve us from this, heavenly Father!