

Did you know . . .

The Feast of the Baptism of the Lord

Tomorrow we celebrate the Baptism of the Lord. Traditionally, it was celebrated on January 13, the octave day of the Feast of the Epiphany. In the current liturgical calendar, the Baptism of the Lord is celebrated on the Sunday after Jan. 6.

However, in countries like the United States, where the celebration of Epiphany is transferred to Sunday, sometimes the two feasts will fall on the same day. When that occurs, the Baptism of the Lord is transferred to the following day, Monday.

“The Church recalls Our Lord's second manifestation or epiphany which occurred on the occasion of His baptism in the Jordan. Jesus descended into the River to sanctify its waters and to give them the power to beget sons of God. The event takes on the importance of a second creation in which the entire Trinity intervenes.”

The baptism of John was a kind of sacramental preparatory for the baptism of the Lord. Men were moved and encouraged to confess their sins. Christ, however, who was without sin, did not need the baptism of John. He appeared in the flesh like us, but was sinless and impeccable.

“Many of the incidents which accompanied Christ's baptism are symbolical of what happened at our Baptism. At Christ's baptism the Holy Spirit descended upon Him; at our Baptism the Trinity took its abode in our soul. At His baptism Christ was proclaimed the ‘Beloved Son’ of the Father; at our Baptism we become the adopted sons of God. At Christ's baptism the heavens were opened; at our Baptism heaven was opened to us. At His baptism Jesus prayed; after our Baptism we must pray to avoid actual sin.” [From a book by Msgr. Rudolph G. Bandas, Catholic author]

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