

**Chaplain's Report
K of C Council 14041**

December 22, 2011

Usually, the feast of the Baptism of the Lord is celebrated the last Sunday of the Christmas Season. With Christmas and New Year's falling on Sundays, the Feast of the Epiphany is Sunday, January 8, 2012, and the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord is Monday, January 9, 2012.

In preaching a baptism of repentance, John the Baptist prepared the way for "the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world" (John 1:29). Jesus came to John and asked to be baptized. The words of St. Paul come to mind: "He emptied Himself, taking the form of a slave . . . and found in human appearance, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even death on a cross" (Phil 2:7).

As Jesus descended into the waters of the Jordan, the heavens opened and the Father declared Him to be His beloved Son. The Holy Spirit descended on Jesus, bestowing on Him the mission for which He was sent. He was shown to be, as we pray in the Creed, "God from God, light from light, true God from true God." The newly translated Preface for the feast reads: "For in the waters of the Jordan you revealed with signs and wonders a new Baptism, so that through the voice that came down from heaven, we might come to believe in your Word dwelling among us, and by the Spirit's descending in the form of a dove we might know that Christ your Servant has been anointed with the oil of gladness and sent to bring the good news to the poor."

Having opened her heart fully to the Word of God, Mary teaches us how to listen to Jesus through daily, prayerful, reading of Scripture, through our participation in the Mass, the other sacraments, and through attentive reception of the Church's teachings on faith and morals. Mary helps deepen our appreciation for the gift of Baptism and to give thanks for this sacrament by which we are reborn to everlasting life and become sons and daughters of light.

Seeing the Baptism of the Lord through the eyes of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we pray that the Father may come to see and love in us what He sees and loves in His beloved Son Jesus.

Merry Christmas
and a Blessed New Year.



Fr. Bill Burke