



## *Reflection from Deacon Ross 1.12.20*

My baptism is clearly implanted in my memory. Those who are baptized as infants do not have that blessing of remembrance.

When I was born my parents were not Catholic and I was not baptized in any religion. About four years later, when my brother was born, my mother passed away. A couple of years later my father re-married. My stepmother was a Catholic. When I was about seven years old, my folks decided that my brother (then 3 years) would be baptized. They asked me if I wanted to become a Catholic. (I am sure that the local priest had told them that since I had reached "the age of reason," I should decide for myself. Little did he know that I would still be working on getting to that elusive "age of reason." the rest of my life – just ask those who know me!)

Anyway, that opportunity for me to make a decision regarding my baptism was a real turning point in my life. I was told I had to decide which faith to be baptized in! Which what? I had not been part of any church. So my family took me around to give me some way to come to that decision. I went to the Catholic Church because my stepmother was Catholic. I went to the Baptist church because my own mother had been Baptist. I went to the Christian Science Church because my paternal grandmother, who had raised me those years after my mother's death, was a Christian Scientist. After some while I chose to become a Catholic. And so I finally was baptized – along with my brother. From then on, my life took on a new turn. Looking back, I am so grateful that journey.

As we consider the Baptism of the Lord today, we find that Jesus, as a young adult, made a choice to be baptized by John. There was really no need for Jesus to take part in John's "baptism for the forgiveness of sin." Jesus was God's Son, sinless. But, Jesus was here on earth, among us, like us, to bring us into the Reign of God. And so, Jesus humbled himself and joined those who were seeking John's baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. Jesus would be "found like us in all things except sin." But we would find Jesus

approachable in an intimate way, because he willingly became "like us.."

From that point on, Jesus' life took a new turn. He set out to share the Good News that the Father had sent him here to proclaim. He accepted the hardships and suffering that we humans endure. He understood and shared our challenges and dreams. All the while, Jesus kept on the path of bringing the light and love of God into the world, into our lives.

Finally, though the baptism of water and the Spirit, Jesus sets our lives on the same path as his. It is now we who bring the Good News and lead others into the Reign of God.

*Blessings, Deacon Ross*

*(Mt 3:13-17)*