

Baptism of the Lord 2021

- Jesus already knew...that He was the Father's "*Beloved Son.*"
 - So the Voice that we hear...
 - it's for our benefit...not for His.
 - And in the New Testament...
 - there are very few times...
 - that we hear the voice of the Father.
 - But each time we do...
 - He says the same thing:
 - This is my beloved Son...in whom I'm well pleased.
 - Listen to Him.
 - Among the lessons...
 - contained in those few words...
 - is the one that teaches us...
 - what really pleases the Lord.

- Up to this point in His earthly life...
 - Jesus had done nothing extraordinary:
 - no miracles...
 - no great speeches...
 - no massive conversions.
 - He spent thirty years...living in the relative obscurity...
 - helping St. Joseph as a carpenter...
 - doing chores for our Blessed Mother.
 - And yet...
 - the Father's favor rests on Him...
 - the Father is well pleased with Him.
 - Why?
 - It's because Jesus...
 - has been doing what the Father asked of Him...
 - and doing it with humble obedience...and sacrificial love.

- We don't need to try and impress God...
 - not with shocking sacrifices...
 - not with a brilliant personality...
 - not with earth-shaking accomplishments.
 - All He desires from us...
 - is a heart that's focused on Him...
 - that's fallen in love with Him...
 - and therefore seeks...in all things...
 - to humbly do His will.

- So really it's all about the Father's will:
 - nothing more...nothing less!
- When that becomes our motto...
 - as it was for Jesus...
 - then we too will be living our vocation...
 - as "beloved sons and daughters"...
 - and we'll have all the benefits...
 - of living in that relationship as well:
 - peace... joy... confidence in God's love...
 - all the things that make life...so worth living.
- Of course all of this...is evident in the lives of the saints.
 - Many of them...
 - did indeed accomplish incredible things...
 - work many miracles...
 - and convert thousands upon thousands of souls.
 - But many did not.
 - They lived ordinary...hidden lives...
 - pleasing God by their daily duties...
 - and all with humble obedience...and sacrificial love.
- St. Therese of Lisieux...is a wonderful example.
 - Today she is one of the best known saints...
 - known as the Little Flower...
 - known for her '*little way*.'
 - She entered a French Carmelite convent...when she was just fifteen years old.
 - For nine years she prayed...worked...and served her community.
 - But when she died...
 - her sisters...were actually at a loss...
 - as to what they could say about her...to all the other convents.
 - That's just how seemingly uneventful...
 - her daily life appeared...
 - even to those who 'knew' her.
 - And yet today...
 - she is one of the most inspirational saints...
 - and a Doctor of the Universal Church.
 - And if her holiness...
 - was hidden in the ordinary events of life...
 - then so too was her parents.
 - They were just canonized a couple of years ago.
 - If St. Therese had never become so famous...
 - we never would have known about them.

- They had nine children.
 - Lost four in infancy...
 - while the other five...
 - entered religious life.
 - The Martins were well known...for their life of prayer and charity.
 - They visited the elderly...
 - they invited the poor to dine with them.
 - But I'm sure that the rest of their life...
 - was pretty much like that of any other family...
 - with cooking...and cleaning...
 - schoolwork...
 - and working to pay the bills.
 - And yet their lives...
 - greatly pleased the Lord!
 - So we don't need to do extraordinary things...
 - to be beloved sons and daughters...
 - of our heavenly Father.
 - Chances are...
 - it just means doing...
 - what you're already doing now...
 - but doing it more intentionally...
 - more passionately for the Lord.
- A classmate of mine in Rome...
 - spent his first summer...
 - working in Calcutta...
 - with the Missionaries of Charity...
 - and he said at one point...
 - he was given a broom...
 - and told to go and sweep out the next room.
 - As he turned to walk in that direction...
 - the sister stopped him.
 - She wasn't done giving instructions!
 - She said:
 - *"When you sweep...you sweep for Jesus."*
 - It completely changed his perspective...
 - of what he was being asked to do.
 - It helped him to see...
 - how something so small...
 - could be so much more important than he realized...
 - when done for the love of Lord.
- So...when you take out the trash...do it for Jesus.
 - When you do your homework...offer it for the conversion of a soul.

- When you wake up in the middle of the night...
 - instead of reaching for the remote
 - or reaching for your phone...
 - pick up your rosary...
 - pray for other souls...
 - who are also awake at that hour...and greatly in need of prayer.
- When you change that dirty diaper...
 - ask the Lord...
 - to release just one soul from purgatory...
 - well...maybe you can ask for more!
- Again...
 - you probably just need to keep doing ...what you're already doing now...
 - but do it more passionately...more intentionally for the Lord.
- My brothers and sisters...
 - this world is a mess right now...
 - and it's going to get worse...
 - as it gets farther and farther from the Lord.
 - So we shouldn't be shocked at things...
 - like those that happened at the Capital.
 - Rather we should be shocked...
 - at the depths of God's patience...
 - at the depths of His mercy and love...
 - when we...as...a society...
 - continue to turn our backs on Him.
 - And while we might feel helpless...
 - while we might feel tempted...
 - to give into despair...
 - thinking what good can I possibly do.
 - Actually...
 - we can do a lot!
- The best way we can impact the universal level...
 - with things happening with our nation...
 - with our Church...
 - even the entire world...
 - the best way you can have an impact on all of that...
 - is to be faithful...
 - to the particulars of your own life...
 - to the small tasks...that God is calling you to do...right now...
 - and by doing it all...
 - with humble obedience...and sacrificial love.
 - That's how saints are made...and this world...it badly needs more.