

Church of the Divine Love
FIRST SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY
THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD
JANUARY 7, 2024 10:15 AM
HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II

THE WORD OF GOD

Processional Hymn #

Opening Acclamation page 355

Collect for Purity page 355

Gloria (sung) page 356

Collect of the Day - lectionary sheet insert

First Lesson: **Genesis 1:1-5**

Psalm 29

Second Lesson: **Acts 19:1-7**

Gradual Hymn #

Gospel: **Mark 1:4-11**

Sermon – The Rev. Jean Lenord Quatorze (printed on insert)

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Prayers of the People, Form IV page 388

The Peace

Welcome and Announcements

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Hymn #

Doxology (sung)	
The Great Thanksgiving:	
Eucharistic Prayer B	page 367
Sanctus (S-130 in hymnal)	page 367
Hymn during Consecration printed on insert	
The Lord's Prayer	page 364
The Breaking of the Bread, Anthem & Prayer	page 337
The Communion of the People	
Communion Hymn #	
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Dismissal Hymn #	

Sermon Sunday January 7, 2024

Genesis 1: 1-5; Psalm 29; Acts 19: 1-7; Mark 1: 4-11.

Sisters and brothers in Christ,

Have you ever had one of those days when wanted a do-over? A day when you wanted to take a mulligan and start again? I remember a guy telling me, one time, "You know, I've had a bad decade. There are so many things I wish I could go back and do differently."

Whether it is a day or a decade there are times when we wish we could back up and do things differently. Choose different words to speak. Act in a differently way. Handle a relationship better. Sometimes we just want to do life differently. I think the wishing goes deeper than just doing differently. More than anything we want to be different. Our doing arises out of and reveals our being, who we are, how we see ourselves, one another, and the world. Being and doing are intimately connected.

Wishing we could do things differently, and the deeper wish to be a different creation, is really the wish for the first day. Think about some of your first days. The first day as a married person. The first day as a

parent. The first day of that job or vocation you had been waiting for and working toward. The first day you took seriously, as a matter of life and death, your faith. First days are filled with light. They hold the promise of all that might be. There is an excitement, newness, and innocence to first days. First days are vibrant, alive, full of dreams and possibilities. I imagine that is how God looked at the first day, in the beginning. No harsh words had been spoken. No feelings had been hurt. No relationships had been broken. There was no guilt or regret. There was only light; the light of life, the light of love, the light of promise and hope; the light of God. And it was good. The first day is always a day of creation.

Sometimes in my work with people someone will say, "Oh, I wish I could go back and" Often a married couple will say, "We want to go back to the day when our marriage was...." They are all looking for the first day. We cannot go back to the way it was. First day wishing, however, is not really about turning back time. It is about becoming a new creation, a new being. Ultimately, it is about returning to the waters of Jesus' baptisms. Every time we return to the baptismal waters, we return to the first day. Creation and baptism cannot be separated. They are intimately connected and mirror each other. Listen to what Genesis says and how St. Mark describes Jesus' baptism. In the beginning a wind (or breath, or spirit) of God swept over the face of the waters. At Jesus' baptism the spirit (or breath or wind) of God descended on Jesus as he is coming up out of the water. In the beginning God said, "Let there be light." At Jesus' baptism God said, "You are my Son, the Beloved. "In the beginning "God saw that the light was good. "At Jesus' baptism God was "well pleased."

Creation and Jesus baptism are God's gifts to humanity. Everything God does God does for humanity. Jesus did not need to be baptized. We needed him to be baptized. The baptismal water did not sanctify Jesus; he sanctified the baptismal water. His baptism is not the means by which we identify with him, but the means by which he identifies with us. Our baptism allows us to participate in his baptism. Through Jesus our humanity was present and baptized in his baptism. Our humanity was the humanity upon which the spirit descended. Our humanity was the humanity to whom the father spoke and with whom he was well pleased. Our humanity was recreated in Jesus' baptism. It is the first day. In baptism we are a new creation, a new being.

Baptism does not eliminate our difficulties, fix our problems, take away the pain, or change the circumstances of our lives. Instead, it changes us and offers a way through those difficulties, sorrows, problems, and circumstances and ultimately, a way through death. Baptism transcends our biological existence and offers us a vision of life as it might be. Baptism offers us a new way of being – one that is neither limited by nor suffers from our createdness. Through baptism we no longer live according to the biological laws of nature but by relationship with God. That means when we pass through the waters of sorrow and difficulty God is with us. The rivers that can drown will not overwhelm us. That means when we walk through the fire of loss and ruination we are not burned. The flames that can destroy will not consume us. For he is the Lord our God, the Holy one of Israel, our Savior.

To know this, to trust this, to experience this is the gift of baptism and baptism always takes place at the border of life as it is and life as it might be. That border is the River Jordan. Geographically, symbolically,

and theologically the Jordan River is the border on which baptism happens. It is the border between the wilderness and the promised land; the border between life as survival and a life that is thriving; the border between sin and forgiveness; the border between the tomb and the womb; the border between death and life. We all stand on that border at multiple points in our lives. Some of you stand there now. Some of you experience that border as a place of loss, fear, pain. For others it is a place of joy, hope, and healing. In reality it is both at the same time.

Every time we return to the baptismal waters, we claim our identity in Jesus as beloved sons and daughters. Every time we return to the baptism waters God again manifests and reveals himself in humanity. Every time we return to the baptismal waters we return to that first day of light, love, life, and the promise of all that might be.

Whatever your life has been or might now be, the baptismal waters await you. So, return to the water. Let the waters of God's life wash and rid you of fear, resentment, and despair. Cannonball into the mercy of God. Immerse yourself in the water of God's love. Splash in the waves of God's forgiveness. Backstroke through the pool of God's grace. Dive deep into the gift of having been created in the image and likeness of God. Drift in the stillness of God's peace. These are the waters of new birth. May we embrace the transformative power of baptism and the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives, as we continually seek to follow the example of Jesus Christ and live as those who have been washed, renewed, and set apart for His glory. May the Lord bless you as you embrace each new beginning, walk in the light of His Word, and allow the waters of baptism to continually shape and transform your life. **Amen.**

1 EPIPHANY/THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD	10:15 AM	HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II (only on zoom)
MONDAY	8:30 PM	AA MEETING
WEDNESDAY	7:00 PM	AL-ANON MEETING
THURSDAY	10AM-2PM	THRIFT SHOP
	8:30 PM	AA MEETING
SAURDAY	10AM-2PM	THRIFT SHOP

2 EPIPHANY

10:15 AM

HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II (also on zoom)

PARISH ANNUAL MEETING FOLLOWS

VESTRY NOMINATIONS

Warden – Erika Febres- First 2 year term

Vestry - Andrew Prosser – First 3 year term

Vestry - David Treasure – First 3 year term

	Today	Next Week
Eucharistic Minister	Jess Berbeck	Dana Kenn
Coffee	Janet Croft	Deb Giordano

SUPPORT THE FOOD PANTRY – DROP-OFF IN THE KITCHEN

PARISH PRAYER LIST

Loving God, comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind or spirit. Give them courage and hope in their troubles and bring them the joy of your salvation. Especially we remember before you:

Grace Schinella	Donna Edwards	Jess
Bob Curley	Beverly Noel	Art
Chris Dickson	Kate Jones	Deb P.
Michael Echevarria	John Rocco	Judy

Christopher	Warren	Kristen
Charlotte H.	Bernie Walther	Celeste
Mo	Phil Ryder	Carolyn
Anthony Paribello	Barbara Curran	Del
Robert Hosey	Lourdes S.	Aidan
Sally & Roger	Sophia	Carol K.
Mary & Family	Ciara	Jan
Nathan Treadwell	Gladys Hadija	Vincent
Jean Estinvil Quatorze	Jean Wildy	Nicolas
Matthew & Anne Marie Treasure		Michael & Family

All people and countries suffering from violence, hatred and natural disasters.

Help us speak words of encouragement and offer deeds of kindness to them.
Bring us with them, into the unending joy of your kingdom. Amen.

To add or make changes to prayer list during the week, email

Janet Croft at jmc220@optonline.net.

Prayer for the New Year

God our Father, thank you for being the God who walks
besides those who love Him in the Valley of the Shadow of
Death. I rejoice in the continued presence of the Holy Spirit

with me, so that I am never alone. Lord, I lift up a sincere request for happiness during this year of difficulty. Help me find joy, that I may be strengthened spiritually, and happiness that I may continue to engage with those around me with Christian love. Sometimes it can be hard to see Your hand moving when everything around me seems dark. Help me find happiness so that I can see Your work, even if I do not understand it fully right now. I know that You use all things for Your glory, and for my good. I ask that You keep my focus on You during this New Year. In the name of Jesus Christ, I pray. Amen.

Hymn to be sung during the consecration:

Father I adore you,
Lay my life before you,
How I love you.

(Repeat twice with second verse starting with Jesus
and third verse starting with Spirit.)

Prayer for Peace

Eternal God, in whose perfect kingdom no sword is drawn

but the sword of righteousness, no strength known but the strength of love: So mightily spread abroad your Spirit, that all peoples may be gathered under the banner of the Prince of Peace, as children of one Father; to whom be dominions and glory, now and for ever. Amen

