

In this reading we learn how Peter recognizes that the good news, which Jesus began to proclaim after his baptism, now extends to all people. At first Peter was slow to believe that God wanted him to bring the word to a non-Jew. But God has revealed this to Peter, and Peter gladly responds to Cornelius, a Roman centurion, together with his family and friends. Peter and the disciples are witnesses to Christ's ministry, death, and resurrection and have been commanded to preach forgiveness of sins through Jesus' name.

Please listen as I read this passage from Acts.

Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right. You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, announcing the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. You know what has happened throughout the province of Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached - how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.

"We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a cross, but God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen. He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen - by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Matthew 3:13-17

Our gospel is the story of Jesus' baptism. John wonders why Jesus should come to him to receive a baptism for the remission of sins, but Jesus tells him that it is right and fitting. After he is baptized, the Holy Spirit is manifest. A voice from heaven proclaims who Jesus is, with words that echo ancient oracles concerning the King and the calling of the Lord's chosen servant.

Hear now these words from the Gospel of Matthew

Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?"

Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness." Then John consented.

As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

Liturgist: This is the gospel message of our Lord and Savior

All: May the reading and the hearing of Your word inform our minds, comfort our souls, and guide our feet.