

Dear Padre,

Why did Jesus have to be baptized? Did he have original sin like us or was there another reason to be baptized?

Jesus is God and did not have original sin like us. He is like us in all things except sin. The baptisms John performed did not free people from their original sin. The people who came to John to be baptized were declaring



that they were going to change their ways and reform their lives. They promised to turn away from sin and follow the commandments. The baptism of Jesus was different. When Jesus was baptized, God revealed who Jesus is and commissioned him to begin his mission on earth.

There were three significant components to Jesus' baptism. First, the skies opened above

Jesus. The prophet Isaiah prayed that God would tear open the sky and come down to earth (Isaiah 63). This was a sign to the people that God was coming down to earth. A new era was beginning. God was no longer "locked up" in the heavens.

Second, the Spirit of God, in the form of a dove, descended from the sky and hovered over Jesus and the water. This takes us back to the first moments of creation when the spirit of God hovered over the waters. The Spirit was a sign to the people that a new creation was being made.

Finally, a voice declared that Jesus is the Son of God. Jesus is the new Adam, who will begin the new creation. Let us call the Holy Spirit to be within our hearts and send us forth, as Jesus was sent, to proclaim a new creation founded on the love and peace of our Savior.

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A WORD FROM Pope Francis

After these thirty years of hidden life, Jesus' public life begins. And it begins precisely with his baptism in the River Jordan. But Jesus is God; why does Jesus get baptized?... Because he wants to be with the sinners. For this reason, he gets in line with them and does the same thing they do.

ANGELUS, BAPTISM OF THE LORD, JANUARY 10, 2021



Our Parish Community

January 9, 2022

The Baptism of the Lord (C)

Is 42:1-4, 6-7 or Is 40:1-5, 9-11

Acts 10:34-38 or Ti 2:11-14; 3:4-7

Lk 3:15-16, 21-22

Taking Up Christ's Ministry

Before the Second Vatican Council, *ministry* was considered by many to be a Protestant word, and the religious leader who did it was called a *minister*. Catholics had priests and bishops who received and administered sacraments. Religious women did the Church's work in schools and hospitals. The council turned our understanding of Church membership inside out. We've come to realize that with baptism—not ordination or religious profession—comes the responsibility of ministry. Catholics and Protestants alike understand their commitment to justice and peace is a genuine ministry that seeks to establish God's reign in our world.

Many interpreters believe that the account of Jesus' baptism points to the inauguration of his own ministry. The theology expressed is certainly Trinitarian (the voice, Jesus identified as Son, and the dove). However, the revelation of his true identity occurs as he begins preaching and healing. Some say his baptism was meant to strengthen him as he began his public life. Others believe it was meant to strengthen his disciples.

Today we maintain that by baptism we are all children of God. Vatican II has enlightened us as to what this really means. Pope Francis has reminded us that by virtue of our baptism we are missionary disciples (see *Evangelii Gaudium*, 120). In other words, as disciples we follow Jesus, learning from him. As missionaries we go out to spread his Good News to others. It is now for us to take up the ministry where he left off, to be faithful servants with whom God is well pleased.



After...Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, heaven was opened and the holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove.

LUKE 3:21-22

FOR Reflection

- ✦ *How does your life's work make the world better? If it does, then you are a missionary disciple of Jesus.*
- ✦ *Go out of your way to make someone's life a little better this week.*

Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA