

12 January 2025 -- Feast of the Baptism of the Lord "C"

[Is 40:1...11; Ti 2:11...3:7; Lk 3:15...22](#)

Homily

Of the four Evangelists, Luke is always the one who emphasizes most everything that has to do with prayer. In the account of Jesus' baptism, he is the only one to mention that it was while Jesus was praying, after being baptized by John, that *heaven was opened* and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in the form of a dove. And it was through this same opening in heaven that the voice of the Father came, saying: "*You are my Son; today I have begotten you*". Let's try to see what this text teaches us about prayer.

Prayer - whether it's a prayer of adoration, of petition or of thanksgiving - is an activity that tears the veil separating the created world from its creator, that opens a breach in the wall that separates time from eternity. We live in a time where there is a yesterday, a today and a tomorrow. God lives in an eternal present. Through prayer, which brings us into communion with God, we enter God's eternal present. This is possible because God Himself took the opposite path. The Son of God became one of us. He came in time and space. And when He began to pray, the veil between time and eternity, between the space of men and the omnipresence of God, was torn and the voice of the Father who from all eternity begets His Son was able to say, in the time of our history: 'today', yes, 'today I have begotten you'.

This voice of the Father accompanies the visible descent of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus. When we begin to pray, that is, when we open ourselves to the gift of prayer, heaven opens and the Spirit of the Father and of Jesus descends upon us to pray within us, enabling us to say: 'Abba, Father', and then, each time, the voice of the Father says to us too, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you". We become adopted sons in the beloved Son, the first-born of a multitude of brothers and sisters. This is the baptism in the Spirit and fire that John the Baptist announced. A baptism of fire, because it burns within us everything that is foreign to this communion or stands in its way.

We can then understand the teaching of the great theologians of the patristic era and the Middle Ages, who saw in the liturgy of this world a participation in the heavenly liturgy. All the blessed who have passed from the present life to eternal life praise God unceasingly in His eternal today. Our liturgies and services here on earth, despite their poverty and even our distractions, provoke this tearing open of heaven and allow us for a moment to enter into this

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same today of God where everything is present. Then our liturgy here below becomes completely contemporary with the heavenly liturgy.

This is what Paul wrote to his disciple Titus: *‘ God, our Savior, has shown His kindness and tenderness towards mankind; He has saved us’*.