



From A Bishop's Journal (656)

What do You Say about Your Baptism? (2)

I am grateful to those who responded to my request to tell me what they thought about their baptism. I am also pleased to give you here the product of their reflection.

A Wonderful Gift

It is through my baptism that I am committed to my community and several committees. First, I am committed to my family that gives me love and happiness, and allows me to blossom so that I can do my work properly. As coordinator and animator of a family-based catechetics programme for years 1 to 6, then as a volunteer in the Scout movement where I am in charge and animator of spiritual activities, and as a person in charge of youth ministry, I have welcomed children and parents, and have shared my faith with them. I receive a lot, because of the family spirit where friendship, fellowship, unity and peace are created. What a wonderful gift! As one in charge of baptism preparation, I dip into the source of my own baptism in order to help others grow in their faith, by sharing and growing with them in love and faith which bind us to Jesus. As chair of the PPC and because of my participation in different activities in my parish as well as in neighbouring parishes whose people I visit – the sick, the elderly, the shut-in, the handicapped, and those who are sometimes left aside for personal reasons, with these people I share so much love and joy. They are my strength and my courage, and I thank the Lord for having set them on my path. My baptism was my parents' greatest gift to me, after the gift of life. Baptism gives me the right to eternal life and to another family, my Christian community. As a baptised person, I must celebrate in the community where I am given strength, by listening to the Word of God and sharing in the Eucharist. I am called to work with the people around me at building a solid and life-giving community that reflects the love of God. Hence, I can share, grow, and live out the mission given to me, to be priest, prophet and king. I hope with all my heart that my presence encourages others to commit themselves. I am happy and satisfied because I love my work and, despite difficulties or challenges I sometimes encounter, I know that I am not alone and that I shall be given the strength I need. – Thérèse Boudreau

A Free Gift

My baptism is God's free gift to me, the most beautiful gift my parents gave me. It was also the occasion of my first encounter with Jesus, and my point of departure in God's great family and the Christian community. My parents were strong believers and had a great desire to stimulate my faith

through getting to know, love, listen to and pray to Jesus. It was also through their example that my faith grew. Besides, I had the advantage of our living close to the church and of being in contact with very religious people; this gave me a taste for attending Mass, evening prayer, vespers, etc. I felt drawn to these religious ceremonies despite the fact that I didn't always understand their meaning. I felt good in the presence of "Little Jesus," as I called him. As a baptised person I am called, like Jesus, to be a light to others through the example of my everyday life. As the Letter to the Galatians says: "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patient endurance, kindness, generosity, faith, mildness, and chastity" (Gal. 5:22-23). – Alda Boulay, R.H.S.J.

For Life

At baptism it was my parents who decided that I was to receive the first sacrament. Through baptism I made my entry into the great family of the baptised. From one thing to another, I learned many things, among others, faith, love, respect, and forgiveness... many things that help us carry on despite the obstacles we come across. I associate baptism with God in me, and with the fact that I am never alone. Finally, I would say that baptism has brought something I cannot describe, but which I am so happy to feel. He and I, together for life! What deep happiness! I often say "thank you" to life, but today I say "thank you" to "my parents" up above for getting me baptised and showing me life's true values. – Lise Boutot

In the Great Family of Christ

Baptism is the sacrament of initiation into the Christian life, and the gate to the sacraments of the Church of Christ. To be baptised is also to join the great family of Christ which we call the Christian community. To be baptised also means to be in communion with the other members of the Christian community who form the Body of Christ. Baptism gives us the Holy Spirit to bring us directly into the life of Christ, that is, we die and are raised up with Christ, dead to sin, and raised up to new life with Christ. To be baptised is also to follow Jesus, and be his witnesses. Through baptism Jesus gives us faith and the graces needed to follow him and be his witnesses in our own milieu and with all that we are. However, to walk with Jesus and be his witnesses, we must hear about him and get to know him. This was done first of all by our parents who taught us our prayers and told us about the life of Jesus; and then we learned from the clergy and our catechists. Baptism gives us faith, hope, and love and, as baptised, I must cultivate and stimulate the growth of these precious gifts. In order to help these gifts grow, we must use every means possible, prayer, and the Eucharist which gives us the Body of Christ, and his Word which gives us the graces and the power needed to live our baptism in our own milieu. Joining associations like the Cursillo Movement or a religious community like the Filles de Marie-de-l'Assomption helps us share the Good News of Christ, and this nourishes our faith. To be baptised is also to be at the service of others, to live our baptism in community, "in other words, in the great family of Christ." – Marius Caron

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