



My Dear Parishioners,

Greetings and Praised be Jesus Christ! As we arrive to the Baptism of Jesus, it's easy to wonder why we celebrate this Feast so close to Christmas.

Doesn't it seem strange that we call to mind his Baptism as a 30 year old

man while his manger is still decorating our Church?!! I suppose it is strange, but that strangeness evokes something beautiful. Namely, the centrality of this first and most beautiful Sacrament: Baptism. While Christmas celebrates Jesus' birth *for us*, His baptism reminds us of His birth *in us* which is what happens in Baptism. In Baptism, Jesus is born in us; we become not just spectators but participants in His Life, members of His Body. So important is this Sacrament that the Church teaches that it is *necessary* for our Salvation. I share some important words here from the Catechism paragraphs 1257-1261.

1257: The Lord himself affirms that Baptism is necessary for salvation. He also commands his disciples to proclaim the Gospel to all nations and to baptize them. Baptism is necessary for salvation for those to whom the Gospel has been proclaimed and who have had the possibility of asking for this sacrament. The Church does not know of any means other than Baptism that assures entry into eternal beatitude; this is why she takes care not to neglect the mission she has received from the Lord to see that all who can be baptized are "reborn of water and the Spirit." God has bound salvation to the Sacrament of Baptism, but he himself is not bound by his sacraments.

1258: Those who suffer death for the sake of the faith without having received Baptism are baptized by their death for and with Christ. This baptism by blood, like the desire for Baptism, brings about the fruits of baptism without being a sacrament.

1259: For catechumens who dies before Baptism, their explicit desire to receive it, together with repentance for their sins, and charity, assures them the salvation that they were not able to receive through the sacrament.

1260: "Since Christ died for all, and since all men are in fact called to one and the same destiny, which is divine, we must hold that the Holy Spirit offers to all the possibility of being made partakers, in a way known to God, of the Paschal mystery." Every man who is ignorant of the Gospel of Christ and of his Church, but seeks the truth and does the will of God in accordance with his understanding of it, can be saved. It may be supposed that such persons would have desired Baptism explicitly if they had known its necessity.

1261: As regards children who have died without baptism, the Church can only entrust them to the mercy of God, as she does in the funeral rites for them. Indeed, the great mercy of God who desires that all men should be saved, and Jesus' tenderness toward children which caused him to say: "Let the children come to me, do not hinder them", allow us to hope that there is a way of salvation for children who have died without Baptism. All the more urgent is the Church's call not to prevent little children coming to Christ through the gift of holy Baptism.

For more information about baptism, please let me know or share with me your questions. It is a good and healthy practice to renew your baptism promises each day.

Peace, Fr. Rogers

REMEMBERING 48 YEARS OF LEGAL ABORTION IN AMERICA-January 22 marks the sad anniversary of the Roe-vs-Wade decision which has brought so much harm to women, families, men and our beautiful country. This year, because of the pandemic, please note the following:

1. THE MARCH FOR LIFE IN WASHINGTON is set for Friday, January 29. Fr. Rogers will join once again with ABVM in West Grove for the trip to DC. ***This year there will be NO mass at the basilica, seating on the bus is limited, masks and social distancing required throughout the day. St. Patrick Parishioners are welcome. For more info or to sign up, please contact Stephanie Tobin at tobinfamily8@gmail.com or 484-467-6675.***
2. PHILADELPHIA: Archbishop Perez will lead a March for Life here in Philly on Saturday, January 23 beginning with Mass at 9:00AM.
3. KENNETT SQUARE: Next week we welcome to our parish Chester County Women's Center. They will share the great work that they do here in Kennett to assist those in need.
4. Finally, on Friday, January 22, we will have Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and special prayers throughout the day for all those whose lives have been affected by Abortion.