TEACHING THE LITURGICAL YEAR

The Baptism of the Lord
(Middle and Upper Elementary)

January 10, 2021 – The Baptism of the Lord

Overview

In this week’s Gospel passage, John the Baptist foretells of the coming Messiah who will baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire. He then baptizes Jesus, upon whom the Holy Spirit descends and comes to rest, while the Father proclaims Him to be His beloved Son. In this lesson, students will consider the meaning of Christ’s Baptism and the invitation to all of us it extends.

Directions

A. Have your students read the Gospel passage, or read it aloud to your students, and then answer the focus questions.
B. Review and discuss the answers when they have completed the focus questions.
C. Have students complete the Why was Jesus Baptized activity and complete the focus questions. Review and discuss the answers when finished.
D. Finally, have your students read the excerpt on Baptism from the Summa Theologica and answer the reflection questions.

Answer Key

Focus Questions

1. He prophesied that one mightier than himself was coming; one whose sandals he was not worthy to loosen.
2. John told them that he was baptizing them with water while one mightier than he is coming to baptize them with the Holy Spirit and fire.
3. “You are my beloved son; with You I am well pleased.”

Why was Jesus Baptized?

1. Jesus’ acceptance and inauguration of His mission as God’s suffering servant.
2. To be numbered among sinners.
3. Jesus is already “the Lamb of God,” He is already anticipating the “baptism” of His bloody death, and He is already coming to fulfill all righteousness and submit Himself to the Father’s will.

4. The Son’s acceptance.

5. The Holy Spirit rests upon Jesus, who will now be the source of the Spirit for all mankind. The descent of the Son of God and the Holy Spirit is a prelude to the New Creation.