

Epiphany 2 –The Baptism of Our Lord - January 11, 2015
Text: Romans 6:1-11
Theme: “The Most Powerful Day”

There have been some powerful days in my life, and they all revolve around vows. There was May 29, 1977, the day I was confirmed in my Baptismal vow by the Holy Catholic Church and I promised that I would not turn away from Christ even upon the threat of death. There was June 7, 1986, the day I married Dänya and vowed to be her husband for life. There was the July 1, 1990, the day I made my ordination vow before the Church, promising to be a faithful shepherd of God’s people. But the two most powerful days of my life were August 8, 1993, and April 5, 1998 the days on which I baptized my sons, Neal and Noah. On this day, I witnessed and facilitated the most powerful vows they will ever make, their Baptismal vows. On the day of their Baptisms, they vowed to renounce Satan and follow Christ even onto death, a vow in which they were confirmed here at Trinity Lutheran Church when we confirmed them in the faith on March 16, 2008 and April 1, 2012 respectively. Those are the most powerful days in my life – the days I saw my sons claimed by Jesus Christ and given eternal life.

No matter what happened from that day on, if I dropped dead of a heart attack after one too many crab dinners or if they were run down by a bus in the street, I knew that nothing could take them from me. My two sons would be with me and with Danya for eternity. That is what Baptism

does. It is a promise direct from God himself to make us his eternal children no matter what. We can live a righteous life in harmony with the 10 Commandments and have a rich and fulfilling life or we can live as the dregs of society in the dark alleys of the world and suffer the itinerate consequences, but when we are baptized, we are coronated as eternal royalty with all the privileges therein including eternal life with God.

We who are Baptized, have been infused with the Holy Spirit and it is he who lives in us and empowers us daily to trudge through this dark world until our days are finished and we are called into the mansion where a place has already, even now, been prepared for us. It is a completely legal and completely divine arrangement and that is why I am so certain of it. This is not about what I feel or what my mother told me or what makes sense. This is a divinely legal arrangement.

When the waters are poured over our heads our sinful nature is drowned and dies with Christ. That's it. By the power of the Holy Spirit, the sinful nature is dead and has no more control over us. Right there, in that font, we die, but we are resurrected from death, just as Christ was resurrected from death and we rise from the font as saints of God.

So now, sometimes we live and act like saints we are, and sometimes we revert to our old, dead, human nature but do not be mistaken, nothing can take our rightful place from us. No amount of sin, no evil spirit, no poor choice can forfeit that which has been bought for us

on the cross. Christ paid for all of our sin in a once and for all sacrifice. It is finished, just as he said from the cross. If you are tempted to live in accordance with your human nature, that is only Satan trying to get you to believe that you have no power. There is no doubt. His web of lies and deception is powerful and treacherous, but God is more powerful. He spoke from the heavens on the day Jesus was baptized so that we all may know and see the connection. Christ was true God and yet took on all the sin of human nature. He came to that river on the day of his Baptism so that we could all be certain that he was 100% human and he, our brother, demonstrated his connection to God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. If Christ, our brother, is connected, we are connected. If he was raised, so shall we be also. And that is all there is to it.

The living waters flow from the Baptismal font. Remember the most powerful day of your life. It was the day that came back to me the day I Baptized Neal and Noah. The most powerful day of your life is the day the living waters began to flow through you because those living waters make you saints of God. Those waters connect you to God the Father through Jesus Christ and those waters insure your eternal life with God, and with all whom you love.