

## THE CHRISTIAN MYSTERY

### *THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM*

#### **Biblical Reflection: Mk 1:1-11**

The sacraments of Christian initiation –Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist—lay the foundations of every Christian life. (CCC 1212)



According to the Apostle Paul, the believer enters through Baptism into communion with Christ's death, is buried with him, and rises with him... (CCC 1277)

From the time of the apostles, becoming a Christian has been accomplished by a journey and initiation in several stages. This journey can be covered rapidly or slowly, but certain essential elements will always have to be present: proclamation of the Word, acceptance of the Gospel entailing conversion, profession of faith, Baptism itself, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and admission to Eucharistic communion. (CCC 1229)

The ordinary ministers of Baptism are the bishop and priest and, in the Latin Church, also the deacon. In case of necessity, any person, even someone not baptized, can baptize, if he has the required intention. The intention required is to will to do what the Church does when she baptizes, and to apply the Trinitarian baptismal formula. The Church finds the reason for this possibility in the universal saving will of God and the necessity of Baptism for salvation. (CCC 1256)

As regards to children who have died without Baptism, the Church can only entrust them to the mercy of God... Indeed, the great mercy of God who desires that all men should be saved, and Jesus' tenderness toward children..., allows us to hope that there is a way of salvation for children who have died without Baptism... (CCC 1261)

*"See where you are baptized, see where Baptism comes from, if not from the cross of Christ, from his death. There is the whole mystery: he died for you. In him you are redeemed, in him you are saved"* St. Ambrose. (CCC 1225)

#### **Questions for discussion:**

- **What is the date of your Baptism? If you don't know, try to find it and celebrate that anniversary every year.**
- **How do you understand your own Baptism? Is there any difference between being baptized or not?**
- **Have you participated in a Baptism ceremony lately? Discuss that experience.**
- **Are you a Godfather or Godmother of anyone? What are your feelings toward your Godson or Goddaughter?**
- **Do you renew annually your Baptismal promises? Do you understand what you promise?**

**Further reading:** Catechism of the Catholic Church, numbers 1210-1284