“Who Remembers their Baptism?” January’s Four-Minute Retreat

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Introduction

If we were baptized as infants, only our parents, godparents, and other family members might remember the occasion. We were either asleep, crying, or if awake, oblivious to what was going on. For Jesus, it was different. He was baptized at 30 years by his cousin John and He made the decision to line up with others who wanted their sins washed away by the waters of the Jordan River. Jesus wanted to be baptized because he desired to be identified with us as sinners. But what happened after the waters were poured over his head was spectacular: the heavens opened; and he heard the voice of God say: “You are my beloved Son, my favor rests on you.” This revelation confirmed for him his divine identity as Son of the Father. The experience so overwhelmed him that he went to the desert on retreat to savor and understand his identity. After forty days of retreat, he was ready to begin his public ministry. The first thing he did was go to a synagogue on the Sabbath where he was invited to do a reading. He opened the Scripture and proclaimed in the words of Isaiah his mission: “to bring good news to the poor, liberty to captives, and to set the downtrodden free.” Even though most of us were not conscious at our baptism, we are invited through our lifetime to realize the new identity we, too received at our baptism—a son or daughter of God. And like Jesus, we have a mission as Christian women and men to carry on the work of Jesus in our families and among the people we know—to be people of hope, to care for the poor, and to lift others to be their best selves. This is our identity and mission that we are invited to own year by year as adults.

Scripture

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized. John tried to prevent him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and yet you are coming to me?” Jesus said to him in reply, “Allow it now for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill righteousness. Then he allowed him. After He was baptized, he came up from the water and behold the heavens were opened and he saw the Spirit of God like a dove coming upon him. And the voice came from the heavens saying, “This is my beloved Son with whom I am well pleased.”

Reflection Questions:

1) What does it mean to you to have the identity of being beloved by God?
2) How are you continuing the ministry of Jesus to be a person of hope, to care for the poor and to encourage others to be their best selves?

Action

Contact someone who needs a word of encouragement and hope today.