

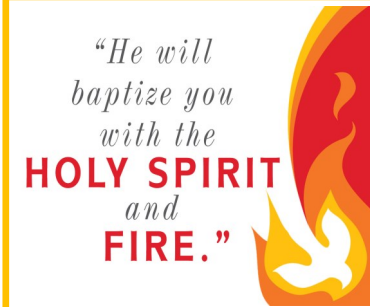
January 12, 2025

The Baptism of the Lord

MASS INTENTIONS

Live-stream All Masses on the West Sac OLG YouTube Channel

Table with 5 columns: Day, Date, Time, Priest, Intention. Rows include SATURDAY Jan 11, SUNDAY Jan 12, MONDAY Jan 13, TUESDAY Jan 14, WEDNESDAY Jan 15, THURSDAY Jan 16, and FRIDAY Jan 17.



WITH WATER AND FIRE

John tells us in today's Gospel that the long-awaited Christ would baptize not only with water but also with fire. Some of us may have been baptized as infants, some as adults, and while we have fresh, living water poured over us, no one talks about the fire that inevitably comes, testing our spirits and our faith.

What lovely words that our hearts long to hear, whether from parents, spouses, teachers or friends, our humanity craves affirmation, which often leads us to look for it in unreliable things. Some of us do find this affirmation in the places we search for it: money, successful careers, likes on social media, until we need so much that nothing will ever be enough. Like inching closer and closer to a cliff without ropes to catch us, a fall will come. A parent might pass away, a child could stop speaking to us, a friend could betray us, and the people we so often rely on for affirmation become the sparks of our trials by fire. These flames of purification can seem unending, unbearable, and cause our hearts to question: how can this be the "love" Christ wants for my life? We see other Christians who pick and choose what they stand for, who only embrace their baptismal vows when it is most convenient and comfortable, and who never survive their personal trek through the desert. However, for those who cling to Christ, through the fire, through the questions, through the struggles of detachment from worldly goods, and fulfill our baptismal vows, there is a life-saving and refreshing river, where Christ waits for us with words that only fulfill our hearts when they are spoken from His mouth: "You are my beloved...with you I am well pleased." (Lily McKeough)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

LECTOR TRAINING will be on Thursday, January 16 at 7 PM in the church. Any questions please email liturgy@westsacolg.org



The 21st Annual Walk for Life West Coast will be held on Saturday, January 25, 2025 in San Francisco. This event is an important opportunity to stand together in defense of life and human dignity. It is a simple, joyful and beautiful expression of the hope we

have for the life of all people. Come and join us. Visit WalkforLifeWC.com to register or find a ride with a local parish community or contact Deacon Danny Patterson at 916.733.0133 or dpatterson@scd.org.



PILGRIMS OF HOPE, WE BELIEVE:

ONE DAY, WE SHALL SEE GOD AS HE IS.

"We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

Everyone who has this hope based on him makes himself pure as he is pure." - 1 John 3:2-3

REFLECTION:

We have an eager, confident expectation that one day, we shall see God as he is. This is our hope, that anchors our soul. It is firm and secure.<sup>1</sup> It is a living hope through the resurrection of Christ from the dead. To have eternal

life in heaven is the "ultimate end and fulfillment of the deepest of human longings, the state of supreme, definitive happiness".<sup>2</sup> Eternal life can be described as life in the kingdom of God (Mk 9:47), as a heavenly banquet (Mt 8:11), as a paradise gained (Lk 23:43), as the heavenly Jerusalem (Heb 12:22), as a place of rest (Heb. 4:1-9), and as an arena of unending light (Rev. 22:5). St. Cyprian contemplated God in his heavenly glory:

"How great will your glory be, to be allowed to see God, to be honored with sharing the joy of salvation and eternal light with Christ your Lord and God . . . to delight in the joy of immortality in the Kingdom of heaven with the righteous and God's friends."<sup>3</sup>

By his death and resurrection, Jesus Christ has "opened" heaven to us. This heavenly Jerusalem will be a place of purity, where sinners will not enter but only those who have washed their robes in the blood of Christ and who have been purified through the forgiveness of sins in Christ.<sup>4</sup> Those who die in God's grace and friendship and are perfectly purified live forever with Christ, for they are like God forever and they "see him as he is, face to face". He "makes partners in his heavenly glorification those who have believed in him and remained faithful to his will".<sup>5</sup> As Pilgrims of Hope, we on our journey to see God as he is. Our hope is anchored knowing that "at the evening of life, we shall be judged on our love"<sup>6</sup>, and be granted entrance into the blessedness of heaven because we have "believed in him and remained faithful to his will".

1 Hebrew 6:19-20 | 2 Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 1024 | 3 St. Cyprian, Ep. 58, 10,1 | 4 The Hope of Eternal Life, No. 140, (2010), USCCB Ecumenical & Interreligious Affairs | 5 Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 1026 | 6 St. John of the Cross, Dichos 64 | 7 Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 1024

A STEWARD MAKES GOD'S LOVE VISIBLE BY IMITATING JESUS.



SERVICE

Weekly Budget Goal: \$4,271.00 Christmas Novena (Simbang Gabi) collections including mass sponsors and intentions collected a total of \$7897.50 This will be put into the New Church Fund.

Thank you for sharing your gifts with our Church!

PRAYER

Pray for the sick, especially in our parish: Sonja Craighton, Michael Vilhauer, Shirley Chiang, Pacing McFeely, Millie Centers, Stan Holland.

FORMATION

- Children's Faith Formation (CFF) Classes meet at 5:30 PM on January 14, 21 and 28 at OLG School.
Adult Bible Study meet on Tuesdays, except on the first of the month. Please contact Ana Ramirez-Palmer for information.
Baptism Class on Wednesday, February 7, 2024, at 7 PM. Please call the Parish Office (916) 371-4814 to sign up.

HOSPITALITY

Happy Anniversary to all the married couples celebrating their wedding anniversary in the month of January.

KIDS CORNER

The Little Ones

Jim Burrows

Comic strip showing a boy and girl praying. The boy says: 'DON'T BE AFRAID TO PRAY LIKE JESUS. IF THE HEAVENS OPEN AND YOU HEAR GOD SPEAK, THAT WOULD BE COOL!' Below the comic is a paragraph of text: 'Now when all the people were baptized, Jesus also was baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came from heaven: "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well pleased."' Lk 3:21-22