

Second Hand Preacher

The Baptism of the Lord

January 10, 2016

1 Corinthians 12:4-11

The Baptism of the Lord brought down the Holy Spirit. By being baptized, Jesus made baptism holy, and now those waters send the Holy Spirit down on all who are baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. This is why this reading from 1 Corinthians is so important to be used on this day. We find in this letter St. Paul explaining how the Church is to operate in these early days. Things had to be done in secret because of fear of persecution, but brave souls were chosen by the Holy Spirit to witness to the truth from time to time. This was not done for the individual's glory but for the greater glory of God.

The reading is a sort of treatise to the Holy Spirit. Some of the wonderful gifts of the Holy Spirit are explained. It tells how the gifts fit into the community and make the community stronger. One might say that the Holy Spirit is the foundation of the community. The Holy Spirit empowers the community and makes it stronger than it ever thought possible. Sure the gifts go to individuals, but the fruit of these gifts are shared with the whole community. Wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, and prophesy all individually build up the community. We have the privilege of having some or all of these gifts given to us. Most of us only get a few gifts and are forced to cooperate with a community so that we are made whole.

The Holy Spirit is what animates our church. Each of us, having the Spirit sacramentally in Baptism and Confirmation, must apply that same Spirit in our daily lives. We must evaluate our gifts to see what direction the Holy Spirit is leading us to participate in the profound mystery of the Church. Each of us are called to do our part.