

Host or designated reader/leader begins the Upper Room prayer hour by reading this message from Fr. David:

Message for November 2017

Dear Friends in Christ;

I think we are going to move into understanding the 7 sacraments next. It is important for every Catholic Christian to be able to understand, and from that understanding, to reasonably explain every sacrament to those who don't understand them. That is what I will have in mind for the next series of Upper Room meetings – to teach you and for you to learn from each other how to teach other souls about their value.

To Christ through Mary;

Fr. David

*Open with Sign of Cross and **Prayer to the Holy Spirit***

L: Come, O Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Your faithful, and enkindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth Your Spirit, O Lord, and they shall be created.

R: And You shall renew the face of the earth

L: Let us pray – God our Father, pour out the gifts of your Holy Spirit on the world. You sent the Spirit on Your Church to begin the teaching of the Gospel; now let the Spirit continue to work in the world through the hearts of all who believe. Through Christ our Lord.

R: Amen

L: You, O lord, will open my lips.

R: And my tongue shall announce Your praise.

L: Incline unto my aid, O God.

R: O Lord, make haste to help me.

L: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

R: As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be world without end. Amen

- 1) There are two major pieces that led to the early Jewish /Christian understanding of Baptism, one was the ritual baths outside the Temple in Jerusalem and the other was the Baptism of John the Baptist. A ritual bath was taken by most all before they entered into the Sanctuary or the sacred spaces of the Temple; most especially soldiers from war, grave sinners like tax collectors, adulterers, lapsed Jews and (although not a sin) women who still had their “time of the month” (blood defiles). As for John the Baptist’s baptism, which was done in light of the “Coming of the Lord” by the acknowledgement of personal sin and John’s water bath, this too broadened the understanding of the people of the New Covenant by connecting the people to the Christ.

Come up with 5 major reasons (or more) for bringing a child and or unbaptized person to the Sacrament of Baptism.

- 2) Read this:

Father, you give us grace through sacramental signs, which tell us of the wonders of your unseen power. In baptism we use your gift of water, which you have made a rich symbol of the grace you give us in this sacrament. At the very dawn of creation your Spirit breathed on the waters, making them the wellspring of all holiness. The waters of the great flood you made a sign of the waters of baptism, that make an end of sin and a new beginning of goodness.

Through the waters of the Red Sea you led Israel out of slavery, to be an image of God's holy people, set free from sin by baptism. In the waters of the Jordan your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Spirit. Your Son willed that water and blood should flow from his side as he hung upon the cross.

After his resurrection he told his disciples: "Go out and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." Father, look now with love upon your Church, and unseal for her the fountain of baptism. By the power of the Spirit give to the water of this font the grace of your Son. You created man in your own likeness: cleanse him from sin in a new birth to innocence by water and the Spirit.

(The celebrant touches the water with his right hand and continues)

We ask you, Father, with your Son to send the Holy Spirit upon the water of this font. May all who are buried with Christ in the death of baptism rise also with him to newness of life. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

This is the prayer of blessing over the Baptismal Waters. Concerning all the underlined sections discuss the notion of life and death in the context of the event named (both literally and spiritually) and how this event connects to baptism even today.

- 3) Each Luminous Mystery has a connection to Baptism. What is the connection? There may be more than one (discuss):
- Baptism of Jesus is the Jordan River
 - Manifestation of the Divinity of Christ at the Wedding Feast of Cana
 - Proclamation of the Kingdom of God
 - The Transfiguration of Jesus
 - The Institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper
- 4) Can those who have not been baptized be saved (go to Heaven)? If your answer is unclear look it up in the Catechism.
- 5) Why does the Catholic Church baptize infants? Many Churches do not (discuss).
- 6) Can you baptize? What would the context have to be? How would you do it? What is the form? If you validly baptized (say an infant) what would you do about the Baptismal Rite at Church? (Answer: You would have the priest or Deacon do a conditional baptism.)
- 7) Name some things about your baptism that you could use as points of meditation in your prayer life.

Prayer:

Read John's account of the Baptism of Jesus and pray the 1st decade of the Luminous Mysteries.

Next month's UPPER ROOM is on the Sacrament of Reconciliation