

Reflections

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Testimony of John the Baptist

The Gospel presents us with a beautiful testimony about Jesus from John the Baptist, and this testimony from the forerunner is very convenient because now Jesus ends his isolated life in Nazareth. He has lived there like any of his contemporaries, ignored by the world. Nothing draws attention. He is one more man like the many who now come forward to be baptized by John. It is impossible to recognize God in Him.

Therefore, the Baptist intervenes with a solemn testimony. In this way, he presents the Divine origin of Jesus to the world. And the Baptism of the Lord is, as we know, the preparation and introduction into his public life.

The triple testimony. What does John's testimony consist of? We can say it is a triple testimony:

1. He first presents **Jesus as the Lamb of God** who takes away all the sin of the world. With that he reveals his great mission: He is the true Pascal Lamb who will sacrifice himself for his people. He is the hoped for Messiah, the Savior of men who will reconcile them with God the Father.

2. **Jesus is He upon whom John saw the Spirit of God descend in the form of a dove.** Upon beginning his mission, the Divine Spirit fills him with his strength and his gifts. Therefore, from now on, Christ will manifest himself as a man filled with the Spirit to the highest, like the bearer of the Holy Spirit par excellence. In his power He will begin to preach the Good News, heal the sick and try to win over his people for the Kingdom of the Father. Through his entire being and acting, He will manifest the singular presence of the Spirit of God.

3. Ultimately, John assures that **Jesus is the Son of God** because upon baptizing Jesus, John heard the voice of the Father which said: *"This is my beloved Son, my favored Son."* And Christ is the favored Son of the Father, because of his attitude before the Father. All he says and does to fulfill his messianic mission, he does at the bidding of the Father, in obedience and love for Him.

He places himself unconditionally at the disposition of the Father's Will. Nothing can separate him from his way: He remains faithful until his death on the cross.

But, what does this triple testimony of the Forerunner, of John, mean for us? It seems to me that Christ wants to remind us that we also, on the day of our Baptism, became God's witnesses.

And He invites us anew to be his faithful witnesses, to give a **triple testimony of life.**

1. In Baptism, we all became brothers of Jesus, and, especially, **disciples of the Lord.** And as such, we must give permanently, witness to his love and mercy, to his peace, justice and truth in the midst of this world and especially before our brothers and sisters.

2. From Baptism and Confirmation, we are all **Bearers of the Holy Spirit.** My soul and my entire being are consecrated to the Spirit and inhabited by Him. *"Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?"* explains St. Paul. And if it is thus, we should give witness that He lives and acts in each one of us. Others should feel the presence of the Divine Spirit in each Christian.

3. In Baptism, we are also transformed into **children of God the Father.** With his death on the cross, Christ gave us the grace of being, like Him, authentic children. Fruitfulness and testimony of that spiritual childhood should be our childlike attitude, that is, our obedience, availability and love of children before the Heavenly Father.

Our life is a walking toward, a pilgrimage to the Father, to the heart of God. Hopefully, some day, we will all meet again in the House of the Father!

Questions for reflection

1. Do I know the date of my baptism?
2. As a baptized and confirmed person, how am I different from others?
3. Am I obedient to God's wishes?

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