

# DISCOVER

## the Joy of Christ



### Why Is Baptism Necessary?

What are the effects of receiving the Sacrament of Baptism and why is it so important? In order to understand the importance of Baptism, we need to go back to the beginning. God creates each person to be united with Him. When God created our first parents, Adam and Eve, they were united with Him in a relationship of love. God dwelled within the soul of Adam and Eve. This we call sanctifying grace. Sanctifying grace is friendship with God and a participation in His Divine Life. This was God's plan for all eternity and the purpose for which man and woman were created, to be united with God here on earth and to enter into the perfect unity of the Blessed Trinity in Heaven.

When Adam and Eve freely chose to disobey God, they separated themselves from Him. By their own choice, Adam and Eve, and in turn all their descendants, were no longer united with God. This is what we call the loss of sanctifying grace. Their relationship with God was severed. God the Father immediately promised to send His Son, Jesus, to re-unite us with the Blessed Trinity. This was necessary because there was nothing that Adam or Eve, or any human being since then, could do to restore what we lost through the problem of sin – our separation from God. It is important to note that God is always faithful, always loving, always merciful, and always desiring to be united with us.

During His public ministry on earth, Jesus established the Church upon Peter and the Apostles and instituted the seven Sacraments. Jesus made available these seven channels of grace through His Passion, Death, and Resurrection. It is through the Church that we receive the seven Sacraments.

The Sacraments are sacred signs instituted by Christ that restore our relationship with God. This relationship heals our human nature which is wounded by sin, thus reuniting us with the Persons of the Trinity. The seven

Sacraments are the means by which God has chosen to accomplish this restoration.

#### **Grace of Baptism**

The first of the Sacraments that Jesus instituted was Baptism. Through Baptism, we receive both the 1) forgiveness of sins and 2) God's life in our soul. These two principal effects accomplished by the grace of this Sacrament have several important aspects.

The forgiveness of sins includes the washing away of original sin inherited from Adam and Eve as well as the forgiveness of personal sin if the person being baptized is not a baby. The grace received through Baptism is a tremendous aid in the struggle against sin. This assistance against sin is necessary because Baptism does not erase suffering, illness, and death which came about through the Original Sin. Nor does Baptism erase our human inclination to sin.

The second principal effect is God's grace. We are now adopted children of God. Through Baptism, one truly becomes a member of the family of God, and belongs to Christ. In Baptism, a person receives faith, which is the power to believe the truths revealed by God about Himself; hope, which is the power to trust God, especially with things that seem difficult; charity, which is the power to love God above all things and our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God.

Let us be thankful for the gift of our Baptism. Let us cooperate with the grace that we received in Baptism by being committed to daily prayer and receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation often and the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist every Sunday so that our relationship with Christ will grow stronger and stronger.

