

“Magi Baptism” | Rev. Tim Frickenschmidt | January 10, 2021

Old Testament Reading: [Genesis 1:1-5](#)

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. 2 The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

3 And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. 4 And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

Reading from the Acts of the Apostles: [Acts 19:1-7](#)

And it happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the inland country and came to Ephesus. There he found some disciples. 2 And he said to them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” And they said, “No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.” 3 And he said, “Into what then were you baptized?” They said, “Into John’s baptism.” 4 And Paul said, “John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus.” 5 On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying. 7 There were about twelve men in all.

Gospel Readings:

[Matthew 2:1-12](#)

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, 2 saying, “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.” 3 When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; 4 and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. 5 They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:

6 “‘And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.’”

7 Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. 8 And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him.” 9 After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was.

Introduction

The baptized are people who have moved from darkness to light. Through what Jesus has done for us, we receive the Father’s gifts in our baptism. Like the magi, we walk in the light and are heading home by another way.

Background

1. **Who are the baptized?**

- The baptized begin as people shrouded in darkness.
- Genesis 1 provides a picture of us in the world: formless and void.
- The baptized are people who have moved into the light.
- The magi are in the light and always moving; Herod is in darkness and never moves.
- Sin makes us stuck like Herod. We want to be king, and we always take and never give.

2. **What do the baptized need?**

- We receive the same gifts Jesus did at his baptism: 1) the heavens open; 2) the Holy Spirit descends; and 3) the Father speaks and is pleased with us.
- We have God’s gifts not because of what we have done, but because of what Jesus has done. He was washed away on the cross for us.
- We should not be consumed by what consumes others, and we should live like this world is not our country.

Discuss

- Can you describe a time when your life seemed dark, formless, and void?
- Why was Herod troubled when the magi arrived? Does God ever trouble you?
- What is one way you have tried to be the ruler of your own life?
- How does observing the sacrament of baptism remind us of God’s gifts?

Conclusion/Application

Putting our faith in Christ, we give thanks for God’s gifts, recognize his lordship, and look forward to the new country to which we are traveling.

Prayer

Father, you are the one who brings light from darkness. Forgive us for thinking we can maintain order in our chaotic lives. Please help us put our faith in you and not in ourselves. Thank you for sending your son to be washed away for our salvation. Amen.

10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. 11 And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. 12 And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

[Mark 1:9-11](#)

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. 10 And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. 11 And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."