

# THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

The Feast of the Baptism of the Lord concludes the Christmas season and marks the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. For those of us recovering from lust addiction, this moment in Jesus' life carries deep spiritual meaning. In choosing to be baptized, Jesus models humility, surrender, and the beginning of a new path—one grounded in the will of the Father.

Lust addiction often leads us into isolation, secrecy, and spiritual dryness. We may try to meet our needs for love, connection, or relief through distorted means. But over time, lust becomes a poor substitute for the real intimacy we crave. We become stuck in cycles of shame, confusion, and hiddenness, wondering if we will ever be free.

Recovery reminds us that true healing begins when we stop trying to save ourselves and instead surrender our lives to God. This mirrors what we witness in this Sunday's gospel. When Jesus comes to John for baptism, John hesitates—"I need to be baptized by you, and yet you are coming to me?" But Jesus replies, "Allow it now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Jesus steps into the water not because He needs cleansing, but because He is embracing His mission to stand with us, to show us the way of redemption.

In our own recovery, we are called to step into the water too. Not with self-sufficiency or bravado, but with a quiet and humble willingness to be transformed. We bring our wounds, our addictions, our brokenness—

and God meets us right there. The same Spirit that descended upon Jesus at His baptism descends upon us. And in the stillness of surrender, we begin to hear the voice of the Father: "You are my beloved."

This voice is essential in lust recovery. Lust may have distorted our view of ourselves and others, reducing people to objects and feeding lies about our worth. But God speaks a better word. He does not define us by our past. He calls us into relationship. Into identity. Into truth.

In recovery, many of us discover that lust was a misplaced attempt to fill a deeper longing. As we surrender control and walk through the steps, God begins to meet those longings in ways that truly satisfy. He doesn't just remove the behavior—He reshapes the desires of our hearts. We learn to love again. To see clearly. To live honestly.

Our program teaches us that transformation doesn't happen overnight. Like baptism, it's both a beginning and an invitation. We must immerse ourselves fully—through daily surrender, meeting attendance, accountability, and honest sharing. The sacraments nourish our souls and guide our renewal. Friendship with others who seek purity keeps us grounded in community and grace.

Let this feast be a reminder that your story is not finished. Like the magi, like the newly baptized, you are being led home by another way. The road may not

always be easy, but it is filled with meaning, freedom, and God's presence—one day at a time.

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What does it mean for you to be called God's beloved, even in your struggles with lust?  
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- In what ways are you being invited to step more fully into the waters of recovery?  
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- How can you allow God to reshape your desires and heal the deeper needs beneath lust?  
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## MASS READINGS

**FIRST READING** Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM** Psalm 29:1-2, 3-4, 3, 9-10

**SECOND READING** Acts 10:34-38

**GOSPEL** Matthew 3:13-17