

Sunday Baptism of the Lord

Year C – “***FORGIVENESS and FIRE...***”

Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7, Acts 10:34-38, Matthew 3:15-16, 21-22

FORGIVENESS is the FOUNDATION of **Healing** –
HEALING is the FRAMEWORK for **Emanating Grace...**
and ***EMANATING GRACE*** is that which **Baptizes Believers with the HOLY SPIRIT and with FIRE!!!**

A **YOUNG MARRIED COUPLE** in their late 20’s (with a couple of toddlers) were celebrating their 7th wedding Anniversary when the mother of the ‘long-ago bride’ got a sense that they were going through some **TOUGH TIMES** in their marriage.

And so the following week, she invited her daughter out for lunch.

After having ordered their food, she looked into her daughter's eyes and said:

*"I have something **VERY IMPORTANT TO TELL YOU...** It's something that my mother once told me, and then she asked me to tell my own daughter when the **TIME came** – and the **RIGHT TIME** has come. It's the **THREE GUIDELINES to a Happy Marriage** –*

1. *Never **KEEP SCORE** in your marriage:* “Don't ever tell your husband: ‘I've been doing far more than you and it's just not fair.’ – Because the day you start **KEEPING SCORE** is **the day your marriage begins to die.**”
2. *Never be too busy for your children:* “Don't ever say to your kids ‘Can't you see **I'M BUSY?** Come back later.’ – cause the day you start being **TOO BUSY** for your kids is **the day that your communication with them begins to die.**
3. *Never miss a day of **PRAYING FOR YOUR FAMILY:*** “Don't let 24 hours go by without talking to God about your family.” – Because **THE DAY YOU STOP TALKING TO GOD ABOUT YOUR FAMILY** is the day you deprive each and every one of them of *the ‘Greatest Gift’ that a mother can give...*

As her daughter's eyes filled with tears, she said:

*“Mom, that’s the **BEST ADVICE** you could ever give me. But why? **WHY** did you wait seven years to tell me? Why didn’t you tell me this on **THE DAY I got married?**”*

It would have helped out SO MUCH over the years!”

*“Honey, **I WANTED TO TELL YOU** on the day that you got married. I wanted to tell you **with all my heart!!** But I knew it wasn’t **the RIGHT TIME.** I knew you weren’t ready then.*

*I had to **WAIT for the RIGHT TIME** — when you would **UNDERSTAND** what I’m talking about...”*

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Some 2000 years ago, our **Heavenly Father** saw firsthand that His most precious creatures, fashioned among CREATION – MEN and WOMEN MADE IN HIS OWN IMAGE and LIKENESS, were going through some **TOUGH TIMES** on earth due to the fallout of **ORIGINAL SIN** coupled with the **EVER-ACTIVE PRESENCE OF SATAN and the FALLEN ANGELS**.

And so when the **RIGHT TIME** came, when He knew that SOME would **UNDERSTAND** what He was talking about, he sent his Own Beloved Son by the POWER OF THE SPIRIT on earth in order to unleash the availability for human beings to discover what makes for a **Peace Filled, JOYFUL life experience on earth**.

And yet – even with that said – it was just a few hours ago when our Lord looked with love Peter said: ‘**Very truly I tell you, this very night, before the cock crows you will deny me three times...**’

"EVEN IF I HAVE TO DIE WITH YOU, I WILL NEVER DENY YOU!"

The **REAL BETRAYAL** happened at that very moment... For what transpired by the charcoal fire this night was simply the passage of the event in Historical Time. The real meaning behind Peter's three denials lies hidden in this one sentence: "**JUST AS he was saying this, the cock crowed, the Lord turned and looked at Peter...**" 2x

That **LOOK** – it was not a look of condemnation, nor was it a look of reproach – rather, it was A LOOK OF LOVING FORGIVENESS SET AFIRE with the Holy Spirit!

A look **so piercing with God's presence** that Peter did the only thing a human being can do in such a circumstance: "**HE WEPT BITTERLY...**"

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The Living Word, which is **SHARPER THAN ANY TWO-EDGED SWORD**, makes the following clear for us in **Ecclesiasticus** chapter 13 verses 16 and 17:

“Every creature mixes with ITS KIND, and **human beings stick to their own sort...**
How can Wolf and Lamb agree? Just so with Sinner and Devout...”

And so we all best take a good HARD look at ourselves in the mirror and SEE EXACTLY **where we're at along the Journey...** For as a Confessor, I have the privilege of **SEEING** where 100% of people are at when it comes to **LIVING LIVES** transformed by **FIRE and Spirit**.

We all start out at **level ONE** – we're all broken, wounded and crying out to God **for JUSTICE** – suffering from **INTERIOR Wounds and SCOURGINGS** inflicted upon us by others – either Privately or Publicly...

We **MUST all** humbly embrace the First Step that leads to a Peace Filled, Joyful Life: and that is the step of ‘**FORGIVENESS...**’ As exemplified by the Master in **THE LOOK** he cast upon Peter...

Our Lord has this to say to **ALL BELIEVERS** this day:

“When you pray the OUR FATHER during the Holy Mass, at that moment, **bring to mind those who have done you THE MOST HARM during your life and embrace them close to you**. Say to them from your heart: *‘In the name of Jesus, I forgive you and wish you Peace...’*”

If the person merits peace, he or she will receive it and GREATLY BENEFIT FROM IT – if that person is not capable of opening up to peace, then **THAT PEACE WILL RETURN TO YOUR HEART...**”

For to be **baptized INTO CHRIST** means we are to share in the same relationship that God the Father has with his Eternal Son – meaning, **JUST AS** our Lord exclaimed: "I have come down from heaven not to do my own will, but to do the will of him who sent me!" **SO** it is for all who BELIEVE in Him – for there is no other way to live out what it means to be a Christian.

But – **DO WE ‘UNDERSTAND’ THIS? Is this the RIGHT TIME for us to finally Understand...**”

While Hanging in AGONIZING PAIN suspended between Heaven and Earth after having had his body publicly scourged from head to toe, with his hands and his feet nailed fastened to a cross... It was from that point of suffering and agony that, **He cried out ONCE** as TIME PASSED that which became **BINDING FOR ALL TIME**:

“Father, **FORGIVE THEM**, for they know not what they do...”

Understand that **THIS IS the Perfection of God’s will for our lives**. “What do you mean Father? *What and where is the perfection of God's will to be found?*” – ‘The perfection of God's will for each one of us is found in the EXACT same place that it was found by His Eternal Son: *it’s found IN THE CHALICE AT MASS!!!’*

The Chalice at Mass contains THE PERFECTION OF GOD’S WILL for everyone that's ever been or will ever be Baptized with the Spirit and with FIRE in His name.

The **PERFECTION OF GOD'S WILL** is that **WE BE poured out in ‘SACRIFICIAL LOVE’** for the sake of the world...’ 2x

As Peter soon will be **crucified upside down out of love for Christ in Rome**...

THAT **IS** the perfection of the FATHER'S WILL for **ALL BELIEVERS!**

And that’s because:

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