

## **Singing Our Faith**

### **Solemnity of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist – June 24, 2018**

You're going to be tired of this melody soon. Yes, it's the same as "Father, We Thank You, Who Have Planted," which we've sung for the last several weeks. This week's text "When John Baptized By Jordan's River" pairs well with the Solemnity of John's birth. While the readings don't mention John's ministry, this hymn gives us a snapshot of what John was sent to do as the "forerunner" of Christ.

The first stanza conveys the "human spirit's ageless quest" of "seeking a new beginning, repentance, and an end of sinning." People had been longing for the Messiah – some thought it was John, and they sought these things in his baptism. Stanza two turns this thinking upside down as Jesus becomes the focus. It paraphrases Matthew 3:16-17...

*"After Jesus was baptized, he came up from the water and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove coming upon him. And a voice came from the heavens, saying, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.""*

The final stanza reminds us that Jesus was baptized by John as a part of his humanity – to share in our likeness. As he reveals later in the gospel, John's baptism with water was a precursor to the true baptism with the Holy Spirit. Moments like this in scripture remind us of the uniqueness of our relationship with God through the New

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Covenant. Through the New Covenant, humanity's intimate relationship with God was restored. God the Son enters into our body through the Eucharist. God the Holy Spirit becomes part of our being through baptism. Hence, our body is a "Temple of the Holy Spirit." These relationships unite all of us as the Body of Christ.

No other religion has this – Jesus the Way, the Truth, and the Life leading us to the Father, our creator. John was sent to proclaim the coming of the Messiah. Through our baptism, foreshadowed by John's baptism, we too are heralds of Christ in our world today. Let's allow this Solemnity to remind us of how we can be more on fire for Christ like John the Baptist was.

Stephen Eros

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### When John Baptized by Jordan's River



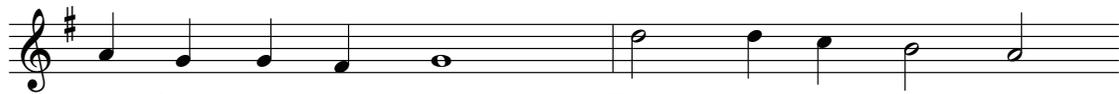
1. When John bap - tized by Jor - dan's riv - er  
2. There as the Lord, bap - tized and pray - ing,  
3. O Son of Man, our na - ture shar - ing,



In faith and hope the peo - ple came, That John and  
Rose from the stream, the sin - less one, A voice was  
In whose o - be - dience all are blest, Sav - ior, our



Jor - dan might de - liv - er Their trou - bled  
heard from heav - en say - ing, "This is my  
sins and sor - rows bear - ing, Hear us and



souls from sin and shame. They came to seek a  
own be - lov - ed Son." There as the Fa - ther's  
grant us this re - quest: Dai - ly to grow, by



new be - gin - ning, The hu - man spir - it's age - less  
word was spo - ken, Not in the pow'r of wind and  
grace de - fend - ed, Filled with the Spir - it from a -



quest, Re - pent - ance, and an end of  
flame, But of his love and peace the  
bove; In Christ bap - tized, be - loved, be -



sin - ning, Re - nounc - ing ev - 'ry wrong con - fessed.  
to - ken, Seen as a dove, the Spir - it came.  
friend - ed, Chil - dren of God in peace and love.