

**What is the most important day of your life?**

**Have you seriously considered this?**

**So many to choose from**

**Day you were born**

**Married**

**A father or mother**

**Ordained**

**Accepted at the college I desired?**

**So many milestones in our lives**

**But which was, or will be, the MOST important?**

**The day of our baptism**

**This is the day we are born for**

**We are created for one reason**

**God sends us into the world for one reason**

**To be with him forever**

**And that gate is opened on the day of our baptism**

**The day we are grafted onto Christ as priest, prophet and king**

**When we are chosen by God for a specific mission**

**This being chosen is also part of our Judean- Christian heritage**

**Isaiah speaks of one the Lord will send**

***My chosen one, with whom I am pleased***

***Upon whom I have sent my spirit***

**This is part of Isaiah's writings known as *The Servant Songs***

**One who will bring justice**

**Not harsh punishment**

***A bruised reed he will not break***

***A smoldering wick he will not smother***

**The mission of the servant is given by God**

**Not chosen by man**

**His servant will come to bring justice to the nations**

**Not only to rescue Israel**

**We see this universal aspect in our reading from Acts**

**Peter begins *'In truth I see'***

**At this time an observant Jew like Peter**

**Would have no dealings with a Gentile**

**But Peter now sees God shows no partiality**

**And Peter speaks to all those gathered in Cornelius' house**

**Peter was sent here**

**Directed by an angel of God**

**His mission was to fulfill the long-standing prophecy**

**The Messiah would be a light to all the nations**

**He taught them all Jesus did**

***Beginning with the baptism John preached***

***And how God anointed him with the Holy Spirit***

**Many things in Christianity existed before Christ walked the earth**

**But they were not the same after**

**Baptism existed before Christ**

**But it is not what we experience**

**Before Christ it was a symbol of repentance**

**Water has a long history as an instrument in salvation history**

**The flood of Noah**

**The parting of the Red Sea at the start of the Exodus**

**The crossing of the Jordan into the Promised Land**

**Again and again water being withheld**

**And the plain being turned into a wasteland**

**Or water flowing into a desert**

**And creating a land of blessing and abundance**

**John's baptism was one of repentance**

**Something Jesus did not need**

**But it is something we need to receive Him fully**

***I have baptized you with water***

***He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit***

**Jesus' incarnation, his becoming human, was not only to be like us**

**Ultimately, it was so he could step into our shoes**

**So he could take the place of sinners**

**So he could accomplish what John's baptism only symbolizes**

**Water washes us clean**

**But it cannot wash away sin**

**This only happens when sin itself dies**

**Jesus' baptism by John is his first identification with man's sin**

**It is also his first step to defeat it**

**And when he undergoes his passion and death**

**Sin itself is killed**

**And when he rose from the dead**

**Sin was left behind**

**Defeated**

**Jesus enters the water of the Jordan not to be sanctified**

**He enters it to sanctify**

**So baptism is no longer only a symbol, an outward sign**

**But it is an effective vehicle of the Holy Spirit**

**Bringing inner cleansing, rebirth and transformation**

**It is now a sacrament through which we are conformed to Christ**

**As priest, prophet and king**

**This is the office of all baptized Christians**

**Priests**

**One who prays for others, intercedes and offers sacrifices**

**Are we doing that?**

**Not as a ministerial priest**

**That is the ordained role**

**It grows out of our organic role as baptized people**

**Are we a people of prayer?**

**Do I pray for my children, my parents?**

**Do I pray for my students, my teachers?**

**For my spouse?**

**Speaking with someone today, this particularly came up**

**The duty of a husband is to get their wife into heaven**

**The duty of a wife is to get her husband into heaven**

**Something I tell those I am preparing for marriage**

**I don't judge who has the harder job**

**And we have to admit that at times there will be kicking and screaming along the way**

**But first and foremost, that is the duty of a spouse**

**Do I pray before meals?**

**At home, with the kids?**

**How about in public?**

**Do you know how powerful a simple sign of the cross is in public?**

**Are we participating fully in the Mass?**

**The highest prayer we have as Catholic Christians**

**A full, active participation is not doing something**

**It is having an understanding, an awareness of what is going on**

**And if I don't have a clue what is going on  
Or why we this or that  
How about studying it?  
Either together or by yourself, investigate and discover the  
richness of this prayer  
That is being a priest  
And we are all called to be a prophet  
Not Abraham or Isaiah or Noah  
But Bill and Sandy and Tom and Sue or whatever  
To speak God's Word  
Whether popular or not  
To be a prophet often means we will be persecuted  
Christ was crucified  
It is not a popularity contest  
So often we hear keep your religion to yourself  
But to be a prophet is not to be ashamed  
As St Anthony tells us  
*Preach always*  
*And when necessary use words*  
Do your kids know you are men and women of prayer?  
Sending them to Catholic school or CCD are important  
But they are not enough**

**They are not even the first step**

**We are called to live our faith**

**At home, at work, at school, always**

**This is being a prophet**

**And we are all called to be a king**

**To lead others to God**

**To help others properly order their lives**

**To give good counsel when asked**

**Directing the home to holiness**

**To offer ourselves in leadership and in service**

**Parish council, finance council, education commission**

**Lecturing, ushering, youth ministry**

**Helping beautify the churches or grounds**

**Decorating, music ministry**

**This is being a king**

**When we exercise our ministries**

**When we live our lives as priest, prophet and king**

**We are grafting our lives onto that of Christ**

***The Priest, The Prophet and The King***

**That is why baptism is the most important day of our life**

**We are baptized into the death of Christ**

**So we can live with him forever**

**We identify with him not as a miracle worker**

**Not as a healer**

**Not as a perfect human**

**But as our savior**

**So we are transformed into him**

**And share in his mission to transform the world**

**Living lives of priest, prophet and king**

**We are called, baptized and anointed**

**So one day we too might hear these words**

***My beloved, with you I am well pleased***