

We (will) gather today with two small babies, Precious and Regan. Their parents, family and friends (will) bring them in the midst of this faith community to be baptized. Throughout their lives we will take them by the hand and lead them on their spiritual path as they push out of her blankets and climb out of the crib, into the sand box, start school, begin work, and enter new relationships where they will encounter in life and explore the ultimate meaning of God and neighbor.

We (will) ask the parents, and this community, are you willing to teach them how to love God and neighbor? Are you ready? We say yes, but deep in our hearts we know we are still learning ourselves how to love God and love the person sitting next to me. Look at that person next you and ask yourself if you are ready and willing to love them day in and day out? Some days are better than others in loving God and neighbor.

Where will get the energy to totally love God and neighbor?

How do we release the energy of the Spirit in these children being baptized today?

As we gather today, we may ask the question, “Where did Jesus receive the energy of the Spirit, the energy to love God with his whole

being and love his neighbor? The Spirit seems to have been released in his on the day of his baptism.

As we celebrate the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, We read in a passage from the gospel of Luke in chapter 2 about Jesus' baptism which gives us an insight.

Two points in the passage are clear:

- First, Jesus hears the words which every human heart yearns to hear: "You are my beloved one; on you my favor rests." Once we know that we are the beloved one of God, everything changes! And scripture says that something happened to Jesus on the day of his baptism. Once he knew he was loved, he realized the Spirit of the Lord was upon him. He knew that he was called to bring good news to the poor, release of prisoner, a year of favor from the Lord.**
- The second thing to note in Luke's gospel is that the Spirit came upon Jesus NOT at moment of his baptism but AFTER his baptism when he was at prayer when he was on the side of the Jordan. (Quote the scriptures)**

In Luke's gospel, prayer is central. Jesus goes ten times in Luke's gospel to pray. He knows he gets the spiritual energy to continue the

journey through knowing that he is the beloved Son. And he comes to know how to love neighbor through prayer.

I would like to suggest that today, as we prepare to baptize two babes in the waters of baptism, little Regan and little Precious, they will only come know the unconditional love of God by the witness of their families and this faith community IF we are a people who know God through prayer. We can give them the finest clothes, best education, a safe neighborhood to live in. But ultimately what they most need from us is to know that they are loved unconditionally by God.

Story of BMO and what they ultimately want from me.

- **Not a job**
- **Not a loan**
- **Not a learning about God and life**
- **They are looking for two things from us:**
 - **That we be people of Compassion: ready to suffer with others**
 - **To be led in prayer; to unite their life with the Lord.**
Surrender to God.

Parents, that is what your children ultimately will want from you: being people of compassion and being someone who can show them how to form a relationship with God.

- **We can only learn to be ultimate compassionate from the one who gave his life for us.**
- **We can only teach our children about God if we have a relationship with God through prayer.**

Prayer is essential for households if they are to give their children what is most needed in life.

Bud Ozar: wise man. Working with couples:

- **Not communication**
- **Not finances**
- **Teach them how to pray so that they can learn once again that they can learn over and over again that they are the beloved of God. From the knowledge of that energy, they can share it with their children and world.**