

Bulletin Information: Baptism of Jesus – Year B

First Reading: **Mark 1:4-11**

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to John, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. In the course of his preaching, John said, "One more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie his sandal straps. I have baptized you with water; but the One to come will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. Immediately upon coming out of the water, Jesus saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. Then a voice came from the heavens: "You are the Beloved, my Own; with you I am well pleased."

Second Reading: **From "A River Far Away and Long Ago" by Mary
Oliver in Red Bird**

The river
 of my childhood,
 that tumbled
 down a passage of rocks

and cut-work ferns,
 came here and there
 to the swirl
 and slowdown

of a pool
 and I saw myself —
 oh, clearly —
 as I knelt at one —

then I saw myself
 as if carried away,
 as the river moved on.
 Where have I gone?

Since then
 I have looked and looked
 for myself,
 not sure

who I am, or where,
or, more importantly, why.
It's okay —
I have a wonderful life.

Still, I ponder
where that other is —
where I landed,
what I thought, what I did,

what small or even maybe meaningful deeds
I might have accomplished
somewhere
among strangers,

coming to them
as only a river can —
touching every life it meets —
that endlessly kind, that enduring.

Reflection: ***“Splish, Splash”***

Rev. Dr. Kharma Amos