

Did I get everyone wet? The Sprinkling Rite is meant to remind us that we are baptized sons and daughters of God because of the water poured on us at our baptism. That's why we have the little holy water bowl at the church doors, to dip our hand, bless ourselves and remind ourselves that we are beloved sons and daughters. In the new church, we will pass a large Baptismal Pool near the door; we'll dip our hands in that large amount of water.

As you may recall, in November a group of parishioners made a pilgrimage to Fatima in Portugal, and also to Lourdes France. Last year was the 150 anniversary of the Virgin Mary's appearance to 14 year old Bernadette Soubirous.

One of the many highlights of the pilgrimage was seeing the stone baptismal font where the two day old Bernadette was baptized on the 9th of January, 1844. (We all know remember our birthday, but does anyone remember the day they were baptized?) Exactly 14 years after the parish priest poured water on infant Bernadette in that font, the Virgin Mary appeared to her at the grotto. She is now St. Bernadette, our patroness--and in my opinion, one of the reasons we are able at last to build a new church. That famous baptismal font at St. Pierre parish church looks like it is still being used today--lucky babies, lucky adults.

So: where has our baptism led us? Has it made a difference in the direction of our lives? Consider this: Jesus was God, but he didn't do anything for 35 years except build tables and chairs! Jesus

didn't do anything until he was baptized by John in the Jordan River! And Jesus came up from the baptismal water and transformed the world.

Listen to what St. Paul says of Jesus, "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power,"---and then what? And then "he went about doing good." "Jesus went about doing good."

We don't have to do great things. We don't have to change the world. We can't. Baptism is a vocation to love: "you are my beloved son; you are my beloved daughter. Now, go love other people as best you can."

Couple of months ago, I come out of Kroger's. The battery is dead--really dead. It's 10:00 pm. Oh, man!! I think of a parishioner who knows a things or two about cars. Should I call this late? What would he want me to do? So I called. He's watching a game, jumps up, brings a meter, meets me--takes me home. Next day, we put a new battery in. "Go about doing good!"

When does the Virgin Mary appear to St. Bernadette? When she is out on a chilly February day gathering firewood for the family.

A bunch of parishioners give up their entire Sunday to go down to Paul Brown Stadium to raise funds for the parish.

God, who is love, is within a baptized person. We let God out. Our life is to give God flesh. So, each Sunday, when we come to the water--as the Prophet Isaiah wrote--we remember our mission: to go about doing good. Can you think of any better way to spend your life?

