



The Holy See

FEAST OF THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

CELEBRATION OF HOLY MASS

AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM TO NEW-BORN BABIES

HOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS

Sistine Chapel

Sunday, 8 January 2017

[Multimedia]

Dear parents,

You have asked for faith for your children, the faith that will be bestowed in Baptism. Faith: this means a life of faith, because faith is lived; walking on the path of faith and giving testimony of faith. Faith is not reciting the “Creed” on Sunday, when we go to Mass; it is not only this. Faith is believing what is the Truth: God the Father who sent his Son and the Spirit that enlivens us. But faith is also entrusting oneself to God, and this you must teach them, with your example, with your life. And, faith is light: in the ceremony of Baptism you will be given a lighted candle, as in the early days of the Church. For this reason Baptism, in those days, was called ‘illumination’ because faith illuminates the heart; it shows things in a different light. You have asked for faith: the Church gives faith to your children with Baptism, and you have the task of making it grow, safeguarding it, so that it may become testimony for all others. This is the meaning of this ceremony. I would like to tell you only this: safeguard the faith; make it grow, so it may be testimony for others.

Then ... the concert has begun! [babies cry]. It is because the babies are in a place they don’t know; they have gotten up earlier than usual. One starts, gives the note and then the others “mimic”.... Some cry simply because the other has cried.... Do you know that Jesus did the same? I like thinking that Jesus’ first sermon in the stable was a cry, the first.... Then, since the ceremony is rather long, some cry out of hunger. If this is the case, you mothers, feel free to nurse them, without worry, completely as usual. As Our Lady nursed Jesus....

Don’t forget: you have asked for faith; it is your task to safeguard the faith, make it grow, so it may

be testimony for all of us, for all of us: even for us clergymen, priests, bishops, everyone. Thank you.