



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, 7 January 2018

[Multimedia]

Dear Parents,

You have brought your children for Baptism, and this is the first step in that task that you have, the task of transmitting the faith.

But we need the Holy Spirit to transmit the faith; we cannot do it alone. Being able to transmit the faith, the opportunity to transmit it, is a grace of the Holy Spirit; and this is why you have brought your children here: so that they may receive the Holy Spirit, receive the Trinity — the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit — who will dwell in their hearts.

I would like to tell you only one thing, which pertains to you: transmission of the faith can only be done “in dialect”, in the dialect of daddy and mommy, of grandpa and grandma. Then the catechists will come to develop this first transmission, with ideas, with explanations.... But do not forget this: it is done “in dialect”, and if the dialect is missing, if at home that language of love is not spoken between the parents, then the transmission is not very easy; it cannot be done. Do not forget. Your task is to transmit the faith, but to do so with the dialect of love of your home, of your family.

They too [children] have their own “dialect”, which does us good to hear! Now they are all quiet, but suffice it that one give the tone and then the orchestra follows! The dialect of children! And Jesus advises us to be like them, to speak like them. We must not forget this language of children,

who speak how they are able, but it is the language that is so pleasing to Jesus. And, in your prayers, be simple like them. Tell Jesus what comes into your heart, as they do. Today they will say it with cries, yes, as babies do. The parents' dialect which is love for transmitting the faith, and the childrens' dialect which must be welcomed by parents in order to grow in faith.

Now we will continue the ceremony; and if they begin to perform a concert it is because they are not comfortable, or are too hot, or do not feel at ease, or are hungry.... If they are hungry, nurse them, without worry; feed them, because this too is a language of love.