



The Holy See

JOHN PAUL II

ANGELUS

Feast of the Baptism of the Lord
Sunday, 11 January 2004

1. Today we are celebrating the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. The Gospels say that Jesus went to John the Baptist by the Jordan River, desiring to receive from him the baptism of repentance. But immediately afterwards, while Jesus was praying, "the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form, as a dove, and a voice came from Heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased" (Lk 3: 21).

It is the first public manifestation of Jesus' *messianic identity* after the adoration of the Magi. This is why the liturgy brings the Baptism of the Lord closer to the Epiphany with a leap in time of about 30 years: today we see the Child whom the Magi adored as a messianic King consecrated by the Father in the Holy Spirit.

2. The *messianic "style"* of Jesus is already clearly outlined in his baptism in the Jordan: He comes as the "Lamb of God" to take upon himself and take away the sins of the world (cf. Jn 1: 29, 36). As such, John the Baptist points him out to the disciples (cf. Jn 1: 36). We too, after celebrating at Christmas the great event of the Incarnation, are asked to keep our gaze fixed on *Jesus, the human face of God and the divine face of man*.

3. Mary Most Holy is a teacher of contemplation beyond compare. If, humanly, she had to suffer at seeing Jesus leave Nazareth, from *his manifestation* she received new light and strength for her *pilgrimage of faith*. The Baptism of Christ is the first *mystery of light* for Mary and for the whole Church. May it enlighten all Christians on their way!

After the prayer of the Angelus, the Pope said:

I greet all the pilgrims present, especially the faithful who have come from the Dioceses of Castellaneta and of Oria.

I wish you all a good Sunday!

To the Polish-speaking pilgrims:

I greet the pilgrims who have come from Poland: the folklore group, Pilsko from Zywiec, the persons who have come on their own and those who have joined us by radio and television. Happy New Year!

To the Ukrainian-speaking pilgrims:

Christ is born! I greet the Ukrainian-speaking pilgrims and all those present in St Peter's Square. I warmly bless you in this New Year. Christ is born!

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