

**A. Introduction - what are we to be / what are we to do?**

**two themes on this feast of the Baptism of the Lord: Identity / Mission!**

- 1. Five week from today, on Feb. 13, over forty of our high school students will be confirmed ... they will renew their baptismal promises, be anointed with the gift the Spirit, and sent forth to be disciples of the Lord**

- what happened in the Gospel today, will happen to them**
- the Spirit of the Lord will come upon them as it did upon Jesus at the Jordan**
- two things are of great importance**
  - a sense of identity: you are my beloved Son / Daughter**
  - a sense of mission: Jesus began his public ministry**
- As Christian: we have an identity: God's people ... who are we? / whose are we?**
- As Christian we are sent forth on mission:**
  - to proclaim the good news of God's love and mercy**
  - to do good ... widen the skirts of goodness ... ACTS: Jesus went about doing good**
  - to care deeply for one another / for others**
  - Confirmation class: deepen their baptism – their sense of identity/mission**

- 2. Thursday night: program introducing Catholics Come Home**

- Diocesan wide initiative ... to invite inactive and alienated Catholics to return**
- series of TV commercials to do the invitation**
- it's all about evangelization ... part of identity and mission**
- we are evangelists ... we are sent to welcome others to join us**
- how**
  - witness: by living the Gospel and the commandments**
  - personal contact: inviting a relative / neighbor / co-worker to join us**
  - sacraments: celebrating well**
  - mass media – as a Diocese / Church**

- 3. Another aspect of our identity / mission**

- cf. our Catholic Social Teaching ... 7 principles**
- #5 preferential options for the poor / vulnerable**
- Isaiah: two images: bruised reed / smoldering wick**
- to know how deeply so many people suffer ... bring compassion to them**

**C. Eucharist: at the table / at the altar, Jesus comes to us once again to tell us that we are God's beloved ... to strengthen us to go forth on mission.**