

BAPTISM is COVENANT

R.C.I.A

Deacon Collins

What is handed to the neophyte at Baptism is the Holy Spirit; the spirit of truth in the Baptismal profession of faith. If we do not understand Baptismal faith then we bear false witness to the faith and to the Holy Spirit by our own disbelief or casualness to our faith conviction. It is easy to say YES when it is required without the sincerity needed, for today many rarely seem to value their word.

It is not sufficient to just reject Satan and his evil works. Our yes must also be witness to the positive love of God that is needed to live in the covenant to which we are attesting. There seems to be a presumption that I am required to say YES in the Church, but it doesn't mean I must abide by my word when I'm in the outside world. After all, God is all forgiving. [?] This is true disbelief! We have not discovered God or our relationship with Him, or the covenant into which we commit ourselves as witnesses.

When we see baptism only as a ritual to be performed, which is not an end in itself, we are defeated before we even start, for there is no conviction of faith. Everything just becomes verbal babble. What is needed for the hope of salvation is to be covenant people. There is no salvation outside the covenant. We enter the covenant in one of three ways; water and the Holy Spirit, desire and the Holy Spirit or blood and the Holy Spirit. Too often we overlook the content for the methodology. Faith is only passed on by believers whose faith is alive, not dead.

It is not enough to say God lives in my heart therefore I don't need to express or develop a relationship with God in the way I live, my actions, my integrity, or my love. Neither words, nor promises nor explanations are capable of arousing faith. Faith can only spring from the sincere heart and the Holy Spirit. Today the Holy Spirit is the driving force that keeps the faithful living according to His message of salvation. The Holy Spirit is conferred upon each believer at baptism as it was on Jesus at His baptism. [Mat: 3: 11] Baptism is spirit in one body. The Spirit is the principal of love and love is the principal of salvation. We must be lovers of God, neighbor and self, to put oneself as a servant to others. Baptism helps us to carry our crosses in this life by the strength of the Holy Spirit so that we may develop a spirit of empathy for what Jesus suffered for us.