

The Baptism of the Lord

January 11, 2009

QUEEN OF PEACE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY
GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA
Rev. Jeff McGowan

1st Reading: Isaiah 55:1-11

All you who are thirsty, come to the water!

Psalm 12

You will draw water joyfully from the springs of salvation.

2nd Reading: 1 John 5:1-9

Everyone who loves the Father loves also the one begotten by him.

Gospel: Mark 1:7-11

"You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

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In the fourth game of this college football season, the University of Florida lost to the University of Mississippi by 1 point. After the game was lost, a chest fallen quarterback made a statement and a promise. He said, "To the fans of the Gator Nation, I'm sorry, I'm extremely sorry. But I promise one thing: A lot of good will comes from this. You will never see a player in the entire country; play as hard as I will play the rest of this season. And you will never see a team play harder than we will the rest of the season." It may have been the mere emotions of the moment, except that he and his team lived up to the promise. The Gators won the next ten games and are the National Champions. They have the crystal trophy to prove it to future generations.

Parents, you are presenting your children for Baptism today. In doing so you are making a promise. You are promising to bring them up in the practice of their faith. There is no expectation that you will be perfect any more than the Gators were perfect in the victories we celebrate. It does mean that when there's a reason to be sorry, you will be sincere. It does mean that when you promise to do better, you will do better. It does mean that for your sake and your children, and frankly all the generations of your family to come, you will play harder to win the greatest of all trophies, the pearl of great price. It means that you are as good as the promise you make today.

Percy Harvin played a phenomenal game with an injured ankle, and said, "I just kept pushing myself. It was all for my teammates. I love this team. We love each other." Parents, you have made the Catholic Church your team. This team will stand behind you. We are relying on you to love your teammates. To push yourself when it's necessary, to give your very best to the most consequential of games, the life of your children.

This is not just some insurance salesman trying to push you to buy; this is the Christ of God offering incredible opportunity, the chance of a lifetime, "I am the light of the world; I have come to bring you life, life in abundance." Say "yes!" to him and live, practice your faith so that your relationship with Jesus Christ informs every decision, every other relationship and life experience and feel the absolute confidence that goes out and wins championships. The championship you win will be ever lasting good news!