

## Baptized into Death (13th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A)

### Romans 6:3-4, 8-11—Baptized into the Death of Christ

<sup>3</sup> Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? <sup>4</sup> We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.... <sup>8</sup> But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. <sup>9</sup> For we know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. <sup>10</sup> The death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. <sup>11</sup> So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. (Romans 6:3-4, 8-11)

#### 1. Baptism: “baptize” or “immerse” in water (Greek *baptizō*) (6:3)

Now when the Pharisees gathered together to him, with some of the scribes, who had come from Jerusalem, they saw that some of his disciples ate with hands defiled, that is, unwashed. (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they wash their hands, observing the tradition of the elders; and *when they come from the market place, they do not eat unless they purify themselves* (literally, “baptize,” Greek *baptizō*)... (Mark 7:1-4)

#### 2. Burial: mystery of *death* and *resurrection*:

<i>Life of Christ</i>		<i>Baptism into Christ</i>
Burial (in tomb)	=	Immersion (in water)
Resurrection (from grave)	=	Emergence (from water)
No Longer Under Dominion	=	Dead to Sin, Alive to God

### The Living Tradition

Thomas Aquinas: *By baptism, men are buried with Christ, i.e., conformed to his burial. For just as a buried man is put under the earth, so one being baptized is submerged under water.* Hence, there are three immersions in baptism not only to indicate belief in the Trinity but also to represent the three days of Christ’s burial. And just as the three days of burial were one burial, so the triple immersion constitutes one baptism. That is also why solemn baptism is celebrated in the Church on Holy Saturday, when the burial of Christ is commemorated... (Aquinas, *Commentary on Romans* no. 474; trans. F. Larcher, O.P.)

## Questions for Discussion and Reflection (13<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A)

1. How did you think of the power of baptism *before* studying Romans 6? How is Paul's explanation of baptism different from common explanations today?

---

---

---

2. What is the link between Christian baptism and Christ's resurrection?

---

---

---

### For Further Reading

1. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans* (trans. F. R. Larcher, O.P.; eds. J. Mortensen and E. Alarcón; Lander, WY: Aquinas Institute, 2012).
2. John Chrysostom, *Homilies on the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistle to the Romans*, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 11 (ed. Philip Schaff; repr.; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1994).