

Matthew 3:13-17
St Mark's – January 8, 2023
The Baptism of Jesus
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Jesus must increase

We've been reading about John the Baptist as we've made our way through Advent and Christmas and then into this ordinary time after The Epiphany.

John has been a primary character, but today he steps back and lessens in prominence as we read about the baptism of Jesus.

It is the Father who Jesus and possibly others present hear from heaven say, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased." It is The Father who leaves them awe struck. It's easy for me to imagine being awestruck right along with them.

John's stature pales in comparison to what they all went through that day.

This lessening of John's stature reminds me of words he himself uttered when speaking to his own disciples when they asked him questions about Jesus. In the third chapter of the Gospel of John (John 3:29-30) John the Baptist is quoted as saying that his joy is complete.

He has made the way for the Messiah. He has done what he was called to do. He has done what was prophesized long before.

Then John's tells his disciples that Jesus must increase, but that he must decrease.

John recognizes and affirms that it is Jesus who must increase. He must increase in importance, in the world, and in each of us.

John knows that it is Jesus that they will now and worship. That Jesus is now their teacher. John recognized that his own importance must decrease so that there would be room for Jesus to increase. So that Jesus could increase in him. So that Jesus could increase in all of them.

Our-selves, the selves we are today, must decrease and we too are to invite and welcome Jesus into our very beings. To make room for Jesus to increase in us.

We are called each day to be more like Jesus than we were the day before.

May each one of us become less our-selves and more like Jesus. Filled with the Holy Spirit. Filled with love.

May our Father in Heaven be well-pleased with each of us.