

# CORPUS CHRISTI CATHOLIC CHURCH

September

9

2018

*Did not God  
choose those who  
are poor in the world  
to be rich in faith  
and heirs of the  
kingdom that he  
promised to those  
who love him?*

*James 2:5*

**3550 East Knox Road  
Phoenix, Arizona 85044**

**Parish Office: 480-893-8770**

**Catholic Education Office:  
480-893-1160**

**Fax: 480-893-3291**

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## TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

[www.corpuschristiphx.org](http://www.corpuschristiphx.org) • [www.formed.org](http://www.formed.org) Parish Code: VD6QM2

Mission Statement: *Corpus Christi Catholic Church strives to be a welcoming community proclaiming the love of God and fostering a life-long personal relationship with Jesus Christ and His Church through Scripture, Sacraments, and service.*

**Parish Office Hours**

**Monday-Thursday:** 9:00 AM-5:00 PM  
(CLOSED Mon.-Thurs. from 11:30 AM-1:00 PM)  
**Friday:** 9:00 AM—11:30 AM  
**Saturday:** Office Closed  
**Sunday:** Following 8:30 am & 10:30 am Masses

**Catholic Education Office Hours**

**Monday:** 9:00 AM– 4:00 PM  
**Tuesday:** 9:00 AM– 7:30 PM  
**Wednesday:** 9:00 AM– 5:00 PM  
**Thursday:** 9:00 AM– 4:00 PM  
**Friday-Sunday:** Office Closed

**Mass Schedule**

**Saturday Vigil:** 4:00 PM (traditional)  
**Sunday:** 7:00 AM (without music)  
8:30 AM (contemporary)  
10:30 AM (contemporary)  
5:00 PM (contemporary)  
**Daily Mass:** 8:15 AM (Monday—Saturday)  
6:00 PM (Tuesday)  
6:30 AM (Friday)

**Confessions:**

**Tuesday:** 5:00-5:45 PM  
**Thursday:** 7:00 PM  
**Saturday:** 2:30-3:30 PM

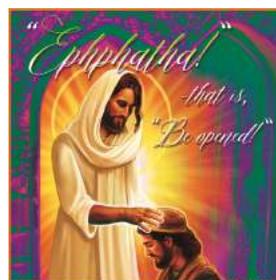
**Devotions**

**Rosary:** 30 minutes before daily Masses  
**Litany Devotions:** following daily Masses  
**Divine Mercy in Cry Room:** following daily Masses

**Adoration**

**Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel** — Enter through the gate from the 36<sup>th</sup> Street parking lot to the Prayer Garden. Follow the path to the last door. **Our Adoration Ministry needs two committed Adorers for each hour.** Below is the list of hours with the greatest need. **Hours in red have no one committed.** If you would like to commit to a weekly Holy Hour, please contact Kathleen Foley at the Parish Office.

**Sun:** 7 pm, 10 pm  
**Mon:** Midnight, 6 am, 8 am, 3 pm, 10 pm  
**Tues:** 3 am, 10 pm  
**Thurs:** 1 am, 9 am  
**Sat:** 8 am, 2 pm, 4 pm, 7 pm, 10 pm



**Clergy and Staff Members**

**Rev. Chad King, Pastor**  
[pastor@corpuschristiphx.org](mailto:pastor@corpuschristiphx.org)  
**Rev. Reynaldo Clutario, Associate Pastor**  
[associate@corpuschristiphx.org](mailto:associate@corpuschristiphx.org)  
**Rev. Albert Francis Hoorman, Pastor Emeritus**  
**Rev. L.A. Sigman, Founding Pastor**  
**Deacon Chris Kellogg**  
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**Deacon Dennis Lambert**  
[dennislambertphx@gmail.com](mailto:dennislambertphx@gmail.com)  
**Retired Deacon Al Gaudio**  
**Retired Deacon Phil Simeone**  
**Steve Mandarino, Parish Manager**  
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[pastoralcouncil@corpuschristiphx.org](mailto:pastoralcouncil@corpuschristiphx.org)  
**Peter Rady-Pentek, President of the Finance Council**

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## Feast Days & Mass Intentions

Mass Intentions are limited to **five requests per year.**



### Monday, September 10

8:15 am † Ernest Loehr

### Tuesday, September 11

8:15 am † Al Gentry

6:00 pm † Kelly Rees

### Wednesday, September 12,

*The Most Holy Name of Mary*

8:15 am William Hayes (birthday)

### Thursday, September 13, *St. John Chrysostom*

8:15 am † Rosemary Vlasak

### Friday, September 14, *The Exaltation of the Cross*

6:30 am † Bob Elwood

8:15 am Marie Chriselle Gilbert

### Saturday, September 15, *Our Lady of Sorrows*

8:15 am Mary Beke

4:00 pm Jeff Tormey

### Sunday, September 16

7:00 am † Salvatore Cioffi

8:30 am Parishioners

10:30 am † Brenda Keller

5:00 pm † Maria Raquel

## Parish Contributions

**Due to the Labor Day holiday, contribution figures from last week were unavailable at the printing deadline. The figures will be published in next week's bulletin.**

### *The Legion of Mary*

Our Blessed Mother Mary is calling parishioners to join this beautiful ministry. Members spend time during the week visiting people in homes, hospitals, hospices, and doing street evangelization. The purpose is to share the love of God with others and bring them closer to her Divine Son by apostolic works. Both active and auxiliary memberships are available.



Active members meet on **Tuesday** evenings (after Mass) from **6:45-8:00 PM** in the Infant of Prague Room in the church. We begin each meeting by praying the Rosary. Come and experience the JOY of helping others to know, love, and serve Jesus through Mary. For more information, please contact Ann Marie at 480-688-2096.

## Can You Help?

**A woman recovering from ovarian cancer is in need of a car in order to get to her medical appointments and her new job.**

**If you have a car that you would be willing to donate or sell at a very low cost, please contact Dcn. Dennis at 480-304-2135 or**

**dennislambertphx@gmail.com.**

**It doesn't need to be pretty!**

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or visit us online at [flocknote.com/corpuschristicc](http://flocknote.com/corpuschristicc)

Sign-up for electronic newsletters, parish event & holy day reminders, emergency notifications, specific ministry communications, and funeral notices.

You can also "Like" us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/corpuschristiphoenix>



## Baptism and the Fathers of the Church (Part 2 of 2)

By Kenneth Hensley, Online Resource & Pastoral Care Coordinator, The Coming Home Network, [www.chnetwork.org](http://www.chnetwork.org)  
August 2018 CHNewsletter

In Part 1, I described how I came to see that the unanimous testimony of the early Church thoroughly supported a Catholic and sacramental view of Baptism. But what about sacred Scripture?

In his *Emergence of the Catholic Tradition*, the great Church historian Jaroslav Pelikan summarizes the early Church's view of what occurs in Baptism. The early Church believed, Pelikan explains, that Baptism effects "the remission of sins, deliverance from death, regeneration, and the bestowal of the Holy Spirit."

Being a Baptist minister at the time who, along with Baptists everywhere, held to a purely symbolic view of Baptism, this realization rattled my theological bones. I immediately turned to the New Testament. I wanted to read it again in the light of what I had seen in the early Church Fathers, to read what it had to say about Baptism as though for the first time. I wanted to see if, by viewing the pertinent passages through the lens of Church Tradition, I might not see something I missed before.

### Water and Spirit in John's Gospel

I began with John 3:3-5, a passage the early Fathers insisted was about Baptism and that Baptists insisted was about anything but Baptism. "I tell you the truth," Jesus said to Nicodemus, "unless a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God ... unless a man is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." Was Jesus talking about Baptism in this passage?

Baptist theologians generally dismissed this passage by saying that Jesus is simply contrasting natural birth with spiritual rebirth, saying we must be born naturally (born of water) and then born again spiritually (born of Spirit). There's nothing here about Baptism. Catholic writers encouraged me to examine the context

of Jesus' words within the Gospel of John, and when I did it seemed nearly impossible to imagine Jesus *wasn't* talking about Baptism when He spoke of the need to be "born of water and the Spirit."

To begin, only 40 or so verses prior to this, in chapter one of John, we find described the baptism of Jesus, during which the Spirit descended and remained on Him (John 1:32-34). In the parallel accounts in Matthew, Mark, and Luke we learn that at the same time a voice from heaven was heard: "This is my beloved Son."

Interesting. In Our Lord's baptism the same three ideas are present that we find in John 3:35. There is water. There is Spirit. There is this idea of being declared a son of God (born again?).

Moving forward into the second chapter of John, we find Jesus performing a miracle in which He transforms the water in six vessels used for Jewish purification rites into wine. In Hebrews 9:9-10 these ceremonial washings are referred to as "baptisms." Again, interesting.

So, the theme of Baptism appears in John 1. It appears in John 2. Finally, immediately following Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus in John 3, what do we find? John 3:22 tells us, "After this Jesus and his disciples went out into the Judean countryside, where he spent some time with them, and *baptized*." It turns out that this is the only place in all four Gospels where Jesus is described as baptizing.

In other words, John 3:3-5 is bracketed on *all sides* by stories about Baptism. This is its literary context within John's Gospel.

In the light of this—and especially considering Jesus' own baptism where the themes of water, Spirit, and divine Sonship appear together as they do in John 3:3-5—is it really possible, I thought, to not see that Jesus was making reference to Baptism when He

said that a man must be “born of water and the Spirit”?

### **Water and Spirit throughout Scripture**

But this was just the beginning. I was encouraged to see that the themes of “water” and “Spirit” and “new life” appear together repeatedly throughout Scripture.

For instance, what do we find in the very story of Creation but the Spirit of God hovering over the face of the waters to bring forth life (Genesis 1:2). Water. Spirit. New life.

Speaking of this passage, St. Theophilus of Antioch, writing around AD 181, related it immediately to Baptism:

Moreover, those things which were created from the waters were blessed by God so that this might also be a sign that men would at a future time receive repentance and remission of sins through water and the bath of regeneration.

In the story of Noah, we again find these themes occurring together. For a second time waters cover the face of the earth, and for a second time, God sends His Spirit to cause the waters to recede and new life to appear. “And God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided” (Genesis 8:2). The Hebrew word translated here as “wind” is the same word translated “spirit” in Genesis 1:2.

In 1 Peter 3:20, St. Peter likens the Christian’s passing through the waters of Baptism to Noah and his family passing through the waters of the flood. Water, Spirit, and new life.

In the story of the crossing of the Red Sea, we find these same themes appearing together once again. The Israelites have left Egypt and become trapped between the Red Sea and the Egyptian armies. Moses stretches forth his staff and suddenly a “wind” comes from God (same Hebrew word) and blows across the waters, dividing them so that the children of Israel can pass through on dry land.

In 1 Corinthians 10:2 St. Paul tells us this was the Israelites’ “baptism” into Moses. Through the waters, separated by the Spirit of God, the Israelites left behind their life as slaves and embarked on their new life as free children of God. Water, Spirit, and new life.

In 2 Kings 5, Naaman the Syrian is instructed to dip himself in the Jordan River seven times in order to be cleansed of his leprosy. He complains that Elijah hasn’t given him something more impressive to do but finally humbles himself to perform this simple act of faith and is healed. God uses this washing with water as the occasion for a miraculous cleansing that He performs by His Spirit.

Writing around AD 190, St. Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyon, commented on this miracle and connected it with baptism:

“And [Naaman] dipped himself ... seven times in the Jordan.” It was not for nothing that Naaman of old, when suffering from leprosy, was purified upon his being baptized, but [this served] as an indication to us. For as we are lepers in sin, we are made clean, by means of the sacred water and the invocation of the Lord, from our old transgressions, being spiritually regenerated as newborn babes, even as the Lord has declared: “Except a man be born again through water and the Spirit, he shall not enter into the kingdom of God” (Fragment 34).

### **Water and Spirit in the New Covenant**

The idea of ceremonial washings is, of course, all through the Old Testament. There were a number of these “washings” (Hebrews 9:9-10 refer to them as “baptisms”), but as the author of Hebrews tells us, these were “not able to clear the conscience of the worshiper.” He describes them as a matter of “external regulations applying until the time of the new order” — the New Covenant in Christ.

It’s when the Lord establishes His New Covenant that He will actually accomplish by His Spirit what the ceremonial washings of the Old Covenant merely foreshadowed.

In light of the theme of water and Spirit bringing forth new life, which I now saw woven throughout the fabric of the Old Testament, I must admit it really hit me to read again Ezekiel’s description of the promised New Covenant:

For I will take you out of the nations; I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water on you and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws (Ezek 36:24-27).

### **Baptism in the New Testament**

It was time to read on through the New Testament to see if there were any other passages that might support the Catholic teaching that in Baptism sins are washed away, the Spirit is given, and we are made sons and daughters of God (born again).

I came to John 9 where Jesus sends a man born blind to wash in the Pool of Siloam. After he washes, he comes back able to see.

I read on and came to Acts 2. The New Covenant has been established in Christ’s Body and Blood; the Jewish feast celebrating the ingathering of the first fruits of the harvest arrives (Pentecost), and the Spirit descends on the Apostles. Peter preaches; his hearers are cut to the heart and cry out, “What must we do?”

**Coffee Break  
Women's Ministry**

*Scripture Study, Prayer, and Fellowship*



**REVELATION**  
*The Kingdom Yet to Come*

**A Catholic Scripture Study by Jeff Cavins**

Join women of all ages for fellowship, food, prayer, small group discussions, and large group DVD presentations each week as we grow in understanding God's Word.

**Welcome Registration and  
Introduction begins  
Wednesday, September 12<sup>th</sup>  
9:00 AM – 11:45 AM**

**Rooms 7 & 8  
Book Fee: \$25  
10 sessions**

**Free childcare is provided!**

**If you have any questions, please contact Anne Young at [anne\\_n\\_young@yahoo.com](mailto:anne_n_young@yahoo.com).**



**Christ Child Society  
The Christ Child Society of  
Phoenix is dedicated to serving  
children in need.**

Please join us as we meet to sew, crochet, and knit newborn clothing items. **Don't sew?** We can use your help cutting fabric for clothing and blankets. We will meet from 9am-1pm in the Parish Center on the Wednesdays listed below. Please bring a sack lunch (a refrigerator is available and dessert, coffee, and lemonade are provided). If you have any questions, please call Michelle Cano at 602-524-7735 or Michelle Grimditch at 480-710-4357.

**Meeting Dates  
September 12 & 26  
October 10 & 24  
November 7  
December 12**

**Men of St. Joseph**

*Corpus Christi Men's Ministry*

**SEPTEMBER EVENTS:**

**"That Man Is You"**

**Wednesdays, Sep. 12, 19, & 26  
6:30 pm in the Parish Center**



**OCTOBER EVENTS:**

**Speaker Night:**

**Wednesday, Oct. 3**

**6:30 pm in the Parish Center**

**Featuring: Fr. Chris Foeckler**

**Topic: *The Benefits of Monthly Confession***

**MEN'S RETREAT**

**November 16-18 in Prescott Pines**

Space is limited. Info & registration available in the Parish Office (Monday-Friday) or at any Men of St. Joseph event.

**Training for New Extraordinary  
Ministers of Holy Communion**

**Wednesday, September 19  
6:30-8:00 pm in Church  
Sign-up online.**



***St. Gerard Circle***

St. Gerard Circle (SGC) includes expectant moms, grandmothers, and every mom in between! We gather for fellowship, spiritual growth, community service, and fun!

***Spiritual Book Club***

**Friday, September 21 at 7:30 pm in rooms 7 & 8**  
Join us as we discuss *The Emotions God Gave You* by Art and Laraine Bennett. Whether you are able to read the whole book or don't even get a chance to start it, please come either way!



***Pray for the Sick***

***Betty Bumgarner, Peter Cavallaro, Sr.,  
Vickie Cole, John Christopher Cooper,  
Lucy Fettig, Helen Singer, Jane Walsh,  
Lois Woodrow, Mary Zilingo***



**Editor's Note:** If you or a parishioner you know recently becomes ill, please call the Parish Office to have the name added to the list for the month.

# Texas Hold'Em Poker Saturday, Sept. 22<sup>nd</sup> 6:00 PM in rooms 5 & 6

The tournament is open to the public, so invite a friend, spouse, son, daughter, or neighbor!

## \$25 Buy-in

The money raised will support the education of our seminarians.

- ◆ Complimentary snacks & soda
- ◆ Prizes for the top 3 finishers

Contact event chair John Gavin at [JandSGavin@cox.net](mailto:JandSGavin@cox.net) or 602-670-3455 if you have any questions.

## Older Adults Ministry

We are trained volunteers who reach out to the isolated and lonely seniors in our church community. If you know someone who is isolated and lonely, please call Vicki McAllister at 602-387-3708.

### Prayer to St. Rita of Cascia:

Sweet Saint Rita, patron saint of loss and loneliness, please help me to find a friend to lead me out of this dark place. In the blessed name of Jesus I pray. Amen. (Anonymous)



Blue Knights & Little Flowers are monthly programs for children 5-10 years old interested in growing in their Catholic faith. Similar to scouting, kids track their progress through earning badges. Each meeting is full of fun activities, crafts, and games. Parent participation is expected. Dads teach the Blue Knights and moms lead the Little Flowers. We meet nine Saturdays a year from 1:30-3:30 pm in Corpus Christi classrooms beginning in September. To register, or for more info email: [Jennifer@mikitish.com](mailto:Jennifer@mikitish.com).

## Respect Life Ministry

### 40 DAYS FOR LIFE.

The 40 Days For Life Campaign is a community based campaign that draws attention to the evil of abortion through the use of a three-point program:

- (1) Prayer & Fasting
- (2) Constant Vigil
- (3) Community Outreach

The 2018 Fall 40 Days For Life Campaign takes place **September 26<sup>th</sup>-November 4<sup>th</sup>**. The Life Rosary will be prayed on the sidewalk outside of the Tempe Planned Parenthood facility located on the Southeast corner of Baseline & McClintock, every **Saturday morning from 9-11 am**. Please join us as we stand up for the rights of the unborn and pray for the end of all abortions. You can get more info about the campaign at [www.40daysforlife.com/local-campaigns/tempe](http://www.40daysforlife.com/local-campaigns/tempe).

## St. Benedict Speaker Series

St. Benedict Parish is hosting a bi-monthly, dynamic Speaker Series beginning **Wednesday, September 26 at 6pm**. All are invited to join us in the Worship Space at St. Benedict (16223 S. 48<sup>th</sup> St.) as we kick-off with **Fr. John Parks**, Vicar of Evangelization for the Diocese. Fr. Parks is a frequent speaker at youth conferences and a regular contributor to [catholicbreakfast.com](http://catholicbreakfast.com). He is an engaging and humorous storyteller who will inspire and challenge you to deepen your personal relationship with Jesus and share the joy of our faith. We promise this to be an evening you won't want to miss!



## 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Joe Hasulak Memorial Golf Tournament

**Saturday, September 29**

**Foothills Golf Club**

**2201 East Clubhouse Drive, Ahwatukee Foothills**

**Play Golf • Have Fun • Help Others**  
Tournament to benefit several local charities.

For details, contact Michael Moore at:

[moore4mike@msn.com](mailto:moore4mike@msn.com)



The Knights of Columbus:  
We HELP people!  
We CHANGE lives! We SAVE lives!

Recycle → Reuse → Reduce

### Remember to use cloth bags when you go shopping!

If you forget, then put your plastic grocery bags to use for the benefit of others and join us for an hour or more!

**Saturday, September 29**

**What:** Learn to cut bags and make “plarn” that will be used to crochet sleeping mats for the homeless

**Where:** Rooms 7 & 8

**Time:** 10 am-2pm

**What to bring:** Helping hands and a refillable personal water bottle.

**Age:** There’s no age limit, but volunteers will be asked to flatten bags, cut with sharp scissors, or connect the cuttings.

**Questions:** [marshacasey@gmail.com](mailto:marshacasey@gmail.com)  
or 480-703-2871

Recycle → Reuse → Reduce 8

## Celebrate Marriage event with Bishop Eduardo Nevares

**Sat. Sept. 29 at Ss. Simon and Jude Cathedral**

This annual diocesan event consists of a beautiful Mass and luncheon. This year’s speakers are Nate & Jill Verschaetse, PhD. presenting: *The Journey of Marriage—Always a New Gift*. Mass begins at 10 a.m., followed by the luncheon. Those celebrating 25<sup>th</sup>, 40<sup>th</sup>, and 50<sup>th</sup>+ anniversaries receive a special blessing, group photo with Bishop Nevares, and certificate when pre-registered. \$55 per couple for luncheon, \$35.00 for individuals. Registration required. For registration info, call Clarissa Quiring at 602-354-2132 or register online at [OurCovenantofLovePHX.org](http://OurCovenantofLovePHX.org). Seating for luncheon and speakers limited. Couples of all ages welcome, as well as family members.

### Frequently Asked Questions

**How do I register?** All Catholics living in the Parish area and regularly participating in the liturgy are invited to register in the Parish. **Church attendance alone does NOT make you and your family registered members.** Registration is *required* for Baptism, First Communion, First Reconciliation, Confirmation, Marriage and Catholic Education programs.

**Adults 18 and over need to be registered separately from their parents** in order to get married, have their own children baptized, or be Godparents or Sponsors.

In order to be a **Godparent or Sponsor or to receive discounted tuition rates at Catholic Schools**, one must be a registered Catholic and active in the parish, which is indicated by use of contribution envelopes or the Online Giving program. Registration forms can be filled out in the Parish Office or via our parish website.

**How do I have my child Baptized?** Before scheduling the date, please call the Office for a welcoming conversation with the priest. A preparation class is also required for parents prior to the child’s Baptism and are offered once a month.

**How do I request a Communion Call or Anointing of the Sick?** Please call the parish office at 480-893-8770. **DO NOT WAIT until someone is near death to have the person anointed!** Although Anointing of the Sick was once known as “Last Rites,” waiting until a person is near death could risk that person not being able to receive the Sacrament if he or she should pass away prior to the priest being able to arrive. Anointing of the Sick can only be administered while the person is still alive.

**How do I get married in the Church?** The Diocese of Phoenix requires a **NINE MONTH** marriage preparation process. John Deg, Director of Married Life Ministries, will meet with you to explain the process, including when you will meet with the Pastor to set a date. **Do NOT set the date** prior to this meeting as it cannot be guaranteed until then.

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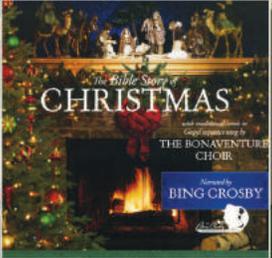
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Peter then responds, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you for the remission of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38).

The question came to me for the first time: Is Peter saying that remission of sins and the gift of the Spirit are received *in Baptism*?

I read on and came to Acts 19, where Paul encounters some disciples in Ephesus. He asks them if they received the Holy Spirit when they believed, and when they answer, “No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit,” Paul responds with the strangest of questions: “Then what *baptism* did you receive?”

Does Paul, I wondered, see the gift of the Holy Spirit as connected *with Baptism*? Is this what is implied here?

I read on and came to Acts 22, where the devout Ananias says to Saul of Tarsus, “Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name.”

At this point I was almost wondering whether I had ever even *read* these verses before! Did Ananias believe—like all the Church Fathers!—that sins are washed away in Baptism?

I read on and came to Romans 6, where Paul says that in our baptism we were buried with Christ and raised to new life. It’s clear from the context that he believes something actually *happened* to us in our baptism that freed us from slavery to sin so that we might walk “in newness of life” (Romans 6:4).

I came to 1 Corinthians 12:13, where Paul says Christians have been baptized by one Spirit into one body and all given one Spirit to drink.

Finally, I came to 1 Peter 3:21, a passage confusing to most evangelical Protestants. Peter is speaking about how Noah and his family were saved through the waters of the flood. And then he says,

And this water symbolizes baptism that *now saves* you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

I noticed a connection with something Peter had said earlier in that same epistle. In chapter 1:3 he speaks of how believers have been “given a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.” Here he speaks of Baptism saving them “through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.”

In Peter’s mind, it seems that Baptism and the new birth are related. Peter seems to be saying that as Noah and his family were saved through the waters of the flood, so we are saved through the waters of Baptism — not because there’s something magical about the water or the outward rite. Rather, it saves us; we are born anew through the power of Christ’s Resurrection (the Spirit!) as we pledge ourselves to God by this act of submitting to Baptism.

## Conclusion

Now, as an evangelical Protestant, at this point I

was still wrestling with myself. On the one hand, there was a voice saying: “These passages don’t *prove* that the New Testament is teaching a sacramental view of Baptism. There are other ways in which each of these passages can be interpreted.”

On the other hand, I had to admit that somehow the Apostles spoke in ways I, as a Baptist preacher, would never have spoken.

Why is it, I wondered, that if I had preached a million sermons I would never have thought to say what Peter said in Acts 2: “Repent and be baptized and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit”? In fact, I had never heard a single evangelical pastor use words like that. We called people to “believe in Christ.” We called them to “accept Christ as Savior.” No one ever said, “Repent and be baptized, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit!” *Why?*

Why is it I would *never* have thought to say to anyone, “Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins”? Why is it that if I had met someone who had not received the Holy Spirit, it would never have crossed my mind to respond, “Hmmm, what baptism did you receive?”

Why would I never in my entire lifetime as a Baptist minister have said, “Baptism now saves you”?

Sure, one might not be able to “prove” on the basis of Scripture alone that all of this evidence added up to the Catholic teaching on Baptism. But what I had said to myself, after being confronted with the unanimous teaching of the early Church on Baptism, was not that I would accept the Catholic position if I could somehow “prove” on the basis of Scripture alone that their position was correct.

What I had said was that given the weight of the early Church’s testimony I would accept the Catholic teaching unless *it was absolutely certain that it was contradicted by the teaching of the New Testament.*

Could I say that? Not even close. Not even close.

And even though this was just one measly little doctrine, it changed the way I thought about everything. I used to think only of the question: “What do I see Scripture teaching about this?” It was clear to me now that this would no longer be enough.

I remember imagining that I could parachute back into the early Church. Faced with Ignatius and Justin and Tertullian and Cyprian and Barnabas—faced with the universal Church’s understanding of Baptism as a powerful sacrament in which sins are remitted, regeneration takes place, and the Holy Spirit is given — would I have been willing to separate myself on the basis of my private interpretation of Scripture? Would I have been willing to say, “Well, you can’t prove that your interpretation is correct. There are other possibilities”—and on that basis start my own church?

To ask the question was to answer it.