

**WHY WAS JESUS BAPTIZED?**

**On the great Feast Day of THEOPHANY, we commemorate, our Lord's baptism in the Jordan River by John. Have you ever wondered why Jesus was baptized? Why did the Sinless One need to submit to a ritual that symbolized the washing away of sins? St. John himself must have the the same question in his mind. The Gospels tell us that when Christ approached him in the Jordan, he was reluctant to baptize Him, saying: *"I need to be baptized by You , and are are You coming to me?"* (Matthew 3:14) In the following verse of Matthew's Gospel, Christ answers: *"Permit it to be so now for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness."***

**Therein lies our answer. Jesus certainly did not NEED purification. But by making the purification of humanity His own, He would wash away the sins of humanity, grant regeneration and reveal the mystery of the Holy Trinity. Thus, Christ's baptism was necessary for the fulfillment of all of God's righteousness. St. Gregory of Nyssa puts it beautifully: *JESUS ENTERS THE SINFUL WATERS OF THE WORLD AND WHEN HE COMES OUT, HE PURIFIES THE ENTIRE WORLD WITH HIM.*"**

**The Church refers to baptism as a "new birth." In this "new birth," a true mystery take place, for in the Sacrament of Baptism, we die, going down into the water to be mystically united to Christ in His death. Then we live again rising up out of the water in His Resurrected humanity.**