

# EXERCISE FOR THE ANNIVERSARY OF YOUR BAPTISM by Saint John Eudes

## V. CONCERNING THE RIGHTFUL TRIBUTE THAT YOU SHOULD HAVE PAID TO GOD ON THE DAY OF YOUR BAPTISM.

Holy Baptism is the beginning of your true life, that is, your life in Jesus Christ, and it is the origin of all happiness. Therefore, it is certain that you would have been obliged to render a very special tribute to your Heavenly Father on the occasion of your baptism. But you were incapable of fulfilling your obligation then because you did not have the use of reason. It is logical that you should each year set apart a little interval near the anniversary of your baptism, or else some other time, to devote yourself to prayer and thanksgiving for this priceless sacrament.

## VI. OBLIGATIONS TO OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST WHO INSTITUTED AND MERITED BAPTISM FOR YOU.

The author of the holy Sacrament of Baptism is Jesus Christ our Lord. He is the source of all its graces, acquired and merited by His Incarnation, by His Baptism in the River Jordan, by His Passion and Death. He applied these infinite merits to you by virtue of His Resurrection, out of His exceeding great love. All those invaluable blessings require you to pay Him the tribute of respect expressed in the following prayer.

## VII. PRAYER.

O Jesus, I adore Thee as divine Author of the holy Sacrament of Baptism, which Thou didst institute for my salvation. Thou didst also acquire and merit the grace contained in that Sacrament, by Thy Incarnation, Thy Baptism in the River Jordan and by Thy holy death.

I adore the exceeding great love with which Thou didst merit and institute this same Sacrament.

I adore all the designs, which Thou didst cherish in its institution, for the whole Church and for myself in particular.

I thank Thee countless times for all the glory Thou hast given to Thyself and for all the graces Thou hast transmitted to Thy Church, and to me in particular, by this Sacrament.

I offer Thee all that glory and all the graces Thou hast produced in Thy Holy Church by this means.

I beg Thee to forgive me for neglecting to take advantage of the grace Thou didst give me in holy Baptism, and for having made it valueless by my cowardice and infidelities in Thy service, and for having even destroyed it entirely in my soul, by my sins.

I give myself to Thee, O Good Jesus; renew in me the treasure of baptismal grace, and accomplish in me, by Thy very great mercy, all the plans of Thy Providence on my behalf in the divine Sacrament of Baptism.

O Jesus, I adore Thee in the mystery of Thy Incarnation, Passion, and Death, as meriting the grace of the Sacrament of Baptism; but especially do I adore Thee in the mystery of Thy holy Baptism in the River Jordan. I adore all the dispositions of Thy divine soul in this mystery, and all the designs Thou didst then deign to have in my regard. How different was Thy Baptism, Lord, from ours! In Thy Baptism Thou didst take upon Thyself our sins, to make satisfaction and do penance for them before the Father of heaven, in the desert and on the Cross, while in our baptism Thou didst lift from us the burden of our sins, washing and effacing them in Thy Precious Blood. Baptize me with the Baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire, even as Thy blessed precursor, St. John the Baptist, assures us Thou dost baptize, that is, consume all my sins in the fire of Thy holy love, and by the power of Thy divine spirit.

## VIII. THE ETERNAL AND TEMPORAL BIRTH OF JESUS, AND HIS DEATH, BURIAL AND RESURRECTION ARE THE EXEMPLAR OF BAPTISM.

All things outside of God have their idea, their exemplar, and their prototype in God; so also Sacramental Baptism has for prototype and exemplar four great mysteries, namely:

1. The mystery of His eternal birth, because His Father, by eternal generation, imparted to Him being, life and all the divine perfections, by reason of which He is the Son of God and the perfect image of His Father. Likewise, by Baptism He imparted to you the celestial and divine life He received from His Father; He implanted in you a living image of Himself, and He made you children of His Own Heavenly Father.

2. The mystery of His temporal birth, because at the moment of His Incarnation and birth in the Virgin, He united our nature with His and His essence with our nature, and filled it with Himself and clad Himself in it as in a garment; similarly in the holy Sacrament of Baptism He united Himself with you and incorporated you with Him; He formed Himself and, as it were, took flesh in you. He clothed and filled you with Himself, according to these words of St. Paul: "As many of you as have been baptized in Christ have put on Christ" (Gal. 3, 27).

3. The mystery of His death and burial, for St. Paul also tells us that "All we, who are baptized in Christ Jesus, are baptized in his death" (Rom. 6, 3), and that "we are buried together with him by baptism into death" (Rom. 6, 4). This means precisely the same as the thought expressed by the same Apostle in other words: "You are dead: and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3, 3), that is, you have entered by baptism into a state which obliges you to die to yourself and to the world, and to live no longer except with Jesus Christ, by a totally holy and divine life, hidden and absorbed in God, resembling the life of Jesus Christ.

4. The mystery of the Resurrection, because by His Resurrection the Son of God entered into a new life, totally heavenly and spiritual, entirely separated from the earth. And so St. Paul instructs the faithful: "We are buried together with him by baptism into death; that as Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6, 4).

For these reasons, then, we owe our Savior a great tribute of homage and should lift up our minds and hearts to Him.

## IX PRAYER TO JESUS

O Jesus, Son of God and at the same time Son of man, I adore Thee in Thy temporal and eternal birth I give Thee infinite thanks for all the glory Thou didst thus render to Thy Father. I adore the thoughts and designs Thou didst then deign to have for me, thinking of me from the very first, O Good Jesus: Thou didst love me and didst plan to make in me a living image of Thyself, of Thy birth and Thy life. Just as Thy Father communicates to Thee His divine and immortal life, and just as Thou art consequently His Son and His most perfect image, so also Thou didst plan to transmit to me by Baptism Thy holy and celestial life, and to make me a living image of Thyself, and to transform me by grace into what Thou art by nature, that is, a child of God, and by participation and resemblance, God and another Jesus Christ. Who could ever thank Thee for such great favors! How culpable I am for having, by my sins, so often impeded the perfect fulfillment of Thy divine plan! Forgive me, my Savior, with all my heart I beg Thee to forgive me, and I give myself to Thee so that Thou mayest make amends for my faults and renew in me that image of Thyself, of Thy birth and of Thy life. Separate me from myself and from all that is not Thee, in order to unite and incorporate me with Thee. Empty me of myself and of all things, destroy me utterly, in order to fill me with Thyself and to form and establish Thyself in me. Cause me henceforth to be a perfect image of Thyself, just as Thou art a most perfect image of Thy Father. Grant that I may share in Thy filial love for Him, since He is my Father as He is Thine; enable me to live by Thy life, that is, a holy and perfect life, truly worthy of God, since Thou hast made me God by participation; and, finally, invest me so fully with Thy qualities, perfections, virtues and dispositions, and so transform me into Thee that men may see only Jesus in me, only His life, His humility, His meekness, His charity, His love, His spirit, and His other virtues and qualities, since Thou dost will me to be Thy other self on earth.

O Jesus, I adore Thee in the mystery of Thy holy death, Thy burial and Resurrection. I give Thee thanks for the glory Thou didst give Thy Father in these mysteries, and for the thoughts and plans Thou didst have in them for me. For Thou didst always think of me in all these mysteries, and at every moment of Thy life, and Thou didst always have a special plan for me. Thy special Providence was to imprint on my soul, by holy Baptism, an image of Thy death, burial and Resurrection, causing me to die to myself and to the world, hiding me in Thyself, and with Thee in the bosom of the Eternal Father, and raising me up again and causing me to live like Thee a new life, altogether celestial and divine. For this, be Thou blessed forever. Alas, by my sins I have destroyed in myself the great effects produced by Thy goodness, and for this I beg Thee, with all humility and contrition, to forgive me. I give myself to Thee, O Good Jesus, I surrender myself to the spirit and the power of the mystery of Thy death, burial and Resurrection, that Thou mayest cause me to die again to all things; that Thou mayest hide me in Thyself and with Thyself in the bosom of Thy Father; that Thou mayest dissolve my mind in Thy mind, my heart in Thy Heart, my soul in Thy soul, my life in Thy life; and that Thou mayest establish in me the new life into which Thou didst enter by Thy Resurrection, so that I may no longer live, save in Thee, for Thee, and by Thee.

## X. JESUS CHRIST, IN THE PERSON OF THE PRIEST, BAPTIZES EACH CHRISTIAN.

All the Holy Fathers teach us that our Lord Jesus Christ, Himself, by the power of His holy spirit, confers all the Sacraments in the person of the priest, who represents Him and acts in His Name and by His authority. It is He who consecrates in Holy Mass and gives us absolution in the Sacrament of Penance; also He baptizes us, with various symbolic ceremonies, inspired by His Spirit in Holy Mother Church and filled with mysteries that signify great graces that are conferred upon us in holy Baptism. We should, therefore, pay Him homage in this connection.

## XI. PRAYER TO JESUS CHRIST WHO BAPTIZED YOU.

O my Most Beloved Jesus, I adore and recognize Thee as the One who baptized me, in the person of the priest, whom Thou didst use as a living instrument to confer this grace upon me. Alas, Lord, I knew Thee not at that time: I did not think of Thee, I did not love Thee, nor did I appreciate the very great favor conferred upon me. Yet this did not deter Thee from loving me, and receiving me among the number of Thy children, and even of Thy members, by the sanctifying grace of Baptism. O my adorable Savior, I desire with all my heart to bring back that holy time, that happy moment in which Thou didst baptize me, in order that I may adore, bless, love and glorify Thee infinitely, imploring Thy Eternal Father, Thy Holy Ghost, Thy Blessed Mother, all the angels and saints and all creatures to love, bless and thank Thee for me forever.

O Jesus, I adore Thee as the One who, by Thy Holy Ghost, didst institute and inspire in Thy Church all the ceremonies which accompany the solemn administration of Sacramental Baptism. I adore all Thy admirable designs in their institution. I give myself to Thee that Thou mayest effect them in my person, and that by Thy great mercy Thou mayest produce in me the great and holy effects signified by these symbolic ceremonies.

O Jesus, cast out the evil spirit from me forever and fill me with Thy Divine Spirit. Give me a lively and perfect faith. Fortify my bodily senses and my spiritual faculties against every kind of temptation by the virtue of Thy holy Cross and consecrate them to Thy glory. Fill my soul with Thy divine wisdom, that is, with Thyself; excite in me the most avid hunger, thirst and desire of Thee, the principal and only food of my soul, so that I may no longer find any savor or relish in anything save Thee alone. Keep me safe in Thy Church, as in the bosom of a mother, apart from whom there is no life or salvation, and give me the grace to honor her in all her observances, as in customs taught and inspired by Thee. Give me the grace to obey all her laws and commandments, as those of a mother most worthy of honor who commands me nothing save in Thy Name. In all things and everywhere teach me to follow the maxims and guidance of her Spirit, which is entirely Thine own.

O Good Jesus, open my ears to Thy word and Thy voice, as Thou didst open the ears of man possessed by the deaf and dumb spirit, by the application of Thy sacred spittle, and close them altogether to the voice of the world and of Satan. Anoint me with the oil of Thy grace so that I may spread abroad, as it were, the divine odor of Thee in every place. Give me a firm and lasting peace with Thee and with every kind of creature. Clothe me in the white robe of Thy holy innocence and divine purity, both bodily and spiritual. Dispel the shadows of my darkness, filling me with Thy heavenly radiance. Set me on fire with Thy sacred love and cause me to be a shining and a burning light, to illumine and enkindle all my associates with the light of Thy knowledge and the fire of

Thy love. Finally, if I was a source of joy to all the citizens of heaven, to the Blessed Virgin, the Eternal Father, Thyself, and the Holy Ghost, when by Baptism I was delivered from the power of Satan and admitted into the divine company of angels and saints, and even of the Three Divine and Eternal Persons, and if in token of this joy the church bells were rung after I was baptized, cause me now to live henceforth in such a way as to continue to be a source of joy and satisfaction to the court of heaven, the Queen of Angels and the Most Blessed Trinity. Grant also that I may find all my satisfaction and joy in serving and loving Thee.

## XII. SOLEMN PROFESSION MADE BY ALL CHRISTIANS AT BAPTISM.

I have in another place explained the nature of the solemn and public profession made by all Christians at Baptism. For that reason I need not repeat what has already been said; but it would be worth your while to refer to it again in “Part One” of this book. I shall confine myself now to recommending a prayer to Jesus Christ in renewal of the profession made to Him at Baptism, and as a repetition in your own person of the Christian vows pronounced on your behalf then by your sponsors.

## XIII. RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL VOWS

O Jesus, my Lord and my God, I adore Thee as the mystical Head whom I must follow and imitate in all things, according to my solemn and public profession made at Baptism. I promised, through my sponsors, before heaven and earth, to renounce Satan utterly with all his works and his pomps, that is, sin and the world, and to adhere to Thee as my Head, and to give and consecrate myself altogether to Thee, to dwell in Thee forever. Great indeed are this promise and profession, which oblige me, as a Christian, to practice great perfection and sanctity. To profess to dwell in Thee and to adhere to Thee as my Head is to profess to be one with Thee, as the members are one with their head; it is to promise to have but one life, one mind, one heart, one soul, one will and one thought, one devotion and disposition with Thee. It means to profess not merely poverty, chastity and obedience, but to profess Thy very self, that is, Thy life, spirit, humility, charity, purity, poverty, obedience and all other virtues. In a word, it is to make the very profession Thou didst make before the Eternal Father at the moment of the Incarnation, a profession perfectly fulfilled throughout Thy life. It means to make profession never to follow one’s own will, but to seek all happiness in doing everything willed by God, to remain in a state of perpetual subjection to God, and submissive to men for the love of God. It means existing always as a host and victim continually sacrificed to the pure glory of God.

Such is the vow I made at Baptism, O Jesus my Lord. How holy and divine is that profession! How far is my life from this sanctity and perfection! How often have I failed in every respect to live up to so sacred a promise! Forgive me, most merciful Lord, forgive me. O divine Redeemer, I implore Thee to repair all my failings, and in satisfaction for them, to offer to Thy Father the inestimable honor Thou didst accord Him all Thy life long, by carrying out perfectly the profession made to Him at the Incarnation.

O my Jesus, in honor of and in union with the very great love and holy dispositions of Thy profession, I now desire to enact in my own person what I promised through others at my baptism, that is, I will to renew the profession then made by my godparents. Therefore, in the virtue and

might of Thy Spirit and Thy love, I forever renounce Satan, sin, the world and myself. I give myself to Thee, O Jesus, to adhere to Thee, to remain in Thee, to be but one with Thee in heart, mind, spirit and life. I offer myself to Thee, never to do my own will, but to seek all my happiness in doing everything commanded by Thy holy will. I sacrifice myself to Thee as a host and victim to be immolated to Thy pure glory in any way that may be pleasing to Thee. O Most Compassionate Jesus, I implore Thee by Thy great mercy, grant me the grace to carry out this holy profession perfectly. Do Thou fulfill it Thyself in me and for me, or rather for Thyself and for Thy own good pleasure, in all the perfection Thou dost desire; for I offer myself to Thee to do and suffer whatever pleases Thee for this intention.

#### XIV. BAPTISMAL TRIBUTE TO THE HOLY TRINITY.

As has been said, it is our Lord Jesus Christ who baptizes the faithful; but each soul is baptized in the Name and by the power of the Most Holy Trinity. The Three Divine Persons are present at holy Baptism in a particular manner. The Father is present generating His Son in the soul and imparting to it a new being and new life in His Son. The Son is present, being born and receiving life in the soul, transmitting His divine sonship, by which the neophyte becomes a child of God, just as He is Son of God. The Holy Ghost is present, forming Jesus in each soul even as He was formed in the bosom of The Virgin. The Father, Son and Holy Ghost are present, Separating the new-born Christian from all things, taking possession of him and consecrating him specially to Themselves, imprinting Their divine character and image on his soul and establishing in his being (as in Their living temple, Their sacred tabernacle, or Their holy throne and heaven) the dwelling-place of the Blessed Trinity, Their glory, kingdom and life. And consequently, if only sin did not stand in the way, the Three Eternal Persons would dwell always in each Christian heart in a particular and ineffable manner; They would most wonder fully glorify one another by living in the soul a most holy and divine life. So, too, it follows that we belong to God as creatures entirely consecrated to Him and we must consequently pursue no other purpose in life save His glory and service. In this connection it would be well to pay the following tribute of praise to the Holy Trinity.

#### XV. PRAYER TO THE BLESSED TRINITY.

O Holy and Adorable Trinity, I adore Thy divine essence and Thy Three Eternal Persons; I adore Thee for having been present at my baptism; I adore all the designs of Thy Providence for me. I beg Thee to forgive me for impeding their fulfillment and in satisfaction I offer Thee the life, actions and sufferings of my Lord Jesus Christ and of His most holy Mother. I give myself to Thee, O Divine Trinity, for the accomplishment of those same designs. O Eternal Father O Thou the Only Son of God, O Holy Ghost of the Father and the Son, enter into me; enter into my heart and my soul; separate me from all that is not Thyself, draw me to Thyself, live and reign in me, destroy in me all that displeases Thee, and cause my being and my life to be completely consecrated to Thy pure glory.

## XVI. ROSARY OF THE BLESSED TRINITY.

During the time devoted to the commemoration of the day of your baptism in the Name of the Most Holy Trinity, it would be a good thing to pay particular honor to that great mystery by saying the Rosary of the most Holy Trinity, which is made up of three decades and three beads in honor of the Three Divine Persons.

First, say three times the words: Veni Sancta Trinitas “Come, Holy Trinity,” to invoke in your memory, understanding and will the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, to give yourself to Them, that They may glorify Themselves in you as They will.

On each small bead, say the Gloria Patri, offering to the Father, Son and Holy Ghost all the glory that has been rendered to Them from all eternity by Their own Divinity and all that shall be rendered to Them for all eternity in heaven and on earth, by way of satisfaction for the faults you have committed against Their honor.

On the large beads, say, with the same intention, the words:

Tibi laus, tibi gloria, tibi amor, O beata Trinitas, “Praise be to Thee, glory to Thee, love to Thee, O Blessed Trinity.”

## XVII. CONCLUSION.

To conclude the exercise on holy Baptism, thank Our Lord for the graces He has imparted during this exercise, asking Him to forgive you for the faults you have committed in it. Offer yourself to the Blessed Virgin, to your guardian angel, to the holy angels who were present at your baptism, to the saint whose name you were given, and to all the other angels and saints. Ask them to offer you to Jesus, to thank Him for you, to pay Him on your behalf all the rightful tribute of homage you would have rendered Him at the time of your Baptism if you had had the use of reason. Invoke their generous intercession to obtain from Him the grace to carry out perfectly all the holy desires and resolutions Our Lord has inspired in your heart during this exercise.