

Choosing Baptism as an Adult

by Judith Bricault

“I’ve thought it over carefully, God, and I am inviting you into my life. I’ve participated in many demonstrations in favour of human rights, a good future for young people, and sustainable development, as well as others against injustice, war, and market globalization. I have worked hard to build equity, community, and fellowship. I have searched for true value in life, and I have found this through commitment, reflection, and rethinking my beliefs. But it didn’t all make sense until I knew you, even though I wasn’t actually looking for you. I didn’t think that I needed you. But you found me. I saw your face in all the causes that are dear to me. You revealed who you truly are in the force and beauty of nature, in the courage of women and children, in the simplicity of poor people, in the suffering and hope of all peoples, in the mystery of life, and in so many other ways. You looked me straight in the eye and I could not turn away. Your love seized me and I can no longer live without you. You fill me like a burning fire. You are my very existence. I’ve thought it over carefully, God, and I love you. Being baptized is my way to say this to the world.”
(Mark—26 years of age)

Mark’s Reflections

- I often contemplate and lose myself in the mystery of God’s presence near and far: the God of the universe is also the God who dwells within the intimacy of my heart. Sometimes God surprises me by bringing me back to immediate realities, where he is also fully present.
- Sometimes I think about God and simply feel his fullness with me, in me, and around me. I allow him into my life unconditionally without attempting to confine or control him.
- The reign of God is both present and future—another of the mysteries that foster faith and invite courage. It is a work in progress, a living work, in which God wants me to be an actor, a builder, and an architect. It is a great honour to participate in creating God’s kingdom.
- Every day I see what God is accomplishing in my life and in the life of the world. Every day I realize the work that remains to bring about God’s kingdom of peace and justice. I am ready to face the challenge of assisting God in this work, and I pray for God’s help.
- Although numerous and diverse, the people of God are one people and one family. This is a difficult concept, but is it really unthinkable? Just a dream? A utopian illusion?
- I like to think that I am a member of this vast family of many colours, languages, origins, and countries, a family across time with members both living and dead. In God who is, who was, and who is to come, we are all one. This is an amazing and extraordinary truth!

As you reflect on Mark's story and reflections—do Mark's thoughts resonate with your own experience? What other reflections or questions do you have?

As you think about your baptism—what has brought you to this decision?

Activities:

- Using a medium of your choice (e.g. writing, drawing, music), describe the stages in your growth in faith.
- Discuss with other people what it means to be baptized, to belong to the church of Jesus Christ, to be part of a specific faith community...to be on a journey of faith.
- Write a short message to be shared with the congregation on the day of your baptism describing your emotions, expectations, hopes, and goals.
- Do a personal timeline with high points and low points, and name where God met you along the way.

What else do you need to do to prepare for your baptism?

Adapted from "An Adult Requests Baptism" by Judith Bricault in David Lefneski, *Celebrating Life! Reflections on Birth in Preparation for Baptism* (Toronto: Unité des ministères en français, Église Unie du Canada, 2005), pp. 84–85.