

Week 3 Baptism: To Form One Body

Gathering Song [*One Bread, One Body*](#) (ELW 496)

Daily Prayer *Jesus, Jesus you are with me as I step into this day.*

Let me hear you gently calling, "Precious child, walk this way."

Jesus, Jesus when I hear you, calling me to follow you,

In that hour, give me grace to love my neighbor like you do. Amen.

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:13 **Context:** 12-14 To Form One Body

For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

Devotional Thoughts Let me tell you the story of Mrs. Chen. I was attending parent-teacher night at my daughter's school. The lunch lady, an older woman with gray hair in a hairnet, was cleaning tables. "You're Zoe's mom," she said without looking up. I stopped. "How'd you know?" "Same eyes. She sits at table seven, always picks the apples nobody wants because they're bruised. Drinks chocolate milk even though she's lactose intolerant. She doesn't like to waste food."

I stood there, stunned. "You know this about my daughter?" "I know it about all of them", she replied. She kept wiping tables. Started talking, "Marcus, at table three, always takes double servings on Fridays because there's less food at home on weekends. Jennifer counts calories out loud to punish herself. Brett throws away lunches his mom packs because kids make fun of the ethnic food. Ashley's parents are divorcing, she stress-eats in the bathroom."

"Why are you telling me this?", I asked. She finally looked at me. "Because you're all at parent-teacher conferences talking about grades. Nobody's talking about this. About who's eating, who's not, who's hurting." I went home and couldn't stop thinking about it. I started asking Zoe questions. She confirmed everything. "Yeah, Mrs. Chen just... sees people... she helps when nobody else notices." Turns out, Mrs. Chen knew the story of every struggling kid who came through her lunch line. "Mrs. Chen knew when we were drowning. She threw life preservers disguised as extra tater tots when no one was watching."

My daughter graduated last month. In her speech, she thanked Mrs. Chen. "Some people teach math. Some teach history. Mrs. Chen taught us that being seen is sometimes the only thing standing between surviving and giving up." The whole cafeteria stood up. Turns out, weird lunch ladies who memorize names --- they're the most important people in the building."

This Week's Challenge? Being baptized through the spirit calls us into community – "baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body". How can you live in unity with others to form one body this week as you pay attention to those around you, just like Mrs. Chen in the story? How are you living out your baptismal promises through seeing and listening and maybe even helping "behind the scenes"?

Affirmation of Christian Vocation: Make the sign of the cross on your forehead (or if you are doing this devotion with others, make the sign on the forehead of another) while saying...

All that we do belongs to God—our work and our rest.

We follow Jesus with thankful hearts and open hands, serving our neighbor in love.

Morning and evening, at work and at play, our life is in Christ Jesus our Lord. AMEN