



ARCHDIOCESE OF SEATTLE

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OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

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Dear Bart,

I don't know how old you will be when you will be able to read this, but I thought it would be good to share a letter with you today as we celebrate a very important event in your life - the day of your baptism. You are now about six and a half weeks old, and today is the first time I have had the chance to meet you. And it is really good to see you.

I am really happy for your mother and father. And they are really happy that they have shared the gift of life with you. I know that in the years ahead, they will share so many gifts with you, especially the gifts of love and care for you. I hope the years ahead will only be a time when they and you together will grow in love and respect for one another.

There are a a lot of people here today at Mary Seat of Wisdom Church in Park Ridge to witness what is taking place. Your grandparents, aunts, uncles, and a lot of relatives and friends are here to celebrate with you and will be over at your folks' house later this afternoon. If there is one thing you will learn soon in your life, it is that your folks like to have people around and they always enjoy a good party. And what better reason to have a party than now when we celebrate your baptism.

Celebrating your baptism is a very important event in your life as well as in all of ours. Baptism is the gift of life which God shares with you and it is a gift of life that will last forever. In the years ahead, God will continue to share that gift of life with you through other gifts that will be offered to you - gifts of nourishment and healing, gifts of maturity and commitment. Today, I pray that God will be very good to you in the years ahead. I pray that God will watch over you and give you every possible gift, especially health and love.

Bart, it's an unusual world into which you have been born. It's a world where there is still the struggle of many people to have a decent home to live in or even food to eat. It is a world where there is still hatred and violence, yet we all hope that you will grow up in a world that will only know peace.

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Bart, in the short time that you have been alive, so much has happened. A huge oil tanker crashed off the coast of Alaska and left an oil spill that is causing tremendous problems. Just last week, there was an election for Mayor in the City of Chicago, and Richard Daley was elected. He might still be mayor when you read this letter. And out here in Seattle, where I live, we had the Final Four Basketball tournament with Michigan beating Seton Hall in overtime. Bart, there is a lot more happening in the world today - some of it very good, some of it very sad. But we gather here this afternoon, Bart, with the hope that the years ahead will only be good ones for you and your family.

It's really great to meet you for the first time, Bart, and it is especially good to share the gift of God's life with you today in Baptism. You are the first grand-nephew whom I have the privilege of baptizing. I look forward to seeing you whenever I can and watching you grow in age, wisdom and grace. Bart, God bless you!

Sincerely Yours,

Tom