

Thomas Alva Edison was born on February 11, 1847 in Milan, Ohio. He grew up in Port Huron, Michigan.

Edison was considered a genius by many, holding over 1,000 patents on various inventions. He is credited with saying that, "*Genius is one percent inspiration, [and] ninety-nine percent perspiration.*"

And in this is found the secret to his success.

While working on a particular research experiment which wasn't going very well, he was asked if he ever grew discouraged by the lack of results. His response was that he was having great success – he had discovered thousands of ways that didn't work, and was confident that soon enough he would find one that did work.

The invention of the light bulb is often mistakenly attributed to Edison. This however is not true. Rather, he invented the first commercially practical incandescent light bulb. The earliest light bulbs were impractical having short operating lives, being expensive to produce, or drawing enormous amounts of electricity.

Edison's carbon-filament light bulb, when made with carbonized bamboo, had a life of 1,200 hours. Which he claims came to him while fishing in Wyoming and noticing threads of bamboo spiraling off of a fishing pole.

Today is the Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, and we again find ourselves listening to readings from the Servant Songs from the Prophet Isaiah, and further commentary from John the Baptist in the Gospel.

In today's excerpt from Isaiah, we hear God speak to the Servant saying:

*I will make you a light to the nations,  
that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth.*

These words, while applicable to Jesus – can also be applied to every person in this building.

While last week's Feast of the Baptism of the Lord focused on Jesus' baptism in the Jordan River, in this week's readings the focus is on the effects of Baptism on all of us.

St. Paul directs his First Letter to the Corinthians to,

*you who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be holy.*

Baptism is the beginning of the Christian life ... the first step in sanctification ... in which we are called to grow in holiness ... every moment ... of every day.

This week, too, we also celebrate what used to be called the *Church Unity Octave*, or as it's known now, the *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity*.

In the *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, one of the sixteen documents of *Vatican II*, in regards to Baptism, we are told that we are,

*linked with those who, being baptized, are honored with the name of Christian*

and that “*by baptism, ... they are united with Christ*” and “*they are joined with us in the Holy Spirit.*”

The Latin title of this document is *Lumen Gentium*, which means “*Light to the Nations,*” from today’s reading from Isaiah.

Yet our work in ecumenism doesn’t end with Baptism. Rather, Baptism is again only the beginning, and we are called to “*pray, hope, and work*” for greater understanding and unity among all Christians, or as St. Paul says, “*all those everywhere who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*”

In this way, we are called to be the “*light to the nations*” so that the Gospel “*may reach to the ends of the earth.*”

As we approach this Altar to receive the Sacred Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ, let us pray for a renewal and a deepening of our own Baptismal graces so that we might grow in Faith to believe in God ... in Hope so as to better live within His holy Will ... and in Love so that by loving God and neighbor, we might be the hands and feet of Jesus Christ in the world. In this way, we can better act under the promptings of the Holy Spirit ... and grow in holiness and virtue.

May we go forth from this place as a “*Light to the Nations*” and as we heard in the Psalm, may we pray these words every day:

*Here am I, Lord; I come to do your will.*