In the months before Jesus began His ministry, His cousin John the Baptist was urging people to repent of their sins and accept baptism in the Jordan River. Jesus was baptized, although He was sinless.

The icon shows us Jesus submerged in the water, with small creatures representing evil spirits fleeing from Christ. John the Baptist, in crude clothing, is performing the baptism. Angels stand nearby with bowed heads, indicating that they will serve Jesus. The heavens are open, indicating God’s presence, and the Holy Spirit is pictured as a dove. The event is celebrated as the first manifestation of the Holy Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Mark 1:9–13).