

Brazil Soccer Legend Ronaldo Celebrating Baptism as ‘a child of God’

Last week, the sports world witnessed a remarkable transformation as Brazil soccer legend Ronaldo Luis Nazario de Lima, commonly known as Ronaldo Phenomeno, took a significant step in his spiritual journey.

The athlete, celebrated for his pivotal role in two World Cup victories, was baptized, confirmed and received First Holy Communion at São Paulo's Church of Sao Jose, a momentous occasion that resonates deeply with Christians who rejoice in the baptism and salvation of others.

Ronaldo shared his newfound faith journey with the world through a heartfelt post on his Portuguese-language Instagram account. "The Christian faith has always been a fundamental part of my life, since childhood, even though I had not yet been baptized," he reflected. In this moment of spiritual renewal, he expressed, "With the sacrament, I feel truly regenerated as a child of God—in a new, more conscious, deeper way. I renew my commitment to follow the path of good, of my own free will, believing in the love of Jesus, in supportive love."

Ronaldo's spiritual awakening was celebrated just days before his 47th birthday in a ceremony presided over by Padre Fábio de Melo, a respected priest and author with a significant following on Instagram. This momentous occasion brought together Ronaldo, his godparents, Amilcar and Malu, and father Dom Oswaldo in a celebration of faith that resonated with millions.

In the Scriptures, we find profound guidance on the importance of baptism:

- **Matthew 28:19-20:** “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things I have commanded you.”
- **Mark 16:16:** “He who believes and is baptized will be saved. But he who does not believe will be condemned.”
- **Acts 2:38:** “Peter said to them, ‘Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’”
- **Romans 6:3-4:** “Or do you not know that as many as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore, we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”
- **Galatians 3:27:** “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”

These Bible verses underscore the significance of Ronaldo’s baptism, reaffirming his commitment to Jesus.

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Ronaldo’s journey of faith has been a gradual one, marked by notable milestones. In June 2022, he fulfilled a promise to complete the 280-mile Camino de Santiago pilgrimage to the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Galicia, Spain, embarking on this pilgrimage by bicycle as a testament to his evolving faith.

Brazil, the world’s largest Catholic-majority country, has experienced a growing Evangelical movement in recent years,

with nearly one-third of the population identifying as Evangelical. Ronaldo's baptism serves as a powerful reminder of the transformative power of faith, transcending the boundaries of fame and fortune, and inspiring Christians worldwide to celebrate the beauty of spiritual renewal.

As Christians across the globe continue to rejoice in Ronaldo's spiritual journey, his baptism stands as a testament to the enduring importance of faith, renewal, and the profound impact of one's commitment to follow the path of goodness and the love of Jesus. {eoa}

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James Lasher is Staff Writer for Charisma Media.