

focus on sunday

THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD 12th January 2025

At the baptism of Jesus, God witnessed that Jesus was his Son. By baptism we too have been made God's children, chosen to bring his Good News to the world.



The baptism of Jesus was not just like our baptism. Baptism for us is entering the church and it is asserting the freedom from the sin. Even though Jesus was not the sinful one, he took part in the ritual of his people - plunging himself, if you put it like this, into the depths of his people. And plunging himself into the depths of our humanity. These depths include our sin as well as all our hopes.

And it's more than that. At the baptism, Jesus heard the words, You are my beloved Son. We could say he came out of the water a different man, Receiving his title from his Father. Later on, he would hear those words again at the Transfiguration. At that time, others would hear them also, Peter and James and John. At the Transfiguration, they were told to listen to him.

But here, nobody else heard the words. We know them because the writers of the Gospel. have shared with us what they heard from Jesus. Only Jesus could have told them what he heard.

The words of Jesus are extended to all of us. He would say, I am God's beloved Son. And because of that, you are his beloved sons and his beloved daughters.

Allow yourself today hear those words spoken to you. Substitute your gender and your name. And give thanks that you are the beloved of God.

Donal Neary SJ, Editor Sacred Heart Messenger



GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia! Someone is coming, said John, someone greater than I. He will baptise with the Holy Spirit and with fire. Alleluia!

GOSPEL Luke 3:15-16. 21-22

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

A feeling of expectancy had grown among the people, who were beginning to think that John might be the Christ, so John declared before them all, 'I baptise you with water, but someone is coming, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to undo the strap of his sandals; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire.'

Now when all the people had been baptised and while Jesus after his own baptism was at prayer, heaven opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily shape, like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on you.'

The Gospel of the Lord. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,

All bow for following two lines:
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God, the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.
 I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.



AFTER THE CONSECRATION

We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

'Here is your God.'
 Here is the Lord coming with power, his arm subduing all things to him. The prize of his victory is with him, his trophies all go before him. He is like a shepherd feeding his flock, gathering lambs in his arms, holding them against his breast and leading to their rest the mother ewes.

The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps. 103:1-2.3-4.24-25.27-30

R. Bless the Lord, my soul! Lord God, how great you are!

1. Lord God, how great you are, clothed in majesty and glory, wrapped in light as in a robe!
 You stretch out the heavens like a tent. [R]
2. Above the rains you build your dwelling. You make the clouds your chariot, you walk on the wings of the wind, you make the winds your messengers and flashing fire your servants. [R]
3. How many are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you have made them all. The earth is full of your riches. There is the sea, vast and wide, with its moving swarms past counting, living things great and small. [R]
4. All of these look to you to give them their food in due season. You give it, they gather it up; you open your hand, they have their fill. [R]
5. You take back your spirit, they die, returning to the dust from which they came. You send forth your spirit, they are created; and you renew the face of the earth. [R]

SECOND READING Titus 2:11 - 14; 3. 4-7

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to Titus
 God's grace has been revealed, and it has made salvation possible for the whole human race and taught us that what we have to do is to give up everything that does not lead to God, and all our worldly ambitions; we must be self-restrained and live good and religious lives here in this present world, while we are waiting in hope for the blessing which will come with the Appearing of the glory of our great God and saviour Christ Jesus. He sacrificed himself for us in order to set us free from all wickedness and to purify a people so that it could be his very own and would have no ambition except to do good.

When the kindness and love of God our saviour for mankind were revealed, it was not because he was concerned with any righteous actions we might have done ourselves; it was for no reason except his own compassion that he saved us, by means of the cleansing water of rebirth and by renewing us with the Holy Spirit which he has so generously poured over us through Jesus Christ our saviour. He did this so that we should be justified by his grace, to become heirs looking forward to inheriting eternal life.

The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

After the Lord was baptised, the heavens were opened, and the Spirit descended upon him like a dove, and the voice of the Father thundered: This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.

PENITENTIAL ACT

You raise the dead to life in the Spirit:
 Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.
 You bring pardon and peace to the sinner:
 Christ, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.
 You bring light to those in darkness:
 Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.
 May almighty God have mercy on us...Amen.

THE GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father. Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us; For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

OPENING PRAYER

Almighty ever-living God, who, when Christ had been baptised in the River Jordan and as the Holy Spirit descended upon him, solemnly declared him your beloved Son, grant that your children by adoption, reborn of water and the Holy Spirit, may always be well pleasing to you. Through our Lord....

LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING Isaiah 40:1-5. 9-11

A reading from the prophet Isaiah.
 'Console my people, console them,' says your God. 'Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and call to her that her time of service is ended, that her sin is atoned for, that she has received from the hand of the Lord double punishment for all her crimes.'
 A voice cries, 'Prepare in the wilderness a way for the Lord.
 Make a straight highway for our God across the desert. Let every valley be filled in, every mountain and hill be laid low, let every cliff become a plain, and the ridges a valley; then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all mankind shall see it; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.'
 Go up on a high mountain, joyful messenger to Zion. Shout with a loud voice, joyful messenger to Jerusalem. Shout without fear, say to the towns of Judah

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