

Only the man who believes  
 that Jesus is the Son of God:  
 Jesus Christ who came by water and blood,  
 not with water only,  
 but with water and blood;  
 with the Spirit as another witness –  
 since the Spirit is the truth –  
 so that there are three witnesses,  
 the Spirit, the water and the blood,  
 and all three of them agree.  
 We accept the testimony of human witnesses,  
 but God's testimony is much greater,  
 and this is God's testimony,  
 given as evidence for his Son.

■ **The word of the Lord.**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION** cf. Jn 1:29

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

**John saw Jesus approaching him, and said:  
 This is the Lamb of God who takes away  
 the sins of the world. Alleluia!**

**GOSPEL** Mk 1:7-11

**A reading from the holy Gospel according  
 to Mark.**

*You are my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*  
 In the course of his preaching John the Baptist  
 said, 'Someone is following me, someone who  
 is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to  
 kneel down and undo the strap of his sandals.  
 I have baptised you with water, but he will  
 baptise you with the Holy Spirit.'

It was at this time that Jesus came from  
 Nazareth in Galilee and was baptised in the  
 Jordan by John. No sooner had he come up out  
 of the water than he saw the heavens torn apart  
 and the Spirit, like a dove, descending on him.  
 And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my  
 Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on you.'

■ **The Gospel of the Lord.**

# Reflections on the Gospel



# THE SAVING WORD

THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD / B

10 JANUARY 2021

## SHARING GOD'S GIFT

One of the great recurring themes of the scriptures is that of God's irrepressible and untiring desire to bring us into the fullness of life. The reading from Isaiah is filled with images of the life God wants to share with us: water, grain, wine and milk without cost, a life-giving and nourishing word that never returns without achieving its purpose. This life is offered freely – all we need do is seek the Lord to share in this banquet.

For Christians, baptism is a sign of the new life that we have been graciously given through the death and resurrection of Jesus. One of the problems facing John's community was that of how to deal with false teachings which were dividing and weakening the community and the baptismal promises they had made. John seeks to remind them of the life they share through their baptism and the call to bear witness to it by their love for God and for their sisters and brothers.

In the birth of Jesus God's life-giving and nourishing word becomes one with us. His baptism marks a moment of grace for him and us. The heavens are opened and God's empowering Spirit comes upon him as he begins his ministry. God bears testimony to the life that he is pleased to offer us in the Beloved Son. At Jesus' baptism the voice from heaven proclaims how a time of new life and growth is beginning. For those with eyes to see the rich harvest is already beginning, and the banquet prepared.

## FIRST READING

Isa 55:1-11

**A reading from the prophet Isaiah**

*Come to the waters; listen to my words and you shall have life.*

Oh, come to the water all you who are thirsty;  
 though you have no money, come!  
 Buy corn without money, and eat,  
 and, at no cost, wine and milk.

Why spend money on what is not bread,  
 your wages on what fails to satisfy?  
 Listen, listen to me, and you will have good  
 things to eat and rich food to enjoy.

Pay attention, come to me;  
 listen, and your soul will live.

With you I will make an everlasting covenant  
 out of the favours promised to David.  
 See, I have made of you a witness to the peoples,  
 a leader and a master of the nations.

See, you will summon a nation you never knew,  
 those unknown will come hurrying to you,  
 for the sake of the Lord your God,  
 of the Holy One of Israel who will glorify you.

Seek the Lord while he is still to be found,  
 call to him while he is still near.

Let the wicked man abandon his way,  
 the evil man his thoughts.

Let him turn back to the Lord who will  
 take pity on him,

to our God who is rich in forgiving;  
 for my thoughts are not your thoughts,  
 my ways not your ways – it is the Lord who  
 speaks.

Yes, the heavens are as high above earth  
 as my ways are above your ways,  
 my thoughts above your thoughts.

Yes, as the rain and the snow come down from  
 the heavens and do not return without watering  
 the earth, making it yield and giving growth to  
 provide seed for the sower and bread for the  
 eating, so the word that goes from my mouth  
 does not return to me empty, without carrying  
 out my will and succeeding in what it was sent  
 to do.

■ **The word of the Lord.**



## RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Isa 12:2-6. R. v. 6

**R. You will draw water joyfully from the  
 springs of salvation.**

1. Truly, God is my salvation, / I trust, I shall  
 not fear. / For the Lord is my strength, my song, /  
 he became my saviour. / With joy you will draw  
 water / from the wells of salvation. **R.**

2. Give thanks to the Lord, give praise to his  
 name! / Make his mighty deeds known to the  
 peoples! / Declare the greatness of his name. **R.**

3. Sing a psalm to the Lord / for he has done  
 glorious deeds, / make them known to all the  
 earth! / People of Zion, sing and shout for  
 joy / for great in your midst is the Holy One  
 of Israel. **R.**

## SECOND READING

1 Jn 5:1-9

**A reading from the first letter of St John**  
*The Spirit, the water and the blood give witness.*

Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ  
 has been begotten by God;  
 and whoever loves the Father that begot him  
 loves the child whom he begets.  
 We can be sure that we love God's children  
 if we love God himself and do  
 what he has commanded us;

this is what loving God is –  
 keeping his commandments;  
 and his commandments are not difficult,  
 because anyone who has been begotten by God  
 has already overcome the world;  
 this is the victory over the world – our faith.  
 Who can overcome the world?

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