



The Baptism of the Lord

Luke 3:15-16, 21-22

As the people were in expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Christ, John answered them all, saying, "I baptise you with water, but he who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire."

Now when all the people were baptised, and when Jesus also had been baptised and was praying, the heavens were opened, and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

Some things to think about...

Most Catholics are baptised as a baby and are supported by their parents and godparents. Other Christians will be baptised as an adult (or young adult) and may be baptised by being plunged into a baptismal pool, closer to the way Jesus was baptised in the Jordan.

At Jesus' baptism the Holy Spirit came down on him and at Baptism we believe that the Holy Spirit comes down on us and helps us to live out our baptismal promises. We receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit which we need to live out our Vincentian calling to serve others.

Can you match the gifts of the Holy Spirit to the explanations?
(see teacher's notes)

Activity

On a template of a dove write your name and see if you can find out what it means or why your parents chose this name for you. Perhaps you have a saint's name and you could find out more about how they served God in their life.

Or write one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit on the dove that you think will help you to be a good Vincentian, for example how will understanding help you to support people in need or how through the fear of the Lord you can bring God's love to others.

Why not bring baptism to life through drama? Act out the stages of a baptism with the help of your Vincentian Coordinator.

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Teacher's Notes

The Baptism of the Lord is important as it marks the beginning of Jesus' ministry and Jesus is recognised as the Son of God. 'You are my beloved Son; with whom I am well pleased.'

John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus; he was getting people ready for the one who would follow him. John was a great prophet and the last prophet before the coming of the Messiah. Baptism means 'to bathe, dip or plunge into water,' which was how Jesus was baptised by John in the river Jordan.

'He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.' These words can be difficult to understand but probably link with the idea that John baptises with water to prepare people for the One who will bring them into a relationship with God in a new way and bring about the promised Kingdom of God. The work of Vincentians is to bring about the Kingdom of God through acts of service to those in need.

A Catholic Baptism is full of symbolism which highlights the meaning of the sacrament. The child is anointed with two oils; the oil of Catechumens on the chest (symbolising the strength needed to be a Christian) and the oil of Chrism (symbolising that they are called to be priest, prophet and king). The Baptism with water and the words 'I baptise you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit) takes place between the anointings. A white garment is worn to symbolise the new life in Christ and a candle is lit reminding everyone that Jesus is the light of the world and that the light of faith needs to be kept burning.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit are:

Knowledge: the gift of knowing the truth and the love of God for us.

Wisdom: the gift to see all things as God sees them.

Understanding: the gift of understanding of God's call for each of us.

Counsel: the gift to see what we should do in a difficult situation

Fortitude: the power to carry through joyfully what we know to be right

Piety: the gift of faithfulness to God.

Fear of the Lord: the gift to love God and feel loved by God.

They enable us to live out our Christian lives, to love and to serve God through the kind acts.

Print the gifts of the Holy Spirit on one sheet, and the explanations on the other. Let the children match them up.

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