



Baptism

Sunday 12th January



*Holy Spirit and Fire with Baptismal Font,
from Art in the Christian Tradition, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville,
TN. <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=56760> [retrieved January 8, 2025].
Original source: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/paullew/42622611981/>.*

Scripture: Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

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

To reflect

Can you remember your baptism? Perhaps you were an infant, with the decision taken by your parents or guardians. Perhaps you were older and it was your decision to take the step of publicly declaring your faith in God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. You may not have grown up in a family of faith, or in a tradition where Baptism was part of worship, or you may have witnessed many baptisms before realising what baptism meant to you.

This Sunday we mark Jesus Christ's baptism. Where Jesus decides to be baptised by John the Baptist and we see one example of the Trinity in action – the presence of the Trinitarian God. We hear the voice of God tell Jesus that he is God's son, beloved and with whom God is well-pleased.

As you reflect today on Jesus' baptism what does your baptism mean for you in this season of your life?

If you are interested in renewing your Baptismal promises (affirmation, also known as confirmation) or if you are interested in being baptised, because you have not yet been or are unsure please speak to your Priest.

A Thanksgiving

The light of Christ is within you. Shine as a light in the world.

As the seed grows secretly in the earth,

As the yeast rises in the dough,

May the power of God be at work in us.

Like a city on a hill,

Like a lamp in the darkness,

May we witness to the glory of the kingdom.

Taken from the Scottish Episcopal Church's Affirmation of Baptism Liturgy (2006)

Jesus' Baptism by Malcolm Guite

Beginning here we glimpse the Three-in-one;

The river runs, the clouds are torn apart,

The Father speaks, the Spirit and the Son

Reveal to us the single loving heart

That beats behind the being of all things

And calls and keeps and kindles us to light.

The dove descends, the spirit soars and sings

'You are beloved, you are my delight!'

In that quick light and life, as water spills

And streams around the Man like quickening rain,

The voice that made the universe reveals

The God in Man who makes it new again.

He calls us too, to step into that river

To die and rise and live and love forever.

From Sounding the Seasons, Canterbury Press (2012)

To Listen (these and other suggestions can be found on a Spotify playlist at

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0F5bU2sf4OiOtQY3q78Rf2?si=a99cbbf61e7d4587>)

- A spiritual which speak about Baptism are 'Down to the River to Pray' one version is by Alison Krauss (from the Film 'O Brother Where Art Thou' where the protagonists encounter baptisms at a River). Another is 'Shall We Gather at the River' one version is by the Scottish Festival Singers.
- 'All Things New' by Elevation Worship speaks of redemption through Jesus and new life through God.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.