

**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON**

After the Lord was baptized, 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.

**COLLECT**

Almighty, ever-living God, who, when Christ had been baptized 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 Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

**FIRST READING 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,

'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 ewe.

*The word of the Lord.*

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 103**

**Response: 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 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 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.*

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

Some one is coming, said John, someone greater than I. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. Alleluia.

**GOSPEL**

**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.*

**PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Accept, O Lord, the offerings we have brought to honour the revealing of your beloved Son, so that the oblation of your faithful may be transformed into the sacrifice of him who willed in his compassion to wash away the sins of the world.

Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

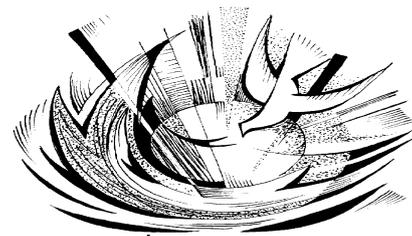
**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

**Behold the One of whom John said: I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God.**

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Nourished with these sacred gifts, we humbly entreat your mercy, O Lord, that, faithfully listening to your Only Begotten Son, we may be your children in name and in truth.

Through Christ our Lord.



**Readings – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday Ord. Time YrC**

**First Reading:** Isaiah 62:1-5

**Second Reading:** 1 Corinthians 12:4-11

**Gospel:** John 2:1-11

Today we celebrate the Baptism of our Lord Jesus and the first reading from Isaiah gives us that familiar prophesy and introduction to John the Baptist;

‘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...then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all mankind shall see it!’

It was indeed at the baptism of Jesus that this prophecy was fulfilled, and his glory was revealed when the heavens opened, and the Holy Spirit descended on him like a dove and God the Father said, ‘You are my Son, the Beloved, my favour rests on you’, and mankind did see and hear it.

John the Baptist preached the need for repentance and the washing in water to cleanse away sin and many thousands in Israel heeded his call and came to be baptised in the River Jordan. People sensed a great need for personal spiritual cleansing. A cleansing which was very personal and different to the ritual cleansing for sin carried out by their priests offering sacrifices remotely in the Temple.

But why did Jesus come to be baptised? Why did God made man, the sinless one come to the river Jordan along with the rest of mankind to be baptised by John and washed in the waters?

St Gregory Naziansen, a great theologian writing in the 4<sup>th</sup> century explains it like this, ‘Christ is illumined, let us shine forth with him; Christ is baptised, let us descend with him, that we may also ascend with him’.

Jesus does not need to have his sins removed, he is the sinless one, but by being baptised he sanctifies the Baptist and sanctifies the waters of baptism. Jesus puts a divine seal on the act of baptism for the forgiveness of sin for all generations to come. This leads to Jesus giving the Great Commission to the Apostles in Matthew’s gospel, ‘Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit’.

St Gregory also explains how Jesus as the new Adam, by being immersed in the waters, washes away the sin of the old Adam. And just as the old Adam closed the gates of heaven on himself, Jesus as the new Adam when he emerges from the waters sees the gates of heaven thrown open, never to be closed again. We descend with Jesus as the old Adam, so that we can ascend with Jesus as the new Adam.

In Paul’s letter to Titus, he explains that it is not through any good actions by ourselves that we are saved but that ‘God through his own compassion for us, saves us by 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’.

This is the wonderful sacrament of baptism that all baptised Christians receive. Through the waters of baptism poured over us and our anointing we each of us receive the Holy Spirit to sanctify us, guide and strengthen us, all the days of our life.

After his baptism, ‘Jesus was at prayer’, always setting us a great example on the importance of prayer and listening to our Father.

As we pray, giving thanks for our baptism and the gift of the Holy Spirit, can we imagine the heavens thrown open and God our loving Father saying to each one of us;

‘You are my child, I love you, my favour rests on you.’

## **Bidding Prayers and Synod Prayer**

**9<sup>th</sup> January 2022 – Baptism of the Lord, Year C**

### **Priest:**

As the Christmas Season comes to an end and we celebrate the Baptism of the Lord we bring all our prayers before Our Heavenly Father.

### **Reader:**

For the Church and Christians everywhere: may they be attentive to the promptings of the Holy Spirit as we continue to journey together.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For peace in our world and an end to violence, hatred and division everywhere.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For those who are poor or in need: following the example of Christ may we always help and serve them with love, generosity and compassion.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For migrants and refugees, particularly our refugees here in Wallasey; may we do all we can to help and support them. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For those in our parish who are sick or housebound: may they come to know the love, peace and the comforting presence of Christ.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For the faithful departed especially **Elizabeth Naylor, Eric and Barbara Bushell** and all who have died recently and those whose anniversaries occur around this time: **“Eternal rest grant unto them...”**

We pray through the intercession of Mary our mother: **“Hail Mary...”**

In silence we bring our own private prayers and intentions before the Lord.

### **Priest:**

Loving Father,

As we celebrate the Baptism of the Lord  
we offer these and all our prayers to you,  
through your Son Jesus,  
who is Christ Our Lord, Amen.

## Bidding Prayers and Synod Prayer

9<sup>th</sup> January 2022 – Baptism of the Lord, Year C

### Synod Prayer

We stand before You, Holy Spirit,  
as we gather together in Your name.

With You alone to guide us,  
make Yourself at home in our hearts;  
Teach us the way we must go  
and how we are to pursue it.

We are weak and sinful;  
do not let us promote disorder.  
Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path  
nor partiality influence our actions.

Let us find in You our unity  
so that we may journey together to eternal life  
and not stray from the way of truth  
and what is right.

All this we ask of You,  
who are at work in every place and time,  
in the communion of the Father and the Son,  
forever and ever. **Amen**