

## The Feast of the Baptism of the Lord

*Isaiah 55:1-11   1 John 5:1-9   Mark 1:7-11*

### HOMILY

With the feast of the baptism of the Lord, we are making a leap from the liturgy of Christmas – leaving it behind us. The child Jesus has now become an adult. It is as a full-grown man that he steps out, into the river Jordan to be baptized by John and to begin his public ministry. His baptism can be likened to the day of his ordination. He leaves behind the sheltered life under his family in Nazareth and he steps onto a more public stage. As he does so two things happen. Firstly, he experiences the coming of the Holy Spirit and then hears a voice from the heavens say to him, ***‘You are my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on you’***.

That’s we can rightly look at the baptism of Jesus as

- a moment of empowerment and a day of sanctioning.
- Above all it was a moment when Jesus was assured of God’s favour. It is like the heavens are saying; go on ahead and God’s hand will be behind you!

Unlike Jesus, most of us at Mass in here, and most of you over there joining into the Mass out there came to the waters of baptism as children not as adults. We did not walk there on our own as Jesus did. We were brought there led by the gentle hands of our parents.

That is why it is so important for us to revisit our baptism as adults. But even though some of you were baptised as adults, we all need to revisit that day of our baptism. It is important for us all to ‘journey back’ to that moment in our mind and heart, and in some way to experience it all again. This ‘journey back’ will enable us to turn that infant moment or that memorable event into the reality that speaks to us now. ‘Journeying back’ helps us to sustain the meaning of baptism in and throughout our lives. Baptism is far more than an event of the past. That ‘journeying back’ will enable us to connect with the spirit of God at work our lives.

‘Journeying back’ will help us take in those words uttered from the heavens: ***‘You are my son/daughter, the beloved; my favour rests on you’***. Yes, we need to re-ignite that Spirit of God and to allow those words of favour to sink into us and to recreate us.

Today, the feast of the baptism of the Lord, is a day to pray that our own personal baptism will come alive for each of us. Today is that day we are invited to experience anew the grace of our baptism, and to commit ourselves anew to living our baptismal calling to the full