

Based on the gospel for Sunday 13 January – Luke 3:15-16, 21-22

“You are my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on you.”

This week we sense the excitement and tension in the air as crowds of people in Jordan surge around John the Baptist, desperate for salvation.

John has been preaching the Word of God so powerfully that many have started believing that he himself is the Messiah they have been anticipating for so long.

This feeling of expectancy started for us back in Advent, when we were waiting for the coming of the infant Christ. In this week’s gospel, it is the adult Jesus who is expected. As depicted by John, he is an almost fearsome figure, one who will baptise with fire.

Yet when Jesus does appear, the imagery is much more gentle: “The Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily shape, like a dove.” This beautiful symbol of his baptism endures, the dove that brings new beginnings for us as Christians.

Baptism is the first of the great sacraments we receive; as the water is poured on us and our heads anointed with oil, so we are “born anew with Christ”. Original sin has been washed away, we have become followers of Christ as proclaimed by John.

Being thus born with Christ, how can we truly mirror his life in this new year ahead? What are we waiting for to bring that change into our lives?



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Lord,
Help us to live out the promise of our own baptism as we start out on a new year.
May we be filled by your Holy Spirit, and like the dove, spread your gentleness and
peace to all those around us. Amen.