

The Parishes of Holy Family Ince Blundell and Our Lady of Victories, Hightown

LITURGY OF THE WORD FOR THE SUNDAY MASS: THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

First reading: Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7

Thus says the LORD:

Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations. He will not cry aloud or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street; a bruised reed he will not break, and a faintly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice. He will not grow faint or be discouraged till he has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his law.

'I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness; I will take you by the hand and keep you; I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness.'

The word of the Lord

Second reading: Acts 10:34-38

In those days: Peter opened his mouth and said: 'Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. As for the word that he sent to Israel, preaching good news of peace through Jesus Christ — he is Lord of all — you yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.'

The word of the Lord

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia. Alleluia. The heavens were opened and the voice of the Father thundered: 'This is my beloved Son; listen to him'. Alleluia.

Gospel: Matthew 3:13-17

At that time: Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptised by him. John would have prevented him, saying, 'I need to be baptised by you, and do you come to me?' But Jesus answered him, 'Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfil all righteousness.' Then he consented. And when Jesus was baptised, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; and behold, a voice from heaven said, 'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.'

The Gospel of the Lord

Source: Universalis App – New Lectionary



Responsorial Psalm: Ps 29(28)

R:/ The LORD will bless his people with peace.

Ascribe to the LORD, you heavenly powers, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. Ascribe to the LORD the glory of his name; bow down before the LORD, majestic in holiness. **R:/**

The voice of the LORD upon the waters, the LORD on the immensity of waters; the voice of the LORD full of power; the voice of the LORD full of splendour. **R:/**

The God of glory thunders; in his temple they all cry, 'Glory!' The LORD sits enthroned above the flood; the LORD sits as king for ever. **R:/**

The Nicene Creed

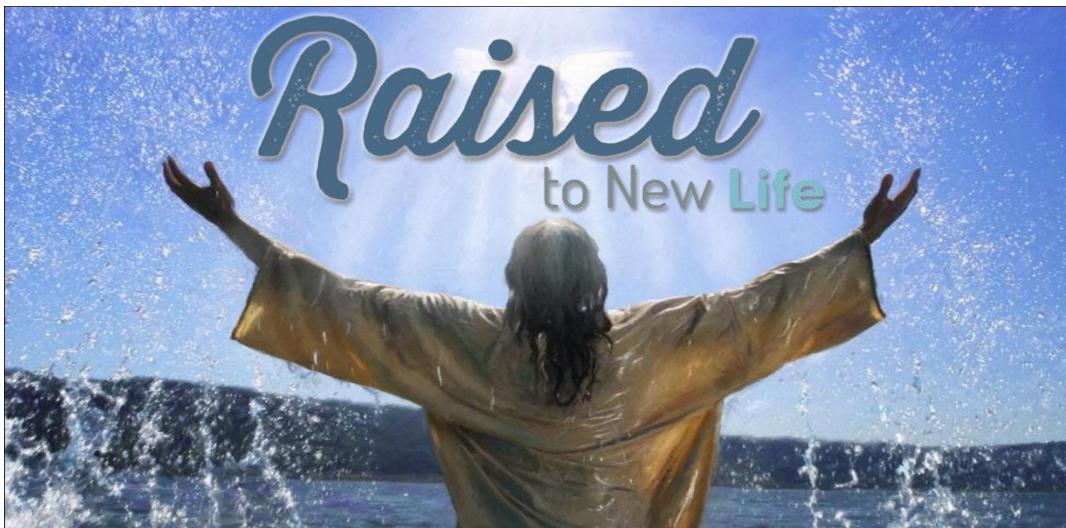
I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.

Amen.



The Baptism of Our Lord

The voice of the LORD is over the waters, the LORD, over vast waters.

On coming up out of the water he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit, like a dove, descending upon him. And a voice came from the heavens, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." Mark 10:11

Today's Feast marks the conclusion of the Christmas Season and the beginning of Ordinary Time. It's a feast of transition from Jesus' hidden life to that of His public ministry. It also echoes the theme of the Epiphany in that the Baptism of the Lord is another manifestation announcing Jesus' divinity to all of His first followers and to the disciples of John the Baptist.

It needs to be pointed out that **Jesus did not need the baptism of John**. John was baptizing as a call to and sign of interior repentance. Jesus had no need to repent. But, nonetheless, He comes to John. John resists at first but Jesus insists.

Why did He receive baptism?

- ✓ **First**, by accepting the baptism of John, **Jesus affirms all that John has said and done** and affirms his sacred role of preparing the way for Jesus and for a new era of grace. Therefore, the Baptism of Jesus acts as a bridge between the Old Testament prophets (of which John was the last) and the New Testament era of grace and truth.
- ✓ **Second**, it has been said that when Jesus entered the waters of baptism, He was not baptized by the waters, rather, His Baptism was one in which all the created waters of this world were, in a sense, "baptized" by Him. By entering into the waters, **Jesus sanctified water and poured forth His grace making all water the future source of salvation**.
- ✓ **Third, the Baptism of Jesus was an epiphany**. It was a moment of manifestation. As He emerged from the waters, "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 beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.'" This manifestation of the sonship and divinity of Jesus took place in a physical, audible and visible form so that all present would know, without question, that Jesus was the Son of the Father. Thus, His baptism is a way in which the Father introduced His Son and His Son's mission to the world.

As we prepare to begin Ordinary Time, reflect, today, upon these words of the Father at the Baptism of Jesus. Hear the Father speaking to You about the divinity of His Son. Turn your eyes to Jesus and prepare yourself to follow Him and to heed every word He speaks. He was sent into this world to draw us to the Father, allow Him to fulfill that mission in your own life.

Lord, I believe that You are the Son of the Eternal Father and the Savior of the World. I believe that You have brought about a new era of grace and truth and that I am called to follow You wherever You lead. As we begin this liturgical season of Ordinary Time, may it be a time of extraordinary grace in which I daily heed Your voice. Jesus, I trust in You.

Father Sergio, Parish Priest