



## ONE MISSION, TWO CHURCHES



The Baptism of the Lord, Year C - 12th Jan. 2024

### Administrator

Fr Alex Chow

### Parish Secretary

Sonya O'Farrell

Wednesdays,  
Thursdays & Fridays  
10am – 2pm

=====

### SUNDAY MASS

**Saturday Vigil:** 5pm (SL) &  
6.30pm (ST)

**Sunday:** 8:30am (SL),  
10:30am (ST), 5pm (ST),  
Vietnamese

-----

### WEEKDAY MASSES

**Tues.** 6:30pm(SL\*)

**Wed.** 9:15am(ST)

*1st Wed Mass of Anointing  
@10am*

**Thurs.** 9:15am(ST)

**Fri.** 9:15am(SL\*)/6:30pm(ST)

**Sat.** 9:15am (SL\*)

\*Rosary after Mass at SL

-----

### RECONCILIATION

SL: Tues 5:30-6:10pm

Sat 9:45 - 10:15am

Sat 4:30 - 4:50pm

ST: Fri 5:30 - 6:10pm.

-----

### EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT & EVENING PRAYER

SL: Tues 5:30 - 6:30pm

ST: Fri 5:30 - 6:30pm

Isaiah 40:1-11, Ps 103:1-30, Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7.  
Gospel Reflection on **Luke 3:15-22**

Meditation: Do you want to be on fire for God? John the Baptist said that the Messiah would "baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire." Fire in biblical times was associated with God and with his action in the world and in the lives of his people. God sometimes manifested his presence by use of fire, such as the burning bush which was not consumed when God spoke to Moses (Exodus 3:2). The image of fire was also used to symbolize

God's glory (Ezekiel 1:4, 13), his protective presence (2 Kings 6:17), his holiness (Deuteronomy 4:24), his righteous judgment (Zechariah 13:9), and his wrath against sin and evil (Isaiah 66:15-16). Fire can also be a sign of the presence and action of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:11-12 and Acts 2:3). God's fire both purifies and cleanses us, and burns within us a passionate love, holy desire, and reverent fear (respect and awe) of God and his word.

**Jesus will baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire:** Jesus came to give us the fire of his Spirit that we may radiate the joy and truth of the Gospel to a world in desperate need of God's light and truth. His word has power to change and transform our lives that we may be burning lights pointing others to Jesus Christ. Like John the Baptist, we too are called to give testimony to the light and truth of Jesus Christ. Do you want the Lord's power, grace, and love to burn brightly in your life? Ask him to fill you with his Holy Spirit. John preached a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins (Luke 3:3). Why did Jesus, the Sinless One, submit himself to John's baptism? In this humble submission we see a foreshadowing of the "baptism" of his bloody death upon the cross. Jesus' baptism is the acceptance and the beginning of his mission as God's suffering Servant (Isaiah 53). He allowed himself to be numbered among sinners. Jesus submitted himself entirely to his Father's will. Out of love he consented to this baptism of death for the remission of our sins. Do you know the joy of trust and submission to God?

**Jesus' baptism - beginning of a new creation:** The Father proclaimed his entire delight in his Son and spoke audibly for all to hear. The Holy Spirit, too, was present as he anointed Jesus for his ministry which began that day as he rose from the waters of the Jordan river. Jesus will be the source of the Spirit for all who come to believe in him. At his baptism the heavens were opened and the waters were sanctified by the descent of Jesus and the Holy Spirit, signifying the beginning of a new creation.

**Heaven will open for those who bow before the Lord:** How can we enter into the mystery of Jesus' humble self-abasement and baptism? Gregory of Nazianzus (329-389 AD), an early church father tells us: "Let us be buried with Christ by Baptism to rise with him; let us go down with him to be raised with him; and let us rise with him to be glorified with him." Do you want to see your life transformed in the likeness of Christ? And do you want to become a more effective instrument of the Gospel? Examine Jesus' humility and ask the Holy Spirit to forge this same attitude in your heart. As you do, heaven will open for you as well. The Lord Jesus is ever ready to renew and refashion us in his likeness through the gift and working of the Holy Spirit – and he anoints us for mission as ambassadors of his kingdom of righteousness (moral goodness), peace, and joy (Romans 14:17). We are called to be the "light" and "salt" of his kingdom that radiate the beauty and aroma of his mercy and goodness to those around us (Matthew 5:13, 15-16). The Lord Jesus wants his love and truth to shine through us that many others may find new life, freedom, and joy in the Holy Spirit. Ask the Lord Jesus to fill you with his Holy Spirit that you may radiate the joy of the Gospel to those around you.

© 2024 Servants of the Word, author Don Schwager.



Office (for both Parishes): 17 Stevens Road Forest Hill Vic 3133

Parish Office tel: 03 9412 8499; Presbytery tel: 03 9877 2292

Email: foresthill@cam.org.au | Web: sttimothys.org.au

Email: blackburnsouth@cam.org.au | Web: blackburnsouth.org.au

## Next Week Daily Readings 13 - 19 January 2025

MONDAY, Jan 13: Hebrews 1:1-6, Ps 96:1-9, Mark 1:14-20.

TUESDAY, Jan 14: Hebrews 2:5-12, Ps 8:2-9, Mark 1:21-28.

WEDNESDAY, Jan 15: Hebrews 2:14-18, Ps 104:1-9, Mark 1:29-39.

THURSDAY, Jan 16: Hebrews 3:7-14; Ps 94:6-11, Mark 1:40-45.

FRIDAY, Jan 17: Hebrews 4:1-5, 11, Ps 77:3-8, Mark 2:1-12. *St Anthony, abbot*

SATURDAY, Jan 18: Hebrews 4:12-16, Ps 18:8-15, Mark 2:13-17.

SUNDAY, Jan 19: Isaiah 62:1-5, Ps 95:1-10, 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, John 2:1-11. 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

(Taken from ORDO 2024, Liturgy Brisbane, ACBC 2023)

## WE WELCOME THE YOUTH MISSION TEAM TO ST TIMOTHY'S

Youth Mission Team Australia (YMT) is one of Australia's leading youth ministry organisations, consisting of 3 teams across the country. Each team is comprised of 6 young men and women who defer career or tertiary studies for 12 months to volunteer as full-time youth ministers in schools and parishes. The ministry of each team is managed by two paid staff members. The Melbourne Youth Mission Team, with their office now based here in the parish, will spend 2025 running retreats and reflection days in Catholic high schools, as well as a weekly youth group, quarterly youth retreats and an ongoing mentoring program. For more information about the work of Youth Mission Team, you can visit their website: [ymt.com.au](http://ymt.com.au)



[ymt.com.au](http://ymt.com.au)

### MINISTERS OF THE WORD

Saturday 5pm SL  
6.30pm ST  
Sunday 8:30am SL  
10:30am ST  
5pm ST

### 11 and 12 Jan

Margaret Gearon  
Volunteer  
Steve Kilroe-Smith  
Volunteer  
Gia Nghi & Thuan Tran

### 18 and 19 Jan

Mia Perang  
Volunteer  
Peter McKeown  
Volunteer  
Thuy Vu & Van Truong

### EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF THE EUCHARIST

Saturday 5pm SL  
6.30pm ST  
Sunday 8:30am SL  
10:30am ST  
5pm ST

Sonya O'Farrell  
Volunteer  
Lynda Kilroe-Smith  
Volunteer  
Hoang Nguyen

Volunteer  
Volunteer  
Margaret Gearon  
Volunteer  
Hoang Nguyen

### SLIDE OPERATORS

Saturday 5pm SL  
6.30pm ST  
Sunday 8:30am SL  
10:30am ST  
5pm ST

Volunteer  
Michelle Chen  
Volunteer  
Manny Gonzalez  
Toan Tran

Volunteer  
Michelle Chen  
Volunteer  
Lee Min Yee  
Toan Tran

### SL WELCOMERS 11/12 JAN

5:00pm Volunteer  
8.30am Volunteer  
10.30am Volunteer

### SL CHURCH CLEANING

No cleaning roster  
during January

### SL CHURCH FLOWERS

No roster during January

### ST CHURCH FLOWERS

January - Parishioners

### SL WELCOMERS 18/19 JAN

5:00pm Volunteer  
8.30am Volunteer  
10.30am Volunteer

### ST CHURCH CLEANING

10th Jan @ 8am  
Toan Tran, Dao Dinh,  
Hieu Nguyen & Dieu Nguyen,

### ST COUNTERS

This week Team 1:  
Owen Grealy & Anthony Yeo  
Next week Team 2:  
Raj & Violet Fonn

## WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

**All who are sick**, especially Josephine Alexander, Bernadine O'Meara, Kit Bing Fan, Kathryn Holmes, Therese O'Donoghue, Stewart Davis, Jerry Donoghue, Mark, Margaret Hayes, Charmaine Bancroft and all those parishioners unable to be among us this weekend.

**All who have died**, especially Alan Marshall who died recently and all those whose anniversaries occur about this time especially John Carman, Ruby D'Souza, Evelyn Abundo, Anatolia Abundo, Philip Benizi Pereira, Stefano Defina, Sophia Alice Dunn, Noreen Rabel, Fr John O'Callaghan, Francis Xavier Borg, Robert John Hammett, John Kennedy, Dr Triet Le, Patricia Duguid, Una Jean Paramanathan, Dorothy Girling & Linda Flynn. May they rest in peace.

---

## POPE FRANCIS' PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR JANUARY 2025:

**For the right to an education:** Let us pray for migrants, refugees, and those affected by war, that their right to an education, which is necessary to build a better world, might always be respected.

Please use the link below to access the prayer intentions:

[catholicnewsagency.com/news/261269/pope-francis-prayer-intentions-for-2025](http://catholicnewsagency.com/news/261269/pope-francis-prayer-intentions-for-2025)

**CUPPA AFTER MASS THIS WEEKEND:** Join us for a cuppa after all Masses this weekend at St Luke's and St Timothy's except for the 6.30pm Vigil Mass at St Timothy's.

**S.I. ANNUAL CARE GROUP CHRISTMAS HAMPER RAFFLE:** Congratulations to the winners of the Christmas hampers which were drawn on December 22nd. First prize went to Jo Drumm, second prize to Kana Chelliah and third prize to Gabrielle Swallow. Thanks to all parishioners for your support of the raffle. Over \$500 was raised for the Care Group.

## Resources ....

**MELBOURNE CATHOLIC:** [Hope and joy in new life](#)

**MAJELLAN MEDIA:** [Christmas Blessings](#)

**THE JOURNEY THIS WEEK:** On The Journey This Week: Fr Joshua Whitehead says that Jesus speaks to us with a voice of love, warmth, and intimacy, calling us His beloved children. Mother Hilda on God being eternally faithful in spite of our infidelity. Plus, Fr Tony Percy, Byron & Francine Pirola, and Fr Mike Delaney. The Journey podcast available at [www.jcr.org.au](http://www.jcr.org.au).

---

## **STEWARDSHIP CORNER:**

*The First collection is for the priest and retired priests.*

*The Second collection is for parish expenses*

**ST:** Last week's Presbytery Stewardship Envelopes: \$182

Last week's Church Stewardship Envelopes: \$240

Vietnamese Donation: \$94.60

**SL:** Last week's Presbytery Stewardship Envelopes: \$306

Last week's Church Stewardship Envelopes: \$379

## Parish Groups & Contacts

### Volunteers and Rosters

ST: Corrie Quimbo

SL: Margaret Gearon

### Baptism Preparation

ST: Mary Italiano

### Vietnamese Community

Hoang Nguyen

Andy Tran

### Vietnamese Youth

Theresa Nguyen

### Parish Collection Preparers

ST: Barry Silvester &

Michael Kawalevski

### Stewardship Counters

SL: Dale Dixon

Steve Kilroe-Smith

### Parishes Safeguarding Committee

Theresa Nguyen, Mary Italiano,

Darren McLean

Janette Clark

### Parish history

SL: Margaret Gearon

### Parish Accountant

Bernard Negline

### SL: Hall Hire

Sonya O'Farrell @ the

Parish Office – 9877 2292

### Church Sacristan

ST: Margaret King & Hoang Nguyen

SL: Greg Grant

### Church Housekeeping

ST: Margaret King

### Church Cleaning & Flowers

SL: Megan McLean

### Church Linen

SL: Beryl Chelliah

### Parish Garden Maintenance

ST: Des Connors, Leo Watson,

Anico Yee & Vietnamese Community

SL: Darren McLean

### Parish Choirs

ST: Mary Italiano & Theresa Nguyen

SL: Lina & Maria Mafi

### St Vincent de Paul Conference

For Assistance: 1800 305 330

(Monday to Friday 10am-3pm)

### Parish Contacts:

ST: John McCoy

SL: Tony Lobo &

Steve Kilroe-Smith

**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.

**Response to the Psalm:** Oh, bless the Lord, my soul.

**Gospel Acclamation:** Alleluia, alleluia! John said: He who is to come is mightier than I; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. Alleluia!

**Eucharistic Acclamation:** Save us, Saviour of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection you have set us free.

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



**TRY ALPHA:** Exploring the big questions in life is important. Have you explored life, faith, and meaning? Alpha is a place where you can bring all your questions. No question is too big or too small to explore. Alpha @ St Luke's Blackburn South is starting on Feb 12th 2025, Wednesday 7-9pm. It's free and everyone is welcome. Use this QR Code for registration or visit the Alpha table in the Church foyers for more information.

## The Reason for Our Hope: Pope Francis' Vision for This Jubilee Year of Hope (I of II)



*Hope does not disappoint.* That's the theme that Pope Francis has chosen for this special Jubilee Year 2025. It began last Christmas Eve, when Francis passed through the Holy Door at St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican, and it will end on 28 December 28 of this year, when the Holy Door is closed again. Like every other Jubilee, this special year continues the Old Testament tradition of dedicating a full year to healing old wounds, releasing those in bondage, extending forgiveness, and lifting up all who are suffering (Leviticus 25:8-10). For the people of Israel, the Jubilee Year began as a remembrance of God's mercy in the past and a call to extend that mercy to people in the present. But gradually, it also became a time to look to the future. Especially during Jesus' time, when Israel had been conquered by the Roman Empire, people looked forward to a coming Messiah, someone "anointed" by God to set them free from captivity and bring healing and liberation to the people (Isaiah 61:1). So the Jubilee became a time of hope and eager anticipation for the great "year of favour" when Israel would be set free and all of God's promises would be fulfilled (61:2). As members of the Church and believers in Christ, we celebrate a new Jubilee. Now our focus is the redemption that Jesus has won for us. We celebrate him as God's "anointed" One, the Messiah, whose death and resurrection have opened the floodgates of mercy to us (Luke 4:16-21). At the same time, we reaffirm our hope in the future, the "living hope" of heaven, "an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading" (1 Peter 1:3, 4). As we begin our Jubilee Year, we want to focus on the gift of hope. We want to explore what Pope Francis teaches about hope, and we want to see how the Scriptures describe this great gift. Finally, we will look at ways that we can celebrate the Jubilee and become beacons of hope for the people around us.

**Hope for All.** In his document officially proclaiming the Jubilee Year, Pope Francis acknowledges a universal truth that we can all relate to: "Everyone knows what it is to hope," he writes. "In the heart of each person, hope dwells as the desire and expectation of good things to come" (*Spes non confudit*, 1). The Holy Father is telling us that hope is like a voice inside of us that says, "Lift up your eyes" to the horizon and see the blessings the Lord has in store for you (Isaiah 40:26). It's a voice telling us that God's plans are for our "welfare and not for woe," that he has plans to give us "a future of hope" (Jeremiah 29:11, emphasis added). That voice of hope is in everyone. It may be buried under years of sadness, sin, broken dreams, and false beliefs, but it's still there. Like Emily Dickinson's bird that never stops singing, the gift of hope is constantly calling out to everyone, urging them to discover the love of Christ, a love that can fulfill all their desires and dreams. But Pope Francis also knows that looking to the future can "give rise to conflicting feelings" (*Spes non confudit*, 1). We may worry whether we will receive what we are hoping for. We may want to hope in the Lord, but we may feel too sinful to deserve his love. Or we may be excited one day about our future with the Lord but fearful and anxious the next.

Francis also knows that some people have little to no hope at all: "Often we come across people who are discouraged, pessimistic and cynical about the future, as if nothing could possibly bring them happiness" (*Spes non confudit*, 1). Perhaps they have experienced too much pain, and they dare not hope for anything good. Or perhaps their faith is weak, and they can't trust that God is good and wants to care for them. Even for them, or for anyone who seems so lost that we fear nothing can save them, Francis holds out hope. Everyone, he insists, can look to a brighter future: "For all of us, may the Jubilee be an opportunity to be renewed in hope" (1). Next week we will reflect on the theme on 'Singers of Hope' & 'Shining the Light of Hope.'

[https://wau.org/archives/article/the\\_reason\\_for\\_our\\_hope/](https://wau.org/archives/article/the_reason_for_our_hope/)





# You are my own dear Son

The Baptism of the Lord

Draw Jesus being baptised in the river by John the Baptist.



## Find Out

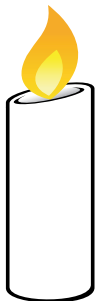


When were you baptised?

Where were you baptised?

Who are your Godparents?

Draw a line to connect each symbol with its correct meaning.



Candle

*Symbolises the Holy Spirit*

*Symbolises life, cleansing and growth*

*Symbolises purity and freedom from sin*

*Symbolises the emergence from darkness into the light*

Dove



Water

White Gown



# BAPTISM OF THE LORD – 12 JANUARY 2025



## COLLECT

O God, whose Only Begotten Son  
has appeared in our very flesh,  
grant, we pray, that we may be inwardly transformed  
through him whom we recognise as outwardly like ourselves.  
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

**Amen.**

## READINGS AND REFLECTIONS

The word 'baptism' comes from the Greek word meaning to dip or immerse. John was baptising in the River Jordan and the gospels of Mark and Matthew say that, at his baptism, Jesus came up out from the water. Today's reading from Luke is a bit less explicit. We do not know if there were any words or ritual gestures associated with the immersion in the river. However all the gospels agree about what happened next: the heavens opened, the Spirit descends in the form of a dove, and a voice from heaven claims Jesus as *my Son, the Beloved, upon whom my favour rests*.

The feast concludes the Christmas cycle because it is an 'epiphany', a revelation to us of who Christ is. It forms a bridge to Ordinary Time because it marks the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. In the Synoptic gospels, Jesus is led by the Spirit to a retreat in the desert. Here he considers several possible approaches to his future ministry. Jesus' baptism may have been for him too a realisation of what God was calling him to do. It certainly marks a turning point in Jesus' life.

## A reading from the prophet Isaiah 40:1–5, 9–11

‘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 ewes.

## Responsorial Psalm Ps 103:1–2, 3–4, 24–25, 27–30

**R.** Oh, bless the Lord, my soul!

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.**

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.**

How many are your works, O Lord!

In wisdom you have made them all.

The earth is full of your riches.

There is the sea, vast and wide,  
with its moving swarms past counting,  
living things great and small. **R.**

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.**

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.**

## First Reading

Each of the four gospels first introduce John the Baptist using some of the words from Isaiah 40. We heard them earlier in Advent when John came on the scene, but they do not occur here in the stories of the Baptism of the Lord.

Nevertheless, they serve as an appropriate announcement of the ministry of Jesus which is about to begin. By his words and deeds, he will manifest the power of God and bring consolation. He will be the Good Shepherd who seeks out the lost sheep. The joyful messenger who shouts, ‘Here is your God!’ echoes the voice from heaven which says, ‘you are my Son’.

The reader should aim for the solemnity of a formal proclamation. A heightened sense of occasion will be achieved by taking the text in a measured way with good pauses. The warm voice of God in the first stanza needs to be differentiated from that of the messenger in the second by using a different register. Likewise, the contrasting images in the fourth stanza (warrior and shepherd) should be contrasted.

‘Mankind’ in the second stanza should be read as ‘humankind’ or simply omitted.

## Responsorial Psalm

*The world is charged with the grandeur of God,  
exclaimed the Jesuit poet Gerard Manley Hopkins.  
...There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;  
And though the last lights off the black West went  
Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs—  
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent world broods  
with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.*

That captures the mood of this psalm! Both the psalm and the poem end with the Holy Spirit whose creative power brings both the world and the ministry of Christ into being.

Psalm 103/104 praises God in all creation. God has created all things and, in his providence, sustains them. The psalm evokes a sense of wonder and praise which the reader/cantor will try to share with the assembly.

The text is made up of scattered verses but it reads coherently. The text is quite long, but the images in every line carry it forward and make the psalm vivid and visual. The proclamation should make the most of them.

**A reading from the letter of St Paul to Titus**  
**2:11–14; 3:4–7**

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.

**A reading from the holy Gospel**  
**according to Luke 3:15–16, 21–22**

A feeling of expectancy had grown among the people, who were beginning to think 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.'

**Second Reading**

We have heard these two paragraphs before – quite recently! They were read separately at the Christmas Masses for night and dawn. So, the Christmas season ends as it began.

In fact, the whole of the Christmas season turns on the theme of revelation. Who is this baby born? Who is the child found by the wise men? Who is the boy with surprising questions in the Temple? Who is this man revealed today as God's son when he was baptised in the Jordan River? Note the opening phrase of today's reading: *God's grace has been revealed.*

Paul unpacks this revelation for Titus – Christ reconciles the whole human race to God, setting them free and purifying them to do good. We are invited to accept God's grace offered to us in the cleansing waters of our baptismal rebirth and by the pouring out of the Holy Spirit over us.

It is in these last lines that we are connected to the baptism of the Lord. The water of rebirth and the anointing with the Holy Spirit led Jesus to engage with his vocation and mission. By our baptism, we join in Jesus' mission to further the Kingdom of God.

It is a difficult reading. Study the text carefully. Identify and underline a few phrases in each paragraph that you would like to highlight. Practise the reading so that you do it well. (Read 'mankind' as 'humankind' or 'the human race').

**Gospel**

John the Baptist demonstrates his humility before Christ and willingly directs his disciples towards Jesus. His is a baptism in water for repentance; Jesus will take this to a new level, imparting the Holy Spirit. This phrase evokes the Pentecost event.

The verses omitted from this reading refer to John's ongoing preaching of the good news and his imprisonment by Herod before reverting to John's work of baptising people in the Jordan.

Luke then presents Jesus' baptism by John in his own way. As in the Gospels of Mark and Matthew, we have the opening of heaven, the descent of the Holy Spirit like a dove, and the voice of the Father's favour, but here in Luke all this occurs after the baptism while Jesus is at prayer. This suggests that it may have been a key moment of revelation for Jesus himself.



## CONCLUDING PRAYER

Almighty, ever-living God,  
when Christ was baptised in the river Jordan  
the Holy Spirit came upon him  
and your voice proclaimed from heaven, 'This is my beloved Son.'  
Grant that we,  
who by water and the Holy Spirit are your adopted children,  
may continue steadfast in your love.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

(Concluding Prayer: Morning and Evening Prayer from Liturgy of the Hours for the Baptism of the Lord)

*An alternative translation of the scripture readings is given here from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV). This may be particularly useful for those in parishes which use the NRSV Lectionary.*

## THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

### FIRST READING ( NRSV)

**A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah 40:1–5, 9–11**

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.  
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her  
that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid,  
that she has received from the Lord's hand  
double for all her sins.

A voice cries out:

"In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,  
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.  
Every valley shall be lifted up,  
and every mountain and hill be made low;  
the uneven ground shall become level,  
and the rough places a plain.  
Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,  
and all people shall see it together,  
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

Get you up to a high mountain,  
O Zion, herald of good tidings;  
lift up your voice with strength,  
O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,  
lift it up, do not fear;  
say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!"

See, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him;  
his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.  
He will feed his flock like a shepherd;  
he will gather the lambs in his arms,  
and carry them in his bosom,  
and gently lead the mother sheep.

### RESPONSORIAL PSALM ( NRSV)

**Psalms 104.1b-2, 3-4, 24-25, 27+28, 29-30 (R.1)**

**R.** O bless the Lord, my soul!

O Lord my God, you are very great.  
You are clothed with honour and majesty,  
wrapped in light as with a garment.  
You stretch out the heavens like a tent. **R.**

You set the beams of your dwelling place on the waters,  
you make the clouds your chariot,  
you ride on the wings of the wind,  
you make the winds your messengers,  
fire and flame your ministers. **R.**

O Lord, how manifold are your works!  
In wisdom you have made them all;  
the earth is full of your creatures.  
Yonder is the sea, great and wide,  
creeping things innumerable are there,  
living things both small and great. **R.**

Living things all look to you  
to give them their food in due season;  
when you give to them, they gather it up;  
when you open your hand, they are filled with good things. **R.**

When you take away their breath,  
they die and return to their dust.  
When you send forth your spirit, they are created;  
and you renew the face of the earth. **R.**

## SECOND READING ( NRSV)

### A reading from the letter of Paul to Titus 2:11–14; 3:4–7

The grace of God has appeared bringing salvation to all,  
training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions,  
and in the present age to live lives  
that are self-controlled, upright, and godly,  
while we wait for the blessed hope  
and the manifestation of the glory  
of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

He it is who gave himself for us  
that he might redeem us from all iniquity  
and purify for himself a people of his own  
who are zealous for good deeds.

For when the goodness and loving kindness  
of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us,  
not because of any works of righteousness  
that we had done, but according to his mercy,  
through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.  
This Spirit he poured out on us richly  
through Jesus Christ our Saviour,  
so that, having been justified by his grace,  
we might become heirs according  
to the hope of eternal life.

## GOSPEL ( NRSV)

### A reading from the holy gospel according to Luke 3:2–4, 15–16, 21–22

The word of God came to John  
son of Zechariah in the wilderness.  
He went into all the region around the Jordan,  
proclaiming a baptism of repentance  
for the forgiveness of sins.

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.”

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.”



# Be GOOD SHEPHERD THE

2 0 2 5



Year  
of  
hope

By  
Olivia  
Dawson