

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.

GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.
We praise you,
we bless you,
we adore you,
we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.
Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.
For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

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.
Amen.

FIRST READING

Is 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 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.
The word of the Lord.

RESP. PSALM

Psalm 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 the 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

Tt 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!****Someone is coming, said John, someone greater than I.****He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. Alleluia!****GOSPEL**

Lk 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 baptize 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.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

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.

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.
Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

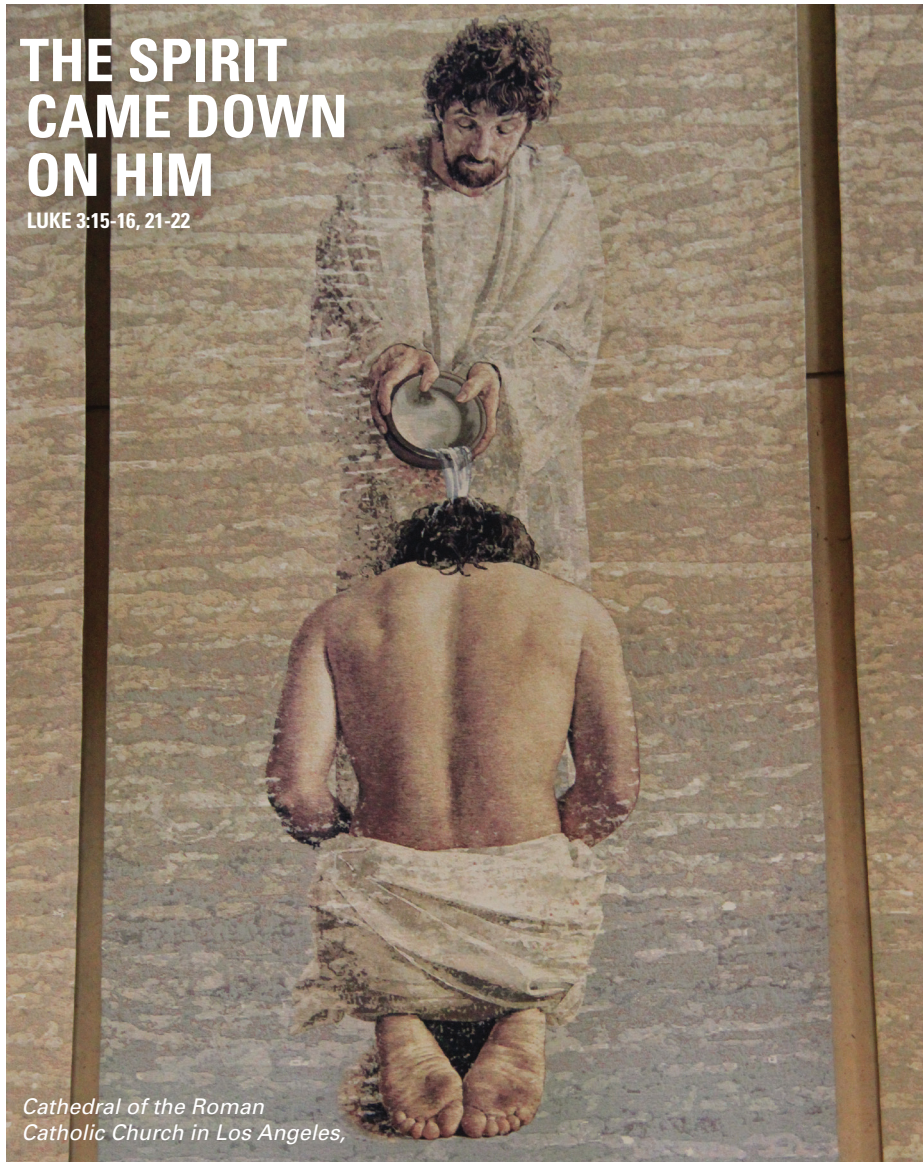
**Behold the One of whom John said:
I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God.**

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. Amen.

THE SPIRIT CAME DOWN ON HIM

LUKE 3:15-16, 21-22



*Cathedral of the Roman
Catholic Church in Los Angeles,*

John the Baptist is a major figure in the gospel tradition, so much so that many people wondered if he himself might be the Messiah.

In today's reading, Luke presents John as definitely giving way to Jesus: now that the true Messiah has appeared, the forerunner can step back from the limelight. The same Spirit who came down upon Mary now comes down upon Jesus as he begins his public ministry, just as the Spirit will come on the disciples at the beginning of the ministry of the Church at Pentecost. The Spirit is the power of God at work, enabling people to carry out their part in God's plan. By accepting baptism, Jesus is identifying himself with all people who wish to lead a decent human life under God. His baptism is another epiphany, revealing him as God's Son, the Beloved: this knowledge comes from God, not by human beings working it out for themselves. ■

DO

Unless you came to the Church later in life, you probably do not remember anything about your own baptism. When we enter the church building, we are encouraged to make the sign of the cross to remind us that we have been baptised and are members of the church which is the Body of Christ. Make the sign of the cross with holy water and take your time over doing so, reflecting quietly on what being a baptised disciple of Jesus means to you.

REFLECT

One of the ways by which we can be reasonably sure that an incident in the gospel is historically accurate is if it is a cause for embarrassment to the person concerned. Peter's denials of Jesus are a good example of this. Jesus being baptised is of a similar type: does this not imply that John the Baptist is greater than Jesus? The evangelist cannot ignore this detail in the tradition, so he plays it down by leaving John out of the actual account of the ritual. Luke presents Jesus as being at prayer at important points in the story. He also emphasises the presence of the Spirit, and the reading from Isaiah links this with bringing true justice to the nations. Luke's presentation of Jesus is marked by compassion, and many people find Luke's version of the gospel story the most attractive and helpful, as Jesus comes across as being gentle and especially concerned for women and those pushed to the margins of civil and religious society. It is by his becoming one of the crowd that Jesus' true identity as the Son of God is revealed. ■

LEARN

Embarrassing stories tend to last longest. The four gospel versions preserve the tradition that Jesus was baptised.

John's baptism was "for the forgiveness of sins," an outward sign of the person's inward decision to change their way of life.

Christian baptism signifies entering into the life of the risen Christ and becoming a member of Christ's disciples today.



*Pope Francis
visits traditional
site of Jesus'
baptism*

SAY

**You are my beloved child:
my favour rests on you.**