

## HOMILY - THE BAPTISM OF JESUS CHRIST – 10 JANUARY 2016

In 2016 what will we learn from Luke's Gospel and the Baptism of Jesus?

Mark's Gospel, and later Matthew's Gospel, tell us that just as Jesus had been baptised, and was coming up out of the water, the heavens opened and the Spirit descended like a dove on Jesus. A voice from heaven speaks and says,

"This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."

Let us ask a few questions so that we can understand it better.

1) Who is the SPIRIT?

Mark says the Spirit. Matthew says the Spirit of God. Luke explains it is the Holy Spirit. Luke will develop our understanding of the HOLY SPIRIT throughout Luke's Gospel and also in the 5th book of the New Testament – The Acts of the Apostles.

2) After being baptised, what did Jesus do?

Mark and Matthew tell us that he was coming up out of the water. Luke adds that Jesus was praying. Luke will give special attention to PRAYER in the Gospel and in the Acts of the Apostles.

3) Does Luke ADD anything else?

Yes. He tells us that the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus IN BODILY FORM like a dove. Luke will develop the bodily form. He will give examples of the Holy Spirit at work where we can see the Spirit's fruit or results in the lives of people.

Matthew, Mark and Luke say that the voice from heaven calls Jesus MY SON, THE BELOVED.

All the Gospels develop the loving relationships of Jesus and the intimacy of God.

During 2016, on most Sundays up to November 20th, we will hear from Luke's Gospel.

4) Apart from the Holy Spirit, Prayer, the evidence of bodily form, will Luke add anything else?

YES. We will discover together many other insights of Luke in this Year of MERCY, such as - WOMEN IN MINISTRY,

JUSTICE, FORGIVENESS and RECONCILIATION,

PEOPLE, POOR, OPPRESSED, PHYSICALLY AND SEXUALLY ABUSED,

GOD UPLIFTING and HEALING the WOUNDED, and the HEALING of our COMMON HOME, EARTH,

THE INSIGHTS of PEOPLE with DISABILITIES, CULTURAL DIVERSITY, MULTICULTURAL

INSIGHTS, LOVE overcoming HATRED, PEACE overcoming WAR.

RESPECT and COURAGE overcoming FEAR.

As Jesus the Beloved, our Saviour, comes to all cultures, we reflect in Australia on the Biblical insights of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sisters and brothers.

5) We will ask HOW DO WE LOVE GOD?

6) We will ask WHO IS MY NEIGHBOUR? WHAT PRACTICAL FORMS DOES THIS TAKE?

We will pray and act with our sisters and brothers here and overseas. We remember our relationships with South Sudanese villages, North Iraqi refugees, refugees and asylum seekers here, our need for local Reconciliation, and the future of the children in our parish family.

We won't be alone. Through Gods' invitation, through the gift of the Holy Spirit, through insights gathered in prayer with God, we love in mercy, in very practical ways. We will be surprised by God this year. As baptised disciples, we pray that we will be open to God and to our neighbour. Amen.

[Fr. Gerry Hefferan – Homily – The Baptism of Jesus Christ – 10 January 2016]