



The Baptism of the Lord

Matthew 1: 18-24

Then 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."

Some things to think about...

- Have you seen someone baptised? Have a chat about what happens at a baptism and why people get baptised.
- Why was John surprised that Jesus wanted to be baptised by him?
- God the Father declares that Jesus is His son. Baptism welcomes us into the Church, and it is a symbol of us being God's children.

Activity

With the help of your Vincentian Coordinator, find out if anyone is being received into the Church this Easter. Write a prayer for them together. You can put this prayer onto cards and decorate them to welcome them into the Catholic Church.*

Materials needed:

- Card
- Pens/pencils
- Scissors + glue

*If no one is due to be received into the Church, why not find out from your parish priest if there are any upcoming baptisms? The Mini Vinnies could make a card for the baby being baptised.

Teacher's notes

(You may wish to use a different translation of this reading, or explain the meaning of certain words e.g. "prevented", "fulfil all righteousness", "descending" etc.)

The way that baptism has been carried out has changed in the history of the Church. Jesus was baptised by John in the river Jordan by full immersion, going right down under the water. In the Catholic Church this doesn't usually happen. Babies and adults are sprinkled on their head with water. In other Christian churches, a person may be baptised in a baptismal pool as they want to be baptised in the same way as Jesus was. Jesus' baptism was the start of his ministry.

Important themes of Catholic baptism include: oil, water, baptismal candle and the colour white. Try to elicit these themes from the group.

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