



“There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither slave nor freeman, there can be neither male nor female – for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

Galatians 3:28

SCRIPTURE of the DAY

Isaiah 40: 1-5, 9-11

Psalms 103: 1-4, 24-25, 27-30

Titus 2: 11-14, 3: 4-7

Luke 3: 15-16, 21-22

The Catechism teaches us that *‘the baptism of Jesus is on his part the acceptance and inauguration of his mission as God’s suffering Servant. He allows himself to be numbered among sinners.’* (536)

St Luke gives a poignant narration and connects us to the heart of the Father. As Isaiah has foretold, God speaks of Jesus as His Beloved Son, in whom He is well pleased. The gospel also narrates that after his baptism, while Jesus is praying, heaven opens and the Holy Spirit descends upon Him.

This affirmation of the Father strengthens Jesus and sets him for mission. Gone is the obscurity surrounding his life up to that point even as he emerges into public ministry. The gospel acclamation brings us to another level as God tells us to *listen to Jesus*. God has revealed His Son in all his glory – Jesus is God with us and among us. The eye witnesses at the scene of the baptism are called to respond. This reminds us of our baptism.

When we are baptised, we enter into communion with Christ who joins us to Himself so that we might experience the fruits of his suffering on the Cross. The Cross is a symbol of love and forgiveness which we are privileged to receive through the gift of baptism.

What must be our response? Do we listen to Jesus, as God commands us? After his baptism, Jesus prays. Prayer connects him to His Father. Prayers open up heaven and *God bless His people with peace*. At the start of this Jubilee Year, as pilgrims of hope, let us take every God-given moment to pray, to listen to God, and allow the Holy Spirit to change us interiorly. We will never tire to encounter Christ anew each time in the confessional, knowing that the Father is ever forgiving and loving.

Then, with God’s anointing, as Church called to be merciful, we can emulate Jesus by *doing good and healing all those oppressed by the devil, for God is with us*. ✚

NEWBEC

NEW WAY OF BEING CHURCH | The Baptism of the Lord | 12 January 2025

CELEBRATING, LISTENING AND WALKING AS PILGRIMS OF HOPE

MONTHLY FOCUS & RATIONALE
CHURCH - CALLED TO BE MERCIFUL

Celebrating the Diversity of Communities

During these days, the Pongal festival of thanksgiving is being celebrated before mass by many parishes who have Tamil speaking among the communities. **The integration of cultural practices is an affirmation that we are people of God with diverse background and ethnicity.**

Liturgically today, we celebrate the Baptism of Our Lord.

