

Sunday Reflection

- ◆ **First Reading:** *Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7*
- ◆ **Second Reading:** *Acts 10:34-38*
- ◆ **Gospel:** *Mark 1:7-11*

The baptism of Jesus was a defining moment in his life. Immersed in the waters of the Jordan he embraced his mission as the Saviour of the world. In Jesus' baptism we are brought into the very heart of two profound mysteries of our Faith, firstly, the depth of Jesus' identification with every human person and, secondly, the revelation

that God is Three Persons in One. To-day's gospel reading can help us marvel and wonder at the mystery of our Faith.

The baptism of John held out was a baptism of repentance (Mark 1;4), which is why he tried to deter Jesus (Matthew 3;14). He who had no sin had no need to repent. We cannot really understand what it would be like to be SINLESS! Can you imagine being completely free and unburdened by pride, jealousy, self-seeking and all the other drives and urges at work within our hearts?

God's love for us, however, is revealed by his desire to identify with us in sinfulness. It is hard to get our heads, let alone our hearts, around this incredible and amazing revelation of Faith.

Imagine someone languishing on death row, unquestionably guilty of a heinous crime. The wheels are in motion to carry out the death penalty. Then an innocent man steps forward and offers to take their place. Such a notion is absurd, even shocking, isn't it? It offends our sense of natural justice. The point is, this isn't about natural justice, but God's mercy and always triumphs over judgement.

We mustn't think that our God doesn't understand the burden of our fallen human nature. Jesus became like us in every way except sin. He lived in obedience to his Father, and through the power of the Holy Spirit he was able to resist temptation and overcome the evil one. We too have received the Holy Spirit. We too can live life in obedience to our heavenly Father and resist and overcome temptation and sin. The God we believe in is not a remote God, but the living God, the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit our Counsellor and Comforter, and the Lord Jesus, our Brother, Saviour and Redeemer.

from st. Irenaeus **“the Spirit of God descended on Jesus and anointed him, as he had promised in the prophets, so that we might draw on the fullness of his anointing and so be saved”**

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