

# SUNDAY JANUARY 12<sup>TH</sup>

## THE BAPTISM OF JESUS



### Gospel reading: Luke 3: 15-17 & 21-22

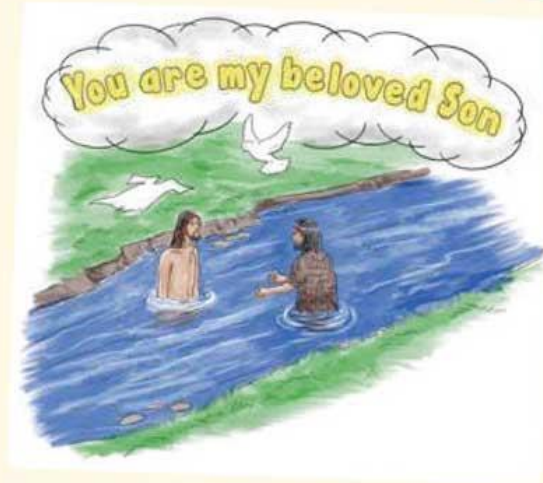
Gracious Father, for those who don't know you, for those who have forgotten about you, and for those who need to know you more - may they all know that you love them.

**Amen.**

**E**veryone was waiting for the Messiah to come to them. People wondered what he was going to be like. So when John the Baptist came among them, they saw what he did and heard what he said, and they wondered if he was the Messiah. \*

But when they asked John, he answered, 'I baptize you with water, but someone is coming who is much more powerful than me. He is so much greater than me that I'm not even good enough to untie the straps of his sandals! He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. He will know who is good and who is bad, just like a farmer knows the difference between the wheat and the chaff. \* Like the farmer, he will gather the wheat into his storehouse, and he will burn up the chaff with fire.'

Then one day, after all the people had been baptized in the river Jordan by John, Jesus came and was baptized himself, just like them. \* While Jesus was praying, heaven opened up and the Holy Spirit came



down and settled on him like a dove. A voice came from heaven, saying, 'You are my beloved Son, and I am very pleased with you.'

Luke 3.15-17,21-22

## A version of the story for very young children

Fill a story basket with two play figures (John and Jesus) and the following objects (or pictures): cup of water, flame shape, dove and heart. Place the objects on a cloth as you tell the story.

John baptized people in the river Jordan. (*play figure*)  
John told everyone, 'Someone greater than me is coming.  
I will baptize him with water. (*water*)  
He will baptize with the Holy Spirit.' (*flame*)  
One day, Jesus came to be baptized. (*play figure*)  
The heavens opened  
and the Holy Spirit came down like a dove. (*dove*)  
A voice from heaven said, 'You are my Son.  
You are loved. I am pleased with you.' (*heart*)

## Stop and share

- Messiah means the 'anointed one', someone chosen by God to save the Jewish people, a title also used for Jesus.
- Chaff – the outer coating of wheat that is thrown away.
- To be baptized is to be immersed in water as a sign of God's forgiveness and a fresh start.

## Listen for love

- As you read the story, ask the children to raise a hand each time they hear a word or phrase which suggests some act of love or care is being shown, e.g. 'He will baptize you', 'He will gather the wheat', 'You are my beloved Son'.
- Stop and explore together each time.

## Talk together and talk to God

Use these questions to discuss the Bible passage

### Talk together

- How does it feel when you know you are loved?
- How might Jesus have felt when he heard God say he was beloved?
- What difference does knowing that you are loved by God make to your life?

## Talk to God: I am beloved nameplate

### Claim God's love for yourselves

**You will need:** paper plates, pens.

- Remind the children that God knows and loves each one of us by name.
- Invite them to create a nameplate with the words '*(insert name)* is named and loved by God', to decorate and take home.
- When everyone has finished, go round in a circle inviting each child to hold up their nameplate in turn, as the rest of the group says '*(insert name)* is named and loved by God' for each person.

## What's in a name?

**You will need:** a baby name book or [look online](#).

- Look up the meaning of each person's name. Ask: How does it feel to be called by that name?
- Ask: What other names or descriptions we call each other. How do those make us feel? Go round the group and name each person: 'You are God's beloved.' How does that make them feel?

## Hear another's experience of being loved

- Invite someone who was baptized as an adult to talk with the group. Ask them to describe how the experience felt, and how they came to know themselves as loved by God.
- Ask: What resources do you draw on as a reminder that you are God's beloved? Encourage the group to ask their own questions.

Ask an adult to explain what happened on the day of their child's Baptism – where it was, what happened in the service, the party afterwards, do you light a candle on the anniversary?



A picture for you to colour



# The Baptism of Jesus



When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. Luke 3:21 (NIV)

Words are taken from Luke 3:15-17, 21-22 (NIV).

L P Q S P I R I T O P P W G M  
 U B S O M N L L F E R O A V C  
 M U U L E K N L J L A U T M K  
 E Z Z V Y O E U E V Y S E P U  
 U L A Z O R G A S Q I P R B X  
 C E E T I R K P U W N V W M M  
 H Y R F U L W C S L G L B J N  
 S J Y Z D Q H D U Q V R X I F  
 H T O K U X J F O L A O E W R  
 A O M H O Y R H K Q H T I Z J  
 D A L B N E P V Z Q U U T C M  
 B O Z Y W I M C H R I S T F E  
 K V V O A S X S P E O P L E Q  
 K E P E X D O P E N E D P V S  
 B A P T I Z E U Z V F V L D S

Spirit  
 opened  
 people

John  
 Jesus  
 praying

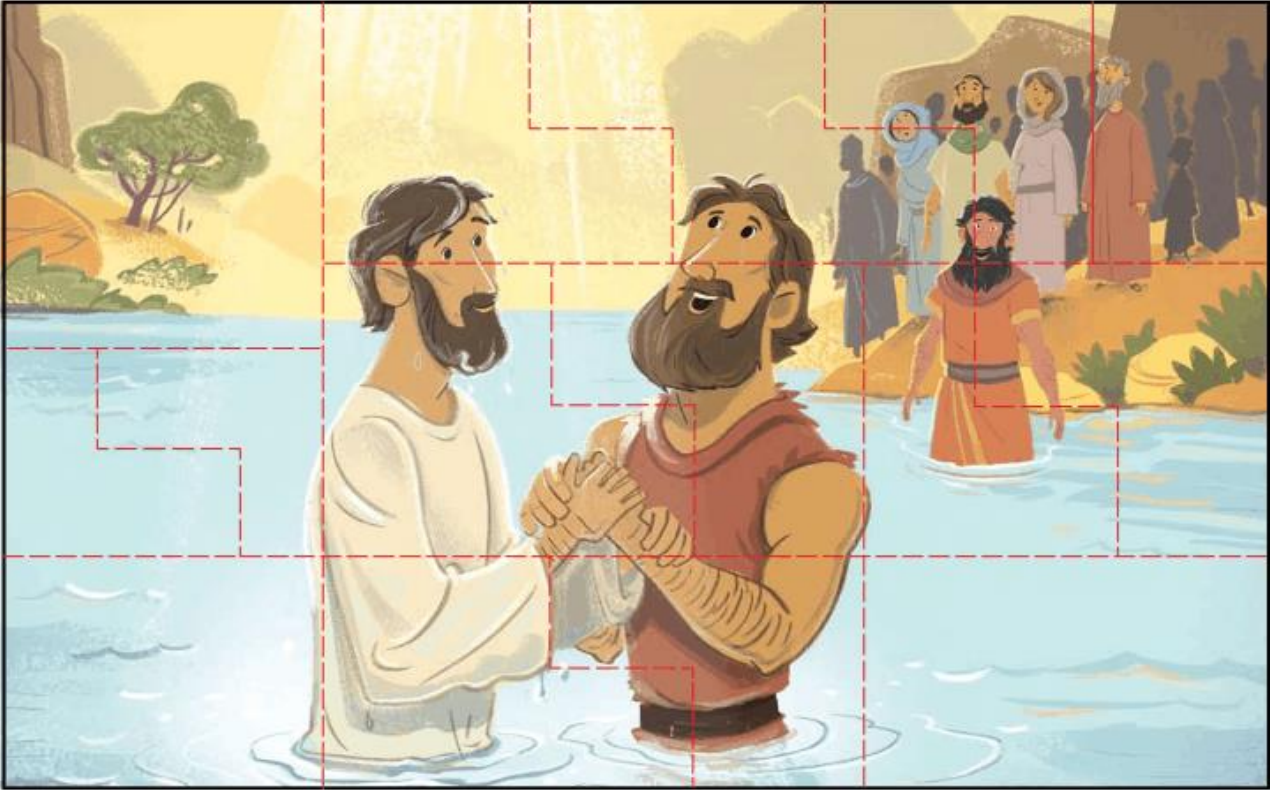
voice  
 dove  
 heaven

Christ  
 powerful  
 Holy

fire  
 water  
 baptize

## Jesus' Baptism Jigsaw Puzzle

Cut the puzzle apart on the red lines, mix the pieces up, and put the picture back together.



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Cut out the jigsaw pieces and then put the puzzle back together again