

Children's liturgy – Baptism of the Lord (Year C)

Preparation of the worship space

Colour: green

Song suggestions: The Spirit lives to set us free (914, Celebration Hymnal for Everyone)

Give me peace, O Lord, I pray (191 Celebration Hymnal for Everyone)

The peace of God (from Share the Light, OCP Publications)

Welcome: Today we hear about Jesus' Baptism and about something very special that happened after it. He was filled with the Holy Spirit. Let's think some about the Holy Spirit today.

Opening prayer: God of heaven and earth, you sent your Son, Jesus, to bring justice and peace to all people. You gave him power and strength through the Holy Spirit. Send us your Holy Spirit too, so we may show our faith in all that we do. We ask you this through Christ our Lord, Amen.

First reading (optional): Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11

Psalms: Psalm 103:1-2, 3-4, 24-25, 27-30 r. 1

Gospel acclamation: everyone stands and sings the acclamation together. Suggestions include: 'Halle, halle, halle' (Caribbean) from 'Sing With the World', Alison Adam & John Bell; 'Alleluia' (Zimbabwe), Abraham Maraire Publications, WCC & GIA; 'Celtic Alleluia' (traditional); 'Alleluia! Raise the Gospel' from 'Go Before Us', Bernadette Farrell, OCP Publications.

Gospel: Luke 3:15-16, 21-22

Gospel reflection: What did you hear in the reading today?

We hear about how John the Baptist was baptising people with water. Can you remember what he says?

He says that someone is coming who is more powerful than he is. Who do you think that person is?

John says he is not worthy to untie the strap of Jesus' sandals. What do you think John means by this?

John does not feel that he is important enough to help Jesus. But yet, Jesus asks to be baptised by John. What do you think this shows us about Jesus?

All of us are important in our own special way, and we are all important enough to serve Jesus. Jesus welcomes us all and sees that we all have special gifts and talents to share.

What happens after Jesus is baptised?

Jesus prays, and while he is praying the Holy Spirit descends like a dove. Then a voice comes from heaven. Whose voice do you think this is? What does God say?

Jesus is the Son of God and he is filled with the Holy Spirit. We too are filled with the Holy Spirit at our baptism.

What is the Holy Spirit? What do you think it means to be filled with the Holy Spirit? What difference does it make to our lives?

Just as we can tell that a tree is good because it produces good fruit, in the same way, we can tell that we are allowing the Holy Spirit to work in us by the way we behave towards other people.

For instance, we can share what we have with others who do not have enough. We can be kind to others. We can try to make our world a fairer and better place for all people to live in. Especially people who are poor.

Some "fruits of the Spirit" are love, peace, kindness and generosity. How do you think you can show these fruits to people both here and around the world? How can we be kind, loving, generous and bring peace in our lives and to the people we meet, or whose stories we hear from around the world?

We are all God's children, no matter where in the world we live, no matter where we come from or what we look like. We are all members of the same global family. And so we try to be loving, kind, generous and bring peace to all people, so that others may see the fruits of the Holy Spirit and our baptism in the way we behave.

How will you show the Holy Spirit working in you in this coming week?

Intercessions *You may want to ask the children to offer their own prayers or you can use the suggestions below.*

We are all children of God and so we pray together:

We pray for all the leaders in the world: that they may listen to their people, rule fairly and do all that they can to bring peace to our world. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for all members of our global family: that we may all know peace, love, joy, and generosity in our lives and that we may all have hope for a future free from poverty and war. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our parish, families and friends: that we may be filled with the Holy Spirit, serve others who are in need and share love as Jesus taught us. Lord, in your mercy...

Closing prayer: God of love, we are members of one worldwide family. As we gather at your table we give thanks for your love. Fill us with your Holy Spirit and help us to show your love to others in all that we do. Amen.

Activity suggestions

Ask the children to colour in the optional accompanying illustration and on the back to draw how they will show the Holy Spirit working in them over the coming week.

Create and decorate a large dove – symbol of peace and the Holy Spirit – with the children to put up on the wall of the worship space. Ask the children to add their prayers for peace to the dove.

Ask the children to tell their family all that they have heard and thought about today. If they have written a prayer for peace, ask them to say it together as a family during the week. Ask them to try and show the Holy Spirit is in them in the way they behave to other people this week.