

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

Preparing the worship space

Colour: white

Props: pictures of water and its uses; blue paper or card shaped like drops of water

Song suggestions: Come to the water (408, Laudate)

O wash me (513, Laudate)

Welcome: Today we hear about how Jesus is baptised by John in the waters of the river Jordan. Water is a very important part of baptism, but it is also really important in our lives for other reasons. We all need water to live. Let's think today about all the ways we use water in our lives.

Opening prayer: Living God, we give thanks for water which gives us life. We pray that all your children around the world may have clean water to drink. Amen.

First reading (optional): Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7

Psalm: Ps 28:1-2, 3-4, 9-10 r. 11

Gospel acclamation: *everyone stands and sings the acclamation together.*

Gospel: Matthew 3:13-17

At that time Jesus arrived from Galilee and came to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. But John tried to make him change his mind. "I ought to be baptized by you," John said, "and yet you have come to me!"

But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so for now. For in this way we shall do all that God requires." So John agreed.

As soon as Jesus was baptized, he came up out of the water. Then heaven was opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God coming down like a dove and alighting on him. Then a voice came from heaven, "This is my own dear Son, with whom I am pleased."

(Gospel passage taken from Good News Translation® and used with permission, see details below)*

Gospel reflection: What do you remember from that reading?

John baptises Jesus in the river, and there is a voice from heaven that says something important. Whose voice do you think it is? What does God say?

Water is very important. It is used in baptism to show that we are starting a new life with God.

But there are many other ways that we use water every day. How many can you think of? Tell me what they are.

That's a lot of water! Are there any ways that we could save water so that we do not waste it? *Eg turning the tap off when cleaning our teeth, using rain water to water the garden etc.*

Fabiano is a boy who lives in a country called Uganda. In Uganda, the weather is often too dry to grow plants and it can be hard to get water.

Fabiano needs water to grow vegetables to eat and to sell. He used to walk to the next village for water, because there were no taps in his own village. Fabiano had to carry the heavy buckets home. It was a long way and hard work.

With CAFOD's support a water pump was built in Fabiano's community, powered by a solar panel that gets its energy from the sun. Now Fabiano can easily fill his watering can. His vegetables are growing very well!

We all need water to live but many people around the world don't have clean water to drink. Or they have to travel a very long way to get any water at all. Can you imagine what that would be like?

What do you think we could do to help more people like Fabiano and his family?

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

Jesus offers us new life in the water of our baptism and so together we pray:

We pray for all people around the world: that they may have clean water to drink and not have to travel long distances to collect it. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for world leaders: that they may make wise decisions so that all people around the world have clean water to drink. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our parish, families and friends: that the Holy Spirit may move us to do what we can to help others and to try to make the world a fairer place for all people. Lord, in your mercy...

Closing prayer: God of life, help us to act so that no one goes thirsty and all people around the world have enough water for all their needs. Amen.

Activity suggestions

Invite the children to colour in the optional accompanying illustration. They could write some of the ways that they use water in the big drops round the outside of the picture.

Make big drops of water out of blue card or paper, ask the children to write or draw one way that they use water during the day on them. Stick them onto a timeline showing how the group uses water throughout the day. How many buckets of water do they think it would take to do all these things that they normally do? How would they feel about carrying all this water back from the next village or town?

Remind the children to go home and share all that they have heard and thought about today with their grown ups. Encourage the children to try to save water during the next week. Maybe they could make sure they turn off dripping taps, avoid drinking bottled water or they could save rain water to help water the garden.

*Gospel passage taken from:

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