



Discovering Baptism

Soon after Christmas we celebrate Jesus' baptism. PATRICIA CARROLL is Pastoral Coordinator for Evangelisation in the Archdiocese of Dublin and reflects on the link between our baptism and his.



Is it just me or do you find it a bit strange that Jesus grows up so quickly after Christmas? This thought came to me as I was reflecting on the readings for the feast of the Baptism of the Lord. We celebrate the Nativity of the Lord on the 25 December and he is a baby, about eight days later we're back at Mass celebrating the feast of the Holy Family and suddenly Jesus is twelve years old! Then in the middle of January at his Baptism he is a full grown adult! Have the Gospel writers done a speedy fast forward? In January we rediscover what our own Baptism is all about by reflecting on the Baptism of Jesus.

If you speak about your baptism are you more likely to say 'I was baptised' or 'I am baptised'? The first is about a past event. The second statement implies that you are trying to live out your baptism daily. When I say 'I am baptised' hopefully I am beginning to connect with a sense that I too like Jesus am loved and cherished by God,

and this growing sense of being loved helps me to know what my purpose in life is. Baptism is then less something that was done in the past to me, but more a present experience that I am growing into in my life long journey of faith.

Some of us grew up thinking about baptism like a divine vaccination, like we were taken to clinics to get vaccinations, like a kind of protection! Jesus' experience of being baptised was a celebration of being God's beloved. This is what our baptism is also about and why Pope Francis said: 'at baptism God's voice repeats what God said at Jesus's baptism: 'You are my beloved son. You are my beloved daughter'. We pray to grow into this unconditional love on a daily basis.

So as we start this New Year we take time to give thanks for those who brought you to the font for baptism, and who in spite of perhaps their own frailties wanted you to experience that you are God's beloved. 