



A Reflection for Baptism of Christ

Readings - Acts 19. 1-7 & Mark 1. 4-11

Our reading this morning reflects a pivotal moment in the life of Christ. It is an image that was painted by Renaissance artists to decorate church walls and altarpieces. The painting pictured depicts the river Jordan in the centre flowing towards the on looker as it reaches the feet of Jesus and John. This central moment albeit at the beginning of Jesus' ministry invites each one of us to share in baptism.

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, 'The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.'

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.'

The words recorded in the New Testament written by Saint Mark narrates this pivotal moment in the life of Jesus. We are to consider that Jesus who did not need to go to the edge of society to be baptised went and found John at the river Jordan. Jesus did not need a new beginning but out of solidarity for humanity, the one without blemish, allows himself to be baptised. The Divine is baptised by a human and John exists because of the one in whom he is baptising.

In faith we trust in our understanding of the events of the baptism of Christ.

It is out of love that Jesus journeyed to the Jordan and stood with humanity in the waters of baptism. It is in the love of God that we are to place our trust as we seek to find answers to life's questions and to trust in the answers that we discover. It is in love that we find true meaning.

Thank you for reading and keep safe.

The Reverend Nick Devenish

*Adrian's music choice for Baptism of Christ. Communion: O little sweet one - Bach.
Psalm 46. Organ: Vom Himmel hoch - Pachelbel.*

*If you are able, join me for a service of holy communion from The Priory.
Live streaming from 10.25am. Please go to the Cartmel Priory Facebook page.*

Image - 'The Baptism of Christ' by Pietro Perugino