

ambitions; we must be self-restrained and live good and religious lives here in this present world, while we are waiting in hope for the blessing which will come with the Appearing of the glory of our great God and saviour Christ Jesus. He sacrificed himself for us in order to set us free from all wickedness and to purify a people so that it could be his very own and would have no ambition except to do good.

When the kindness and love of God our saviour for mankind were revealed, it was not because he was concerned with any righteous actions we might have done ourselves; it was for no reason except his own compassion that he saved us, by means of the cleansing water of rebirth and by renewing us with the Holy Spirit which he has so generously poured over us through Jesus Christ our saviour. He did this so that we should be justified by his grace, to become heirs looking forward to inheriting eternal life.

The word of the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation Mk 9:8

Alleluia, alleluia! The heavens were opened and the Father's voice was heard: this is my beloved Son, hear him. Alleluia!

Gospel 3:15-16, 21-22
from the holy Gospel according to Luke

A feeling of expectancy had grown among the people, who were beginning to think that John might be the Christ, so John declared before them all, 'I baptise you with water, but someone is coming, someone who is

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more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to undo the strap of his sandals; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire.'

Now when all the people had been baptised and while Jesus after his own baptism was at prayer, heaven opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily shape, like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on you.'

Gospel thoughts

by Dianne Bergant CSA

The readings for this feast recapitulate the themes of the entire Advent-Christmas season. Within the Christian tradition the voice that announces the future events is associated with John the Baptist. However, the reading itself proclaims the coming and manifestation of the Lord, clearly an Advent theme. The gospel reading from Luke moves us from anticipation of the coming of the messiah to fulfilment of God's promise. This theme of fulfilment is at the heart of the Christmas message. In the baptism narrative we see that Jesus has come into our midst, not only as a helpless infant, but as our anointed messiah. There is a dimension to this same gospel reading that opens us to a future yet to be fully realised in our lives. The one upon whom the Spirit descends has come to baptise us in that same Spirit.

The reading from Titus is similar to the gospel. Both herald the appearance of Jesus and promise a future fulfilment for us. Renewed by the Spirit, we will be justified and become heirs in hope of eternal life. The readings clearly announce that: the Lord is coming; the Lord has come; the Lord will continue to come to and through us into the whole world. Under all of this rings the melody of God's creative power as seen in the Psalm response. In view of the Isaian passage, God promises to create something new in the wilderness of chaos. There the glory of the Lord will be revealed.

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Our Sunday Word The Year for Priests

St Michael's Parish, Nowra

www.nowraparish.org.au

Baptism of the Lord (Year C) - Season of the Year

10 January 2010

First Reading 40:1-5, 9-11

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

'Console my people, console them' says your God. 'Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and call to her that her time of service is ended, that her sin is atoned for, that she has received from the hand of the Lord double punishment for all her crimes.'

A voice cries, 'Prepare in the wilderness a way for the Lord. Make a straight highway for our God across the desert. Let every valley be filled in, every mountain and hill be laid low, let every cliff become a plain, and the ridges a valley; then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all mankind shall see it; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.'

Go up on a high mountain, joyful messenger to Zion. Shout with a loud voice, joyful messenger to Jerusalem.

Shout without fear, say to the towns of Judah, 'Here is your God.' Here is the Lord coming with power, his arm subduing all things to him. The prize of his victory is with him, his trophies all go before him. He is like a shepherd feeding his flock, gathering lambs in his arms, holding them against his breast and leading to their rest the mother ewes.

The word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm Ps 103

R/ Oh, bless the Lord, my soul!
1. Lord God, how great you are, clothed in majesty and glory, wrapped in light as in a robe! You stretch out the heavens like a tent.

2. Above the rains you build your dwelling. You make the clouds your



chariot, you walk on the wings of the wind, you make the winds your messengers and flashing fire your servants.

3. How many are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you have made them all. The earth is full of your riches. There is the sea, vast and wide, with its moving swarms past counting, living things great and small.

4. All of these look to you to give them their food in due season. You give it, they gather it up: you open your hand, they have their fill.

5. You take back your spirit, they die, returning to the dust from which they came. You send forth your spirit, they are created; and you renew the face of the earth.

Second Reading 2:11-14; 3:4-7
from the letter of St Paul to Titus

God's grace has been revealed, and it has made salvation possible for the whole human race and taught us that what we have to do is to give up everything that does not lead to God, and all our worldly