

Please take the time to go through this Service slowly, to receive the words of light and life, which God has for you this day, 10th January 2021.

**Today is the 1st Sunday of Epiphany and the day we celebrate
The Baptism of Jesus Christ**

The baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist is a major event in the life of Jesus, which is described in three of the gospels: Matthew, Mark and Luke. It is considered to have taken place at **Al-Maghtas, located in Jordan** .



Jesus approaches John and asks to be baptized. John has been proclaiming the **Gospel** and baptizing those who repent of their sin, want to make right their relationship with God, and await the coming Messiah, who is now standing before them. We read:

Matthew 3: 16 - 17

After Jesus was baptized, he came up from the water and behold, the heavens were opened [for him], and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove [and] coming upon him. And a voice came from the heavens, saying, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.”

This is also the first Sunday of Epiphany. The word ‘Epiphany’ comes from the Greek word “*epiphainein*” which means, “reveal,” a manifestation of the

divine, that is, God revealing Himself to us, as happened to the Magi, who followed the guiding of the star to Jesus, born to be King.

Matthew 2: 10 - 11

When the Magi saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother, Mary and they bowed down and worshipped him.

Both the Birth and the Baptism of Jesus Christ are moments of God revealing himself, moments of **Epiphany**.

These moments required openness, listening, seeking, believing and trusting. The Magi had conviction that God was with them and would show them the way by the light of the guiding star. Jesus came as the Light of the World. He was the One who would guide his people through the journey of the whole of life, listening to his Father and to the people, through the Holy Spirit filling and empowering him. This was symbolised by the presence of the dove descending upon him, at his Baptism and the start of His Ministry.

Here are some words taken from Isaiah chapter 49, which reassure us of our Creator God's guidance for us today:

Where there is an ® repeat the response : **I, the Lord, will comfort my people**

Listen to me you islands: and people who live far away.

My servant, in the time of my favour I will answer you:
and in the day of salvation I will help you.

I will restore the land: and share out afresh its desolate fields;

I will say to the prisoners, "Go free": and to those in darkness, "Come out to the light". ®

They will feed beside the way: and find pasture on every barren hill.

They will never hunger nor thirst: sun and desert heat will never plague them,

For he who loves them will guide them:
and lead them beside springs of water. ®

Shout for joy, you heavens and exult, you earth: mountains break into song;

For I the Lord will comfort my people: and will have compassion on my own in
their distress. ®

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the
beginning, is now, and shall be for ever. Amen.

Let us pray

Heavenly Father, by the power of your Holy Spirit, you guided the Magi by the
light of the star to meet with and worship the Lord Jesus Christ.

Their journey was demanding, they had to keep looking for your lead; they had
to keep trusting through all the difficulties they encountered on the way.

**May your light shine in our darkness and may we trust in you showing us the
way, on our journey through life.**

Lord God, you were pleased with your son, Jesus, at his Baptism. He would
become the Light of the World, the Way, the Truth and the Life. He would be
the ultimate traveller with us, on the journey of our time on earth and for
evermore.

**May we have our own Epiphany...the reassurance of the power of the peace
and love of God's presence in our hearts and lives this day.**

Let us hold the silence.

May we now offer to God all those we long to know the light and the loving
presence of God this day....his healing and strengthening love.

Let us hold the silence.

We draw all our thoughts and prayers together in the words of the Lord's
Prayer:

Our Father, who art in Heaven,
hallowed by Thy name.
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil,
for thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

The Collect, the Special Prayer for today:

Eternal Father,
who at the baptism of Jesus
revealed him to be your Son,
anointing him with the Holy Spirit:
grant to us, who are born again by water and the Spirit,
that we may be faithful to our calling as your adopted children;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
One God, now and for ever. Amen.

As God leads us, so he calls us to lead others, through his light in us, to bring them comfort and courage, acceptance and His eternal love:



Here I am, Lord, Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.

I, the Lord of sea and sky,
I have heard My people cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin,
My hand will save.
I who made the stars of night,
I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear My light to them?
Whom shall I send?

Here I am Lord, Is it I Lord?
I have heard You calling in the night.
I will go Lord, if You lead me.
I will hold Your people in my heart.

I, the Lord of snow and rain,
I have born my peoples pain.
I have wept for love of them, They turn away.
I will break their hearts of stone,
Give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak My word to them,
Whom shall I send?

Here I am Lord, Is it I Lord?
I have heard You calling in the night.
I will go Lord, if You lead me.
I will hold Your people in my heart.

I, the Lord of wind and flame,
I will tend the poor and lame.
I will set a feast for them,
My hand will save
Finest bread I will provide,
Till their hearts be satisfied.
I will give My life to them,
Whom shall I send?

Here I am Lord, Is it I Lord?
I have heard You calling in the night.
I will go Lord, if You lead me.
I will hold Your people in my heart.

Closing Prayer:

God of glory, you nourish us with your word which is the bread of life.
Fill us with your Holy Spirit, that through us the light of your glory
may shine in all the world.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen

Blessing

May we abide in the love of Christ and wherever we are, know that through
our prayers, others may come to know the heavenly Father. And may the
blessing of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; may the Epiphany of
God's presence be with us and those we care for, this day and forevermore:
Amen.