



# Baptism Of Christ

## Fundamental Choices

### Introduction

We celebrate birthdays with a lot of fuss. We celebrate many other events. But never our baptisms. How strange that Christians pay so little attention to their real birthday. In today's liturgy we celebrate the baptism of Christ. In celebrating his baptism we celebrate our own baptism too and we renew its grace within us.

### First Reading (Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7)

Here we are given a picture of a true servant of God. He is gentle and humble of heart, and totally dedicated to his mission, which is to bring about true justice.

### Second Reading (Acts 10:34-38)

Here we are given a description of how the first Christians saw Baptism. The baptized person was said to have been 'anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power'.

### Gospel (Mark 1:7-11)

This tells how Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist in the river Jordan, and the signs that accompanied that baptism.

### Prayer Of The Faithful

Let us pray that we may understand the meaning of our Baptism and live up to it with joy and generosity.

R: Lord, hear our prayer.

For all Christians: that they may strive to live up to their Baptism. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, hear our prayer.

For all our leaders who have to make such difficult and important choices: that they may see truly and act rightly. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, hear our prayer.



For those who are at the cross-roads, faced with difficult and important choices for their own lives. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, hear our prayer.

That we may persevere in the right choices we have made, and that we may have the courage and strength to correct the wrong ones. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, hear our prayer.

### Communion Reflection

(From experience of Stalin's labour camps Solzhenitsyn wrote:)

"Looking back, I saw  
that for my whole conscious life  
I had neither understood myself or my strivings.

What had seemed for so long to be beneficial  
now turned out in actuality to be fatal,  
and I had been striving to go in the opposite direction  
to that which was truly necessary for me.

But just as the waves of the sea  
knock the inexperienced swimmer off his feet  
and keep tossing him back onto the shore,  
so also was I painfully tossed back on dry land  
by the blows of misfortune.

And it was only because of this  
that I was able to travel the path  
which I had always really wanted to travel".

Lord, we ask you to keep on calling us  
along the right path, no matter what the cost,  
for life is slipping away from us,  
and we cannot afford to get it wrong.