



Church window depicting the baptism of Jesus by John

The Baptism of Jesus is another Epiphany. Jesus comes from Galilee with the definite intention of receiving baptism from John, who initially resists his request.

John's baptism is a sign that the person undergoing the ritual is sorry for sin, which can hardly apply in the case of Jesus. Jesus explains that it is an indication that he wants to be seen to fulfil all the obligations which a person wanting to lead a righteous life would carry out. He is thus identifying himself with all those individuals who want to live a decent human life under the word of God. Although Jesus recognises that his baptism is superior to that of John, he still accepts the baptism which John offers and many people have sought.

It is as a result of this act of solidarity with people who want to live a proper life that Jesus is revealed as God's Son, the Beloved. Also, a new possibility of communication between heaven and earth is suggested by the heavens being opened and the Spirit of God descending. Thus the identity of Jesus is established for us at the beginning of his ministry.

It would seem that this incident actually occurred in the life of Jesus. The early community would be more likely to try to suppress an event which suggested that Jesus was in some way inferior to John the Baptist than to invent a story which could lead to embarrassing misunderstandings. The dialogue between the two hints at this concern within the early circle of disciples. ■

REFLECT

One of the interesting – and challenging – aspects of the Jesus story is how he was not afraid to risk being misunderstood if it helped him in his mission to reach people with the Good News. In the course of his ministry, the religious leaders criticised him for associating with people on the margins of civic and religious society in such a way that he was identifying himself with them by eating with them. In today's story he undergoes a voluntary ritual by which people showed that they were turning away from a former sinful life and towards God, even though he and John the Baptist are aware that he has no need to do so. Yet Jesus wants to be seen as being at one with those who have good reason to want to express repentance.

One of the traps into which religious people can easily fall is that of respectability. The reasons for the decline in religious practice are many, and one that has been suggested is that once going to church ceased to be regarded as a necessary sign that a person (particularly a woman) was respectable in the eyes of people who knew them, then the social pressure to attend services of any denomination diminished.

All of us are sinners: we all fall short of the mark, which is what the New Testament usually means by sin. We might then be careful before forming judgments about others. ■

LEARN

If an incident in the Gospel is embarrassing to a prominent figure (eg Peter and his denials) then it is likely to be historically accurate.

The baptism which John administered was simply a sign that the person repented of past sin and looked for forgiveness from God.

The Jordan is the one main river in the Holy Land, flowing from the Sea of Galilee to the Dead Sea, a distance of 65 miles.



SAY

It is fitting that we should do all that righteousness demands (Matt 3:15)

DO

Make the Sign of the Cross with holy water. Remember that baptism made you a member of the people of God: make an act of solidarity with your fellow Christian brothers and sisters.

PARISH OF DROMORE

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Baptism of the Lord

Sunday Mass Times

St Colman's, Dromore All Saints, Ballela
Sunday 11.00am Sunday 9.45am

Weekday Mass Times

St Colman's

Mon, Wed & Thurs: Liturgy of the word 9.30am
Tues & Fri : Mass 9.30am
Sat: 10-11am: Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

All Saints

Thurs : 7.00pm

Ballela Anniversaries

Sun 12: Kathleen McGregor
Sun 19: Martha McCullough (Months Mind)

Dromore Anniversaries

Sun 12: Hugh Eadie
Isobel & James Mulgrew

Sun 19: Hugh McGrath
Kathleen McDonnell

Offertory Promise Collection £862.20

Readers – Dromore

Sun 19: Grainne Killiner

Recently Deceased

Rita Keenan, Maypole Rd, Dromore.

St Colman's College Open Day

Sat 18th Jan from 10am – 1pm. Principal's Address
am & 12 noon.

Annadone, Ballela & Dromore Lourdes

committee The Dromore diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes will celebrate its 50th pilgrimage in 2020, if you are interested in travelling as an assisted pilgrim or pilgrim please contact any member of the parish committee. The pilgrim fare will cost £660. If you would like to nominate a member of the parish to travel as an assisted pilgrim please forward the name to any committee member. Please do not nominate someone without first asking them if they would like to go.

Whist Whist will take place on Sun 19th Jan at 8.30 in St Colman's hall Dromore. Ladies to supply pastry: Helen Downey & Bronagh Brady.

Do This In Memory

Will take place in both church's on Sun 26th Jan.

Sunday 12th Jan 2020

Parish Draw Winners Week 42

£100	Bernadette Mackin	159
£50	Hugh Pat O'Hare	099
£30	Brian O'Neill	183
£20	Anne McEvoy	421

Ballela G.A.C. Lotto

Sun 29th Dec: 5 6 7 19

No £10 winners Seller: Anglers Rest
Jackpot £2000

Registration Breakfast in All Saints school on Sun 26th Jan 10.30-12.30. Dinner dance 8th Feb in Anglers Rest.

Ballela Community Group

A.G.M Meeting will take place on Wed 22nd Jan at 7.30pm. New members are welcome.

Pilgrimages - The Camino and Lourdes

Pilgrimages for young adults (18 to 30+)

Lourdes -12th to 17th May - Costs £610 cover flights, full board accommodation, transfers, insurance and Lourdes programme.

Camino a Pilgrimage walk in Spain - July 19th to 25th - cost approx. £480 include, flights, accommodation, insurance, transfers and walkers support.

Choose your pilgrimage - either a great way to get to know likeminded people, travel and to grow in faith in a very new way.....to secure your place forward a deposit of £200 to the Diocesan Youth Office, 39 - 41 Hill Street, Newry, BT341AT. Cheque payable to the Diocese of Dromore Trust - Youth. For more information email dromoreyd@btconnect.com or phone Frances 028 30833898

Armagh Archdiocesan Pilgrimage to Fátima

7th July for 7 nights led by Archbishop Eamon Martin. Cost £719 per person sharing: fully escorted pilgrimage, flights from Dublin to Lisbon, Full Board in Hotel Averida, complimentary travel Insurance, single room supplement £25 per night. Coach from selected locations to Dublin airport. For further details contact Maureen or Joe McLoughlin on 02890701606 or 07745093530.

Tea and Chat

Will take place on Sun 26th Jan in St Colman's hall Dromore after 11am Mass. Everyone welcome.

Do you need financial or practical assistance or even a friendly chat?

The St. Vincent De Paul Society is here to help. You can contact us through our helpline number: 07738838187