

# realpeople

the gospel in everyday language



## Today's Readings:

My chosen one. Is 42:1-4,6-7  
The mission of the Messiah. Acts 10:34-38  
The baptism of Jesus. Mt 3:13-17

## Next Week:

Witness to the chosen one of God  
Is 49:3,5-6; 1 Cor 1:1-3; Jn 1:29-34

## In a nutshell

As Jesus is baptised by John in the Jordan, signs of the power of the Holy Spirit emerge. The drama of this moment in which Jesus' identity and mission are revealed involves an outpouring of the Father's love, encapsulated in the words 'This is my Son, the Beloved...' Through love we discover our mission to love.



## Welcomed in love, farewelled in love.

*In a Catholic parish...*

On Tuesday we celebrated the funeral of a baby girl. She had been baptised just ten days earlier. Born premature, she arrived in this world with serious complications and lived only a short time. In keeping with the funeral rite, the coffin was sprinkled with holy water as a sign of baptism; a symbol of our Christian belief that this is a child of God.

The next day we celebrated the funeral of a 90 year old parishioner. Again the coffin was sprinkled with holy water. Again the significance of baptism was acknowledged by the community of faith.

Two very different people. Both baptised. Both welcomed and farewelled by the Church as children of God. It brings home to me the sacredness of life. We are only on this earth for a short time, and whether it be minutes or many decades, whether we die in utero or well into old age, our existence has a purpose, a sacred origin and an

eternal destiny.

The Church's rite of baptism celebrates this gift of life. In Christ we are born, we live, we grow. We are welcomed in love, and throughout our lives we are sustained by the faith of the Church, her people, her sacraments. And, finally, we are farewelled in love. This too is part of our baptismal belief. We come full circle. We return to the Father's arms, enveloped in the love that has never left us.

*Today, reflect on the gift of your baptism.*

## Beloved son

When his son was born, Tony put a sign in the window of his shop to alert all his local customers to the great news: It's a boy! Luke 4.11. Luke is the name of his son, the numbers referred to the baby's birth date.

An over-zealous Christian passing by mistook the sign as a bible reference: Luke 4:11. Tony explained that the reference was to his newborn son.

'Oh,' said the Christian. 'I thought it signified something - you know - profound.'

'Oh, but it does!' replied Tony. God's miracle of new life. A father's love for his son. That's profound.



## The parental instinct: image of God's love

I was at Mass one Sunday and in the same seat was a nine month old baby and his mother. He was an active little fellow: he wriggled, he wanted to get up and down, he wanted to see all that was going on, he even 'sang' with the assembly, hugged his mum, pulled her hair ... his repertoire was extensive. His mother responded patiently and gently to his many moves. Towards communion time, he gave a little yawn and.... The bottle was produced from the bag and together they held the bottle while he drank. I thought how attentive his mother was to his little signs. She knew intimately that need for food and refreshment. (Jill)

## Today...

Think about the meaning of your baptism: the love God has for you; the love this faith community has for you.



**RealPeople** offers faith reflections from the saints and prophets of everyday life.

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