

realpeople

the gospel in everyday language



In today's readings:

Thirsty? Come to the waters. Isaiah 55:1-11
The Spirit, the water and the blood give witness.
1 John 5:1-9
Jesus is baptised. Mark 1:7-11

Next week:

Gospel chain reaction.
1 Samuel 3:3-10,19;
1 Corinthians 6:13-15,17-20;
John 1:35-42

In a nutshell

The most striking thing about Jesus' baptism at the Jordan is the testimony of the Father's love for him. Today, as a Church community, may our baptismal symbols and celebrations always be an experience of that deeper reality: God's love for us, and our love for each other as the body of Christ.



Do your children know the story of their own baptism? Today, share 'baptism stories' with one another. Ordinary, unique, funny, special... bring alive the love of God and the love of our faith community which is at the heart of every baptism.

Families, baptisms and lion cubs

Our family went to the christening of a friend's baby. The church was full of children, including our 3-year-old Maddie. Now, as many a harried parent will tell you, 'church' automatically triggers the 'run riot' button in their children and our Maddie is no exception.

But this time was different. Maddie and a number of the children positioned themselves at the front of the proceedings and watched, chins cupped in their hands, transfixed in fascination as the baby was solemnly held up to the congregation, as the water was poured, the candle lit...

My wife and I couldn't help wondering to ourselves if their interest had been stirred by an

association with the *Lion King*.

Lion King is an animated children's video which Maddie just loves and contains a lot of Christian-like symbolism, including a scene very much akin to a baptismal rite as all the animals of the jungle gather to honour the birth of Simba, the lion cub destined to be king.

We see everyday moments like these as opportunities to communicate with our children, to say things like, 'Look, that's a bit like what we did today with baby Jessica', and to use them as a talking point as we help them to make sense of our Christian traditions. (Peter)

'Our Church'

When Rachael had her baby son baptised, it was so important to her that the baptism take place in the 'old' parish church where she had grown up. She could have waited a little longer and held the baptism in the beautiful brand new church which was about to open next door. But no, she insisted that her son be baptised in the 'old' church (this was on the eve of its closure). Her decision reflected a sense of continuity with her past and the love that she had experienced from her faith family over so many years.

Welcomed in love

Jacqui and John's baby is due soon. While they continue to search for a name, they have dubbed their unborn child 'Mo'. Explains Jac, 'It stands for "Magnificent one"'



church below the rooftops

A woman who became a Catholic through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) wrote to her sponsor:

Joan, how good of God to give you to me as my sponsor. That out of all the people in the parish God should cause our paths to meet, giving me new insights into love, life and faith. Thank you for being ready to listen, to advise, to laugh and to pray. Thank you too for letting me know that I am important to God, to the parish and to you—as you are to me. Love, Pat.

Think...Talk

What do you understand of Baptism? Extend your knowledge. Read, ask questions, reflect. If possible, revisit some photos of your baptism. Who was there to welcome you into your family of faith? Pray for a deeper understanding of this great event in your life.

Prayer Prompt

Listen to a popular love song—e.g. *Beautiful In My Eyes* (Joshua Kadison)—and think of those who are a channel of God's love in your life.

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