



## The Baptism of the Lord

Isaiah 42:1-4,6-7  
 Ps 29:1-4,9-11  
 Acts 10:34-38  
 Luke 3:15-16,21-22

### Monday Jan. 11

1 Sam 1:1-8  
 Ps 116:12-19  
 Mark 1:14-20

### Tuesday Jan. 12

1 Sam 1:9-20  
 1 Samuel 2:1,4-8  
 Mark 1:21-28

### Wednesday Jan. 13

1 Sam 3:1-10,19-20  
 Ps 40:2,5,7-10  
 Mark 1:29-39

### Thursday Jan. 14

1 Sam 4:1-11  
 Ps 44:10-11,14-15,24-25  
 Mark 1:40-45

### Friday Jan. 15

1 Sam 8:4-7,10-22a  
 Ps 89:16-19  
 Mark 2:1-12

### Saturday Jan. 16

1 Sam 9:1-4,17-19,10:1  
 Ps 21:2-7  
 Mark 2:13-17

Today's readings are full of expectation. What are *you* waiting for? How do you need God to come and rescue you from injustices, or deliver you from evil, or comfort you as you wait for loved ones to whom their hearts belong to God? What guidance have you been seeking yet still you feel confused and uncertain?

Do you feel Christ's gift of peace within you as you wait expectantly? Or frustrated, worried, and impatient?

John the Baptizer's congregation was filled with expectancy because they hoped that he was their finally-arrived Messiah. Yearning for God to intervene against injustices, foreign oppression, and sin, they latched onto the fiery enthusiasm of John and his baptism of repentance. Their excitement was based on personal im-

patience, not divine guidance.

God, however, had something better in mind. The real Messiah would baptize with the fire of the Holy Spirit. Whereas John could only call people to repentance, the real Messiah would empower them to grow in holiness by giving them his own Spirit of holiness.

When Jesus submitted himself to John's baptism, it was not because he needed to repent; he was sinless. He was uniting himself to *our* need for repentance,



thus starting his ministry of delivering us from evil by taking our sins to the cross.

In Christian baptism, we are immersed into the holiness of Jesus and everything that came afterward: his ministry, his priesthood, his prophetic sharing of the Good News, his servant leadership, and yes, his suffering, for the benefit of the salvation of others. The Holy Spirit empowers us to do it and the Father says, "You are my beloved child; with you I am well pleased!"

What do *you* expect? What do you think should happen in your life because of your baptism? Expectation is a good attitude – unless it's based on impatience, which usually leads to disappointment. Expectation that's based on the goodness of God and what *he* wants will never fail to provide more than we hope to receive.

### Reflect & Discuss:

1. What would you like to expect from God this year?
2. Is this something that he wants for you?
3. How might things turn out differently – but better – than what you imagine should happen?
4. Name some of the baptismal promises that God makes in his covenant with us. How do know he keeps his promises?
5. Share the story of a time when an answer to prayer turned out better than you expected.