

St Peter's, Ealing
Sunday 10th January 2016
Baptism of the Lord – Family Mass

Where is God?

Today we had a reading from the Bible that was pretty dramatic. John the Baptist has been preaching repentance to the people of Israel as a preparation for the coming judgement of God. John believed someone special was coming soon, and that special person would bring with him the Kingdom of God when the people of Israel would be saved from the sinfulness of the world and brought back into a kingdom lead by God. This would be a new stage in the life of the people of God and would be the fulfilment of the prophecies of old.

The people were getting all worked up by John's words. They wanted to know what he meant, was John the one who was to come? John said he wasn't. He was baptising with water but the Messiah, this special person from God, will baptise with the Holy Spirit and fire. So if the people were uncertain then they just had to look for the signs.

What signs do we have in the reading from Luke's gospel today that tell us God is with Jesus and is in the story?

Water

Dove

Word: This is my Son, my Beloved.

What do we think these signs might mean? How are they signs from God?

Water: washing, cleaning, refreshing. Water becomes the symbol of God's refreshing and cleansing love for us. Might even be healing.

Dove: a symbol of the Holy Spirit. A distinctive blessing from God. Here a consecration of Jesus'

This is my Son, my Beloved: if we were not sure by the time Jesus was baptised we should be now!

That's all great and tells us a lot about Jesus at the very beginning of his ministry. Can you think of ways God may still speak to us and show us the way of faith today?

Bible
Sacraments
Church
Each other

I wonder how each of these tells us about or shows us God today. Can you think?

Bible: word of God which still tells us today the stories of God and how God works in the world.

Sacraments: the ways in which the grace of God are shared in our world – baptism and holy communion, confirmation, marriage, ordination, anointing, reconciliation.

Church: a visible sign of God's presence in the community, which is dependent on –

Each other: through our lives as Christians we show people God's love.

In same way Jesus was anointed through the holy spirit to begin his ministry, we are anointed at baptism to share the good news, that God loves us and cares for us. That through Jesus we too are called Beloved by God and God calls us his children.