



## Reflection by Hillarie Griggs

**Jesus's Baptism / Epiphany**  
**Matt 2:1-12**  
**7<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

This weekend we remember and celebrate two events in the life of Jesus, His Baptism and the visit of the Magi. Both these events begin to reveal the divine nature of Jesus of Nazareth.

Epiphany commemorates the moment when the wise men recognised the incarnate Messiah. These visitors were prepared to travel a vast distance following the star into the unknown to find the child born king of the Jews. When they saw Jesus, they humbled themselves, knelt down and worshipped him. When they departed, they did not return to Herod's castle but obeyed God. What an example to us all! Are we prepared to step out of our comfort zone into the unknown as we seek Jesus? Would we recognise him when we have found him? What of our gifts would we give him? Do we obey God rather than man?

The visit of the Magi is only found in Matthew's Gospel, but Jesus' baptism is depicted not only in Matthew but also in Mark and Luke and is alluded to in John. The baby in the manger had grown into adulthood and on that day went down to the River Jordan where John the Baptist was preaching. Did Jesus join the queue of people waiting in line to be baptised by John to show that he is one of us? The crowds would have seen an ordinary man go down into the water as many had done previously. But three significant things happened as Jesus came out of the darkness of the river into the light of the day:

- Heaven was torn apart.
- God's spirit descended on him like a dove.
- God's voice was heard. "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

This confirms Jesus's identity as the Son of God. The crowds standing on the banks of the River Jordan would have known for certain that this was the greater person John had been telling them about. Certainly, Jesus's baptism brought fundamental changes for him. His earlier normal and obscure life had ended, and his life of preaching, love, and healing was about to begin.

The baptism of Jesus was the first public revelation of the Trinity. God the Father's voice was heard from heaven. Jesus was recognised as God's Son. God the Holy Spirit, in the form of a dove, descended upon Jesus.

When God says to Jesus, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased," he is saying it also to everyone because Christ identified himself with humanity as one of us. How hard is it for you to accept the fact that you are loved by God? How do you respond to this love?

As Jesus's baptism signals the start of his ministry and mission, in the same way our own baptism is the beginning of our own mission to serve God and one another. Are you aware of the unique mission entrusted to you by God? How do you respond to this invitation?

