

# Risen



# Christ

The Baptism of the Lord

11 & 12 January 2025 - Year C

## The Catholic Communities of Our Lady Help of Christians, Eltham & St Francis Xavier, Montmorency



We acknowledge the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation who are the traditional custodians of this land and pay our respect to the elders past, present and emerging.

### Gospel: Luke 3:15-16, 21-22

A feeling of expectancy had grown among the people, who were beginning to think that John might be the Christ, so John declared before them all, 'I baptize you with water, but someone is coming, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to undo the strap of his sandals; he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.'

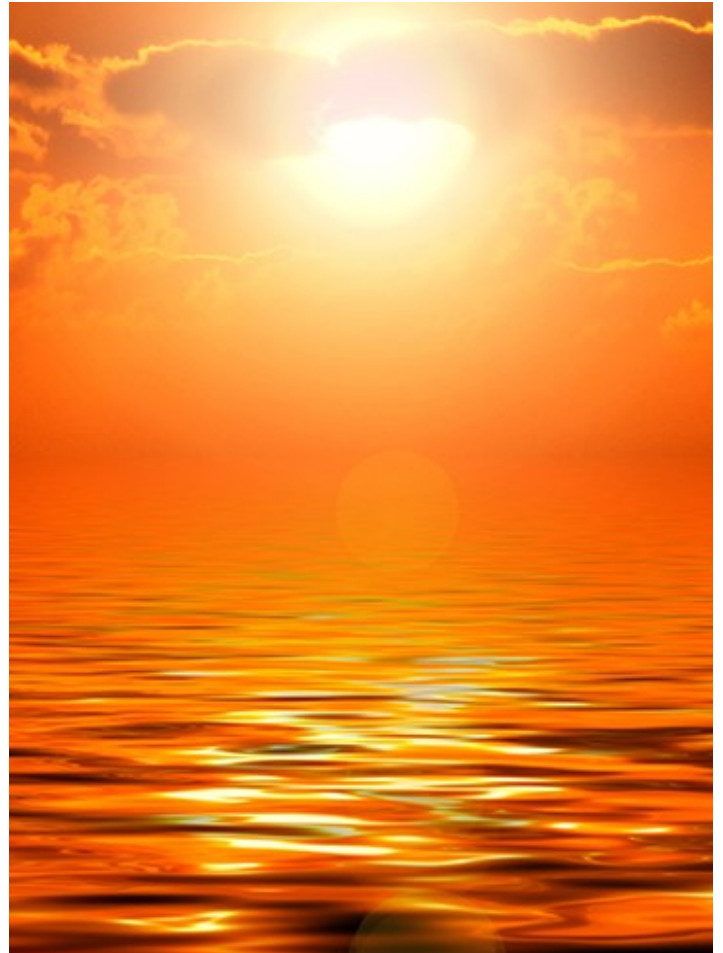
Now when all the people had been baptized and while Jesus after his own baptism was at prayer, heaven opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily shape, like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on you.'

### Reflection - Break Open the Word 2025:

John the Baptist demonstrates his humility before Christ and willingly directs his disciples towards Jesus. His is a baptism in water for repentance; Jesus will take this to a new level, imparting the Holy Spirit. This phrase evokes the Pentecost event.

The verses omitted from this reading refer to John's ongoing preaching of the good news and his imprisonment by Herod before reverting to John's work of baptising people in the Jordan.

Luke then presents Jesus' baptism by John in his own way. As in the Gospels of Mark and Matthew, we have the opening of heaven, the descent of the Holy Spirit like a dove, and the voice of the Father's favour, but here in Luke all this occurs after the baptism while Jesus is at prayer. This suggests that it may have been a key moment of revelation for Jesus himself.



*Let us pray for all those who have gone before us marked with the sign of faith ...*

#### Montmorency

For those in need of **healing**,  
remembering especially:

*Terry Kean, Debbie Edgley (nee Vanderwert),  
Leon Gray, Siobhan Lappin,  
Graeme Layton, Frances McDonald,  
Cindy & Ed Morrissey, Pauline Murphy,  
Regina Roszczenko (mother of Liz Gray)  
Jeanette Steward, Skye Stojanov*

For those whose **anniversaries**  
are at this time:

*Walter Lee (20 year anniversary), Francis James Mannix*

#### Eltham

For those in need of **healing**,  
remembering especially:

*Penny Boyce, Maurice Brosnan, Ruth Decker,  
Shannon Donahoo, Mary Luttick,  
Rosemary Scully*

For those whose **anniversaries**  
are at this time:

*Caroline O'Connor*

To include an anniversary please contact Parish Office  
9435 4742 or [RisenChrist.Parish@cam.org.au](mailto:RisenChrist.Parish@cam.org.au).

*This parish has a commitment to ensuring the safety of children and vulnerable people in our community.  
We support the recommendations of the Royal Commission into institutional abuse and pray for all the survivors.*



## VIEW FROM ROME

Austen Ivereigh



Among 21 new cardinals created last weekend at St Peter's was the English ecclesial national treasure whose brilliant insights have long graced these pages. For the 70-odd friends and family coming out to share the joy of his elevation - "Cardinal Timothy Radcliffe" is still unfamiliar enough to generate a frisson - part of what they'll remember is the chaos of the seating in the basilica and the surging crowds for the courtesy visits afterwards. This was by far the most fraternal consistory I have attended: popular and warm, marked by hugs and humility. It could stand as an icon of the Francis reform.

For many in the Curia, mind, it was the consistory of wild cards. They saw a Pope about to hit 88 shaking up the college with left-field choices. Half of the new voting-age cardinals were from religious orders rather than the diocesan priesthood - surely a record.

But what really raised the eyebrows were two easter-rite picks who are young enough to be voting in conclaves for at least the next 30 years. Along with the two Dominicans in white habits, these two stood out from the sea of scarlet *abito corale* by their black robes. George Jacob Koovakad, the 51-year-old who organises the Pope's travels, is a Syro-Malabar from Kerala whose doctorate is on the need of poverty in the priesthood. He carried off a fetching scarlet-piped tunic and round red-topped round hat,

while Mykola Bychok, a Ukrainian Redemptorist Greek-Catholic bishop in Melbourne, Australia, had a black monastic veil with red trim. Bychok, who heads the eparchy of the Byzantine rite down under, is at 44 by a long shot the youngest cardinal in the college, nearly eight out of 10 of whose electors - the under-80s, now standing at 140 - have been chosen by Francis. He says he aims to be a cardinal who is "flexible, holy, accessible and without eminence".

**Wild cards aside**, most newbies were bishops of major sees - Tehran, Tokyo, Toronto, Naples, Turin and Belgrade - or from fast-growing, young Churches such as Calookan in the Philippines, or Abidjan in the Ivory Coast. In the case of the other Cominican, the impressive French-born 62-year-old archbishop of Algiers, Jean-Paul Vesco, Francis is bolstering a figure on the crossroads of dialogue with Islam.

This was a big consistory for Latin America. Bestowing so many red hats there - Lima (Peru), Santiago (Chile), Porto Alegre (Brazil), Guayaquil (Ecuador) and Santiago del Estero (Argentina) - felt like the coming-of-age of a new generation cut from the same synodal, fraternal cloth as Francis. Lima's Carlos Castillo has valiantly taken on the corrupt and powerful Peruvian Sodalicio movement; Santiago de Chile's Fernando Chomalí was an early advocate of radical reform in the response to abuse. Fraternity, unity and service were on Francis' mind when he addressed the new cardinals with a huge bruise on his right jaw after a night-time's brush with a bedside table. (He is fine: rock-strong in spirit and will. But motor functions and his one complete lung - Rome's cold, wet

air at this time does him no favours - are weakening.) He asked them to centre in Christ and divest themselves of what is superfluous, to "cultivate a passion for encounter" and be "builders of communion and unity". The new red hats were already on that programme, not least the first Oxford cardinal since Newman. Radcliffe, 79, told the Pope that he didn't want to be uprooted from the fraternal life of the Order of Preachers. "In the depth of my being, I am a brother ... and I wish to remain a brother ... at the service of my brothers and sisters in the Church," he told Catholic News Service.

**Fraternal Cardinals** who are warm as well as wise tend to be much loved, which is why there were many more tickets allocated to their friends and families than there were seats in the basilica. Up at the Angelicum, hosting a reception for Teams Radcliffe and Vesco the following day, I heard not a few - including elderly Radcliffe brothers and their wives - tell of having to stand at the basilica edges from where nothing could be seen or heard. But outside were seats and big screens and it wasn't so cold, so many made ourselves at home there. When the Englishman went up to receive his ring, biretta and *titulus* - the scroll with the name of the church in Rome - the people around me went quiet. *Lui é bravo*, I heard a woman say behind me. On my right, an Anglican priest who is a long-standing friend of the new cardinal, was shocked he hadn't ironed his trousers of bought new shoes, chortling: "He looks like he's coming back from Tesco's!"

Austen Ivereigh is a biographer of Pope Francis. His latest book, *First Belong to God: On Retreat with Pope Francis*, was published by Loyola Press in February.



### Breathing Under Water Not for Ourselves Alone

What was given to you freely, you must give away freely. - Matthew 10:8

Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs. - Step 12 of the Twelve Steps

*Richard emphasises how inner transformation needs to extend outward to the world:*

After teaching the gospel for over fifty years, trying to build communities, and attempting to raise up elders and leaders, I'm convinced that one of my major failures was that I didn't ask more of people from the very beginning. If they didn't turn outward early, they tended to never do so. Their dominant concerns became personal self-development, spiritual consumerism, church as "more attendance" at things, or, to sue a common

phrase among Christians, "deepening my relationship with Jesus". Bill W. seemed to recognise this danger early on. Until people's basic egocentricity is radically exposed and foundationally redirected, much religion becomes occupied with rearranging deck chairs on the Titanic, moving alongside other isolated passengers while the whole ship sinks.

Step 12 found a way to expose and transform that perpetual adolescence by telling us early on that *we must serve others*. Supporting others in their healing is not an option, not something we might eventually be "called" to after thirty-five religious retreats and fifty years of church services. It isn't something we do when we finally get our act together. No; we don't truly comprehend any spiritual thing until we give it away. Spiritual gifts increase only by "using" them.

The author of the Letter of James always insists on orthopraxy instead of mere verbal orthodoxy: "To listen to the word and not obey it is like looking at your own features in a mirror, and then, after a quick look, going off and immediately forgetting what you look like" (1:23-24). For James,

to "actively put it into practice is to be happy in all that one does" (1:25) and "if good works do not accompany faith, it is quite dead" (2:17). James is a unique apostle of the Twelve Step behavioural approach.

*James Finley warns against the temptation to prioritise our own healing at the expense of others:*

There's a certain temptation [as you go down the spiritual path] to say, "I'm out of here. I know it's a troubled world, but I'm a mystic in the making. Don't disturb me. See, I'm out of here." There's a temptation to think you're finding your way into a realm of divinity or inner peace [or healing], removed from the brokenness and sadness of this world, which is really then to betray the path. Thomas Merton once said to me in the cloistered monastery, "We did not come here to breathe the rarified air beyond the suffering of this world. We came here to carry the suffering of the whole world in our heart. Otherwise, there's no validity in living in a place like this." What goes around comes around and it circles back around in the practice with ourselves first.