Journey towards the Cross

Topic:
God declares who Jesus is.

Bible portion:
Matthew 03:17

Focus:
Baptism: God declares who Jesus is.

March 23, 2026

A daily devotional for lent season

40-Day Gospel Reading Plan

Bible Readings for Today

John 1-2

Have you Read your Bible today?

Memory Verse for the day

"But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God."

John 01:12 (ESV)

Quote

"When Jesus was baptized, the whole world was marked for renewal."

- N. T. Wright.

The baptism of Jesus reveals three powerful truths: Firstly, Jesus willingly comes to John to be baptized; secondly, the Holy Spirit descends upon Him like a dove; and thirdly, the Father declares Him as His beloved Son in whom He is well pleased.

At first glance, Jesus' baptism can feel confusing. Baptism is connected with repentance, but Jesus was sinless (Hebrews 04:15). Why would the Holy One step into waters meant for sinners? When John hesitated, Jesus replied, "Let it be so now" (Matthew 03:15). At that very moment, Jesus chooses solidarity over separation. Though He had no sin, He stepped into the muddy waters of human brokenness. He stood where sinners stand. He entered the place of repentance not because He needed cleansing, but because we did.

This act points to the heart of the gospel: God does not save us from a distance. The world is wounded by sin; creation groans under its weight. Humanity has lost the glory it was created to reflect. God chose Israel to display His holiness to the nations (Exodus 19:05–06), yet even they failed. Into this failure, Jesus steps—not with condemnation, but with compassion. In the waters of baptism, we see a preview of the cross: the Sinless One standing in the place of sinners (Mark 10:45).

Baptism is an outward sign of an inward reality (Romans 06:03–04). It points to repentance, new life, and surrender to God. Yet before we can experience inner renewal, we must admit the truth about our world and our hearts. We live in a broken world, and we carry brokenness within us. Lent calls us to honest reflection—to name our

sins, our compromises, and our weariness. The good news is this: we are not asked to clean ourselves up before coming to God. We come as we are. However far we feel, however stained by failure, Jesus has already stepped into our place (Romans 05:08). When Jesus rises from the water, the heavens open, the Spirit descends, and the Father's voice declares love and delight (Matthew 03:16–17). This is not only about who Jesus is; it also points to what God desires for us. Through Christ, we are welcomed into God's family. The same God who led Israel through the Red Sea and the Jordan now leads us into new life (1 Corinthians 10:01–02). What Israel could not fully become, Jesus fulfills. In Him, we receive the Spirit, and in Him, we hear the Father's gracious welcome: "You are My beloved."

This Lent, let us come honestly to Jesus. He has already stood with us. Now we are invited to walk with Him—toward repentance, renewal, and resurrection life.

Reflective Questions

- Do I honestly admit that I am still broken and sinful—even with all my religious practices and spiritual activities?
- Where do I struggle to believe that God welcomes me "as I am"?
- What broken areas of my life do I need to bring honestly before Jesus this Lent?
- Am I willing to humbly seek daily cleansing by the Holy Spirit and step into others' brokenness with love, just as Christ did for me?

Prayer

Gracious Father, Thank You for sending Your Son to stand with us in our brokenness. When we feel unworthy, remind us that Jesus stepped into the waters for our sake. Cleanse our hearts, renew our minds, and lead us in the way of repentance and life. Pour Your Spirit upon us, and help us to live as Your beloved sons and daughters. As we journey through Lent, shape us to walk in humility, obedience, and hope. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

-Rev. Cletus Edward

Prayer Point

Let us pray for our diocesan office-bearers:
Bishop Rt. Rev. Prabhu D. Jebamani,
Vice President Rev. Suresh L. Pawar,
Hon. Secretary Rev. Thomas Jacob, and
Hon. Treasurer Dr. Jamson Masih and their families