

# Connecting with the Sunday Readings

**Feast of the Baptism of  
Our Lord**

**Gospel Word**  
Luke 3:15-16,  
21-22

If you embark on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, one place available for a visit is a spot along the Jordan River where, it is believed, Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist. Whether this place was the *exact* location of this important event in the life of Jesus is not that important. What is important is that it happened and is remembered. Scholars say this was a turning point in the life of Christ. It was as a result of that act of being baptized that Jesus was affirmed as the Beloved Son of God. He was chosen by God to go forth and begin the arduous task of announcing and establishing God's reign on earth.

## Living the Word

Jesus was human just like we are. In his humanity of Jesus, he had real human needs. He experienced worries and disappointment as well as joy and excitement. He is not made of plastic nor did he fail to touch the ground, the same ground we must walk on. He struggled with temptation and could be pulled down by failure. Okay, he never sinned, but that is not to deny he wasn't human *in every other way*.

Some suggest that the event of his Baptism was an eye-opener for him. "You are loved and get on the road and tell everyone else the same." We are created to be loved and to love. This truth arises from the deepest part of our humanity. It creates in us a hunger to love and to be loved without condition. Reflecting back on the baptism of Jesus, what if Jesus stumbled out of the Jordan River and remembered that he had an appointment to rush to. He heard that voice saying something to him, but he was in a rush and didn't have time to listen. Fortunately for him (and us) he stopped, listened intently and remembered what he heard for the rest of his life.

We're plugged into sounds from a thousand sources. Some people can't endure silence. They always want the background music of ten thousand songs stored in a little device that can be carried in a pocket. The challenge for us today is to hear the subtle messages of God's love. God doesn't give up on us so if we don't hear his message the first time, it will be repeated. The real issue is not whether God is communicating God's love for us but whether we are listening when God says it.

### One-line Prayer

Dear God, open our hearts to hear the many ways you communicate your love for us. Amen.