

WEEKLY SERMON

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'I saw the spirit come down from Heaven'

As a child, I distinctly remember our family holiday and the preparation that my father used to make to ready the car for the journey. Sadly, I am not as diligent as he was but he used to check the tyres, check the oil, check the washer fluid, and have a good look around the vehicle. He also used to check the spare wheel (back when cars had them!) and the tools in the car. He always wanted to be prepared for the journey.

In the Bible passage from John from the gospel reading on Sunday we read of the baptism of Jesus and we are reminded of how we should prepare ourselves for our Christian journey as Jesus prepared at the start of his ministry. We read in John that as Jesus was baptised, he sees the Spirit of God descend and remain with Jesus, equipping him for the ministry that lies ahead. We also hear that Jesus is declared to be the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world and within the passage get an insight into what the ministry of Jesus will be, a ministry of teaching and sacrifice. Jesus models to us the need to seek the Holy Spirit in all we do and in every endeavour, in order to be equipped and prepared for whatever lies ahead and in order to live out lives worthy of God.

There is much to learn from this passage, but praying for the Holy Spirit to guide and equip us at the start of each new day and each new venture would be a practice that will draw us closer to God and allow us to receive the gifts of the Spirit stated in Isaiah 11 of wisdom, understanding, counsel, strength, knowledge and fear of the Lord.

Canon Stephen Whittaker, Interim Diocesan Secretary