

TO THE Heights

FEAST OF THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

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Game Changers

The Catholic Church's Liturgical Calendar is crammed full of inspirational saints, or as we like to call them, Game Changers!

You can check out our other Game Changer resources on our website: www.waterfordlismore.ie/youth-ministry for resources on Sr Clare Crockett, Bl Carlo Acutis, Fr Emil Kapaun, St Therese and many more!

13 January [St Hilary of Poitiers](#)

15 January [St Ita, Patroness of Munster](#)

(and born in Co Waterford!)



Hear

Grab your Bible and look up the Gospel reading.
Don't have a Bible? No worries, click the bible image!



Year C

Sunday Mass Readings

First Reading:

Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11

Responsorial Psalm:

Psalm 103

Second Reading:

Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7

Gospel:

Luke 3: 15-16, 21-22

'You are my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on you'.



1. What is meant by Messianic expectation?
2. Why might they have thought that John the Baptist was the Messiah?
3. How did John convince them that He was not the Messiah?
4. What three symbols of the Holy Spirit are mentioned in this Gospel?
5. Whose voice do you think was heard as the dove came to rest on Jesus?
6. We celebrate the feast of the Epiphany on January 6th. Epiphany means manifestation: why is today's story also seen as an Epiphany?
7. Why do you think Jesus, who was sinless, chose to be baptised by John?



Gospel Reflection: ANOTHER "EPIPHANY"



Today we celebrate the feast of the Baptism of the Lord. In today's Gospel, as in the other Gospel accounts of Jesus' baptism, we hear John the Baptist address the confusion of the people who thought that John might be the Messiah. In response, John contrasts the baptism that he performs with the Baptism that Jesus will inaugurate. John the Baptist says that he has baptized with water, but that someone will come and baptize with the Holy Spirit. The type of baptism that John performed was not yet a Christian Baptism; it was a preparation for Christian Baptism through which sins are forgiven and the gift of the Holy Spirit is received.

The baptism of Jesus is reported in each of the three Synoptic Gospels—Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Clearly, it was an event of great significance for Jesus and for the early Christian community. The Evangelists Mark and Luke report the story from Jesus' perspective; the voice from heaven is addressed to Jesus. Compare this to Matthew's Gospel in which the voice from heaven speaks to everyone. In Luke, however, the Holy Spirit descends upon Jesus during his time of prayer after his baptism. Through his Gospel, Luke will show Jesus to be a person of prayer who withdraws regularly from the crowds and his disciples to pray to his Father.

The baptism of Jesus is considered a manifestation of God in Jesus, another "epiphany." On this, the last day of the Christmas season, our Gospel reveals to us Jesus' relation to God: the son of Mary and Joseph is also God's own Son. In Luke's Gospel, all three members of the Trinity are manifested here: God the Father in the voice, the Holy Spirit descending, and Jesus the Son. At the beginning of his Gospel, Luke is communicating to us important information about the identity of Jesus. In the verses that follow, Luke lists the genealogy of Jesus, tracing Jesus' ancestry back to the first person, Adam, who is also identified as the son of God. We, the children of Adam and Eve, are again made children of God through Baptism.

The Sunday Connection - Loyola Press



Consistency will beat intensity every time.
- Fr Mike Schmitz -

1% CHANGE EVERYDAY

The story of the Baptism of Jesus might seem simple enough until we start probing a little deeper. Why was John baptising people in the River Jordan? So they could repent of their sins and prepare for the coming of the Messiah. Did Jesus *need* to repent of any sins? Of course not, He is God, and He was the coming Messiah. So why did he get baptised?

Jesus' baptism was symbolic. Jesus, as God, actually sanctified the waters by His descent into them, rather than needing to be cleansed of any sin. His baptism was for *our* sake, not for His. He *chose* to embrace and represent the human condition which is broken and in need of forgiveness and healing, and this was symbolised at his baptism. His public ministry is about to begin, and at that moment, the Father says, "*You are my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on you.*" The will of Jesus was completely united with the Will of the Father. If we want to become the person God is calling us to be, we also need to unite our will to His, and follow His guidance for each day and each action of our lives!

TEACHER'S CORNER

Fire in the South: a Catholic Charismatic Outreach Movement to enable people to encounter the personal love of God Father, Son and Holy Spirit. companionship, music, sharing, prayer, the odd funny story, sacred scripture & adoration. Every Wednesday, 8 - 9.15pm (Re-starting in Mid-January)
Zoom ID: 86141473152 Password: FIRE

Introduction to Theology of the Body

Mondays 7.30 - 9pm, Feb 14th - April 4th.
Foyer of Charity, Dunmore East, Co. Waterford. Registration is essential. Please contact Helen at 086 1678027 or email hellywilliams@gmail.com

Got a Minute? New YouTube Series with Bishop Phonsie Cullinan on the Diocese of Waterford and Lismore YouTube Channel weekly



Young Person's Prayer



Father God, my Father, You have a loving plan for my whole life. I do not know exactly where You want to lead me, but grant me the grace to trust in Your plan. Show me now who it is You want me to be at the end of this year. Teach me daily what I need to do, to become that person, the best version of myself. Help me to commit to small steps faithfully, to grow 1% closer daily to that vision.

TUNE OF THE WEEK

Your Plans for Us

Eleventh Hour Worship 

WEEKLY CHALLENGE:



Spend time this week praying, journalling and committing to the kind of person God wants you to be at the end of this year: what virtues, decisions, growth, pruning, change will that require? when you're ready, commit to your first 1%, and then repeat daily, till the end of the year! keeping a journal, a written record, will help you.

WATCH: [The Secret to Sticking to a New Year's Resolution](#)
(Fr Mike Schmitz)

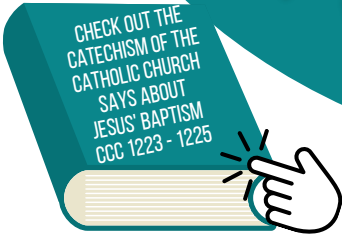


CHECK IT OUT: THE BIBLE IN A YEAR APP



The Bible in a Year Podcast guides Catholics through the Bible in 365 daily episodes, providing commentary, reflection, and prayer along the way. This podcast has been number one in the US since the beginning of the New Year! 1) Read the ENTIRE Bible; 2) Feel more confident about your understanding of Scripture; 3) Experience the transformative power of God's Word in your daily life; 4) Start seeing the world through the lens of Scripture. Note that some readings contain adult themes and may not be suitable for children.

- ASCEND YOUTH MINISTRY (DIOCESE OF WATERFORD & LISMORE) -



**Take Action!
Take a Step!
Move!**



The 1% Rule

THE SECRET TO STICKING TO NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS!

LUKE 3: 15-16, 21-22

Therefore, my dear brothers & sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.
1 Cor 15:58



HAVE YOU MADE ANY NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS? HAVE YOU MADE THEM IN THE PAST?
WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR EXPERIENCE OF TRYING TO STAY FAITHFUL TO THEM?

WATCH THIS VIDEO FROM FR MIKE SCHMITZ, "THE SECRET TO STICKING TO A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION" (ASCENSION PRESENTS) AND REFLECT ON THE QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW



Click here to see the montage Fr Mike references and see what you think!

What is it about the Rocky movies that Fr Mike finds so inspiring?

What effect did seeing Rocky IV have on Fr Mike and his siblings?



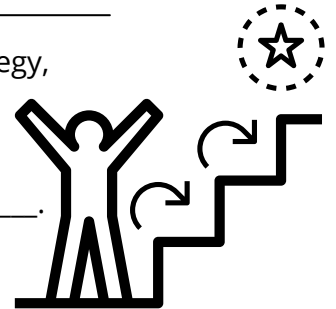
INSPIRATION ON ITS OWN IS NOT ENOUGH FOR CHANGE TO HAPPEN...

What cycling team did Dave Brailsford coach to victory in just three years?



Brailsford credited "mimimal aggregate gain" as his winning strategy, also known as The _____ rule.

In simple terms this means we try to improve ourselves by ____ % every _____.
Small steps that help us move towards where we want to be.



This Rule demands we have a clear sense of _____.

For Christians that means asking "What kind of person does God _____ me to be by the _____ of this _____?"

To discover this, Fr Mike invites us to do two things: _____ and _____



goal:

WHEN WE HAVE A CLEAR VISION, WE CAN DECIDE ON THE SMALL 1% IMPROVEMENTS THAT BRING US CLOSER TO THE VISION GOD HAS PLANTED IN OUR HEARTS.

Being faithful does not necessarily mean having a lot of faith and feeling it a lot.



- **Faithful means:** Keeping your _____ and keeping them _____.
- **Consistency** will beat _____ every time!

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THE 1% RULE

[LUKE 3:16-16, 21-22](#)

AM I CONSISTENT IN CHOOSING THE LORD? AM I CONSISTENT IN REPENTING WHEN I FALL? EVEN IN THE MIDST OF FAILURE AND SIN, DO I REMAIN FAITHFUL? DO I CHOOSE GOD WHEN I FALL?

STILL FEELING A BIT MEH? *It's not about your emotions!*

If you are feeling lukewarm and don't care, what does Fr Mike recommend?

Remember: your intellect and will can guide your _____.



Now Read Luke 3:16-16, 21-22



The story of the Baptism of Jesus might seem simple enough until we start probing a little deeper. Why was John baptising people in the River Jordan? So they could repent of their sins and prepare for the coming of the Messiah. Did Jesus need to repent of any sins? Of course not, He is God, and He **was** the coming Messiah. So why did He get baptised?

Jesus' baptism was *symbolic*. Jesus, as God, actually *sanctified* the waters by His descent into them, rather than needing to be cleansed of any sin. His baptism was for *our* sake, not for His. He chose to embrace and represent the human condition which is broken and in need of forgiveness and healing, and this was symbolised at his baptism. His public ministry is about to begin, and at that moment, the Father says, "You are my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on you." The will of Jesus was completely united with the Will of the Father. If we want to become the person God is calling us to be, we also need to unite our will to His, and follow His guidance for each day and each action of our lives!

"God has placed a vision of your life for who he wants you to be at the end of this year.

Choosing that faithfully, just 1% every day, ends up resulting in the kind of person God wants you to be."

(Fr Mike Schmitz)

MISSION!

SPEND TIME THIS WEEK PRAYING, JOURNALLING AND COMMITTING TO THE KIND OF PERSON GOD WANTS YOU TO BE AT THE END OF THIS YEAR: WHAT VIRTUES, DECISIONS, GROWTH, PRUNING, CHANGE WILL THAT REQUIRE? WHEN YOU'RE READY, COMMIT TO YOUR FIRST 1%, AND THEN REPEAT DAILY TILL THE END OF THE YEAR! KEEPING A JOURNAL, A WRITTEN RECORD, WILL HELP YOU.



PRAYER TIME!

Father God, my Father, You have a loving plan for my whole life. I do not know exactly where You want to lead me, but grant me the grace to trust in Your plan. Show me now who it is You want me to be at the end of this year. Teach me daily what I need to do, to become that person, the best version of myself. Help me to commit to small steps faithfully, to grow 1% closer daily to that vision.



CREATE A PLAYLIST TO LISTEN TO AS YOU REFLECT ON THE YEAR AHEAD

- [Your Plans for Us - Eleventh Hour Worship](#)
- [When God's Perfect Plans - Resound Worship](#)
- [I will trust - Elevation Worship](#)
- [Your Promises - Elevation Worship](#)
- [The Change in Me - Casting Crowns](#)
- [I will follow You - Kristene di Marco](#)
- [I choose to worship - Rend Collective](#)
- [Good to me - Audrey Assad](#)



Click the links for the YouTube videos to listen to some suggestions!



**New Year's Resolutions ... for Me or for God?
LITTLE BY LITTLE w/Fr Columba Jordan CFR**



**The Key to Self-Mastery: Improvements
by Aggregation of Marginal Gains**



Allow yourself some space to sit and reflect on your future. You might prefer to play some music in the background, or just sit in silence. Read the words of Thomas Merton below and pray with them. Allow ideas, thoughts and images that come to you as you pray to form part of your doodle prayer. What are the areas of your life you need to invite Jesus into? What situations, relationships do you need His help with? What decisions do you have to make? Ask the Holy Spirit to guide your heart and your thoughts. This is a particular space you are creating for God in your life today. Speak, and listen.

My Lord God,
I have no idea where I am going.
I do not see the road ahead of me.
I cannot know for certain where it will end.
nor do I really know myself,
and the fact that I think I am following your will
does not mean that I am actually doing so.
But I believe that the desire to please you
does in fact please you.
And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing.
I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire.

And I know that if I do this
you will lead me by the right road,

though I may know nothing about it.
Therefore will I trust you always though
I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death.

I will not fear, for you are ever with me,
and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.