

# John baptizes Jesus in the River Jordan

Joe Sarnicola/Contributing writer

It is written in the prophet Isaiah: "Behold, I am sending my messenger, a voice of one crying out in the desert, 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.'"

Many, many years passed. Kings rose to power, one after another, and became part of history. At the time God had determined, a son was born to a couple who had been childless. They promised God, if he blessed them with a son, they would dedicate the boy's life to serving God. Zechariah and Elizabeth had a son, and they named him John. As an adult he was known as John the Baptist. He was that voice crying out in the desert.

John prayed every day that God would give him the power and faith he needed to fulfill his ministry. He preached to anyone who would listen, and to many people who did not want to listen. He wore a tunic made of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist. He traveled constantly and ate locusts and wild honey.



Illustration by Linda Jeanne Rivers

From the first day he began preaching, John proclaimed that baptism led to forgiveness of sins for those who repented. He also prophesied a great promise that would be fulfilled soon.

"One mightier than I is coming after me," he said. "I am not worthy to stoop and loosen the thongs of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." People from Jerusalem and the country of Judea came to hear John and to be baptized by him. On one very special day, a very special man came to be baptized by John.

A man named Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee, stood in line waiting to be baptized in the River Jordan. When John saw him, he immediately recognized Jesus for who he really was. He said to Jesus, "I need to be baptized by you, and yet you are coming to me?"

Jesus replied, "Allow it now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness."

So John baptized Jesus in the water. When Jesus came up out of the water, the sky looked as though it had been torn open and the Holy Spirit, in the shape of a graceful white dove, rested on Jesus. A voice declared out of the heavens, "You are my Son; with you I am well pleased."

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Mark 1

## Q&A

1. What did John say about baptism?
2. What happened in the sky after Jesus was baptized?

## Puzzle

Fill in the blanks with the word or phrase that correctly completes the Lord's Prayer. Answers on page 13.

(1) \_\_\_\_\_, who art in heaven,

(2) \_\_\_\_\_ be thy name. Thy (3) \_\_\_\_\_

come, thy (4) \_\_\_\_\_ be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us (5) \_\_\_\_\_ our.

daily (6) \_\_\_\_\_; and forgive us our trespasses

as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us

not into (7) \_\_\_\_\_,

but (8) \_\_\_\_\_ us from evil. Amen.

## Bible Answer

The Gospel According to Mark and from the Gospels of the Gospels. But Mark's Gospel is a very different story written by the reporter who witnessed the events in the book.

Many details are given that describe the time, the weather, the places and the clothes the people were wearing. Mark placed special emphasis on the healings and other miracles performed by Jesus. Mark's Gospel is written for the people who were in the Roman Empire who were not familiar with the Jewish religion. Mark's Gospel was written with Paul.

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## St. Cecilia

The story of St. Cecilia is a beautiful one. She was a young girl who was very beautiful and very kind. She was a Christian and she was very devoted to God. She was a very good girl and she was very kind to everyone.

She is believed to have been the daughter of a Roman official. As part of her devotion to God, she fasted several times a week. After Cecilia was married, she told her new husband Valerian that an angel appeared to her. The angel told her that she and Cecilia's husband should from that day to see that Christians who were killed for their faith received decent burials. For this, Valerian and his brother Tiburtius, who had been arrested by Roman soldiers and sentenced to death, Cecilia had to bury them.

Cecilia was charged with the same crime and sentenced to death. Because she refused to be wedded she sang to the Lord in her heart. Cecilia is the patron saint of music and musicians. We honor her on Nov. 22.

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