



In John 1:33 St John the Baptist said this about Jesus at the time when he received an infilling of the Spirit, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptise with the Holy Spirit.' In a footnote commenting on that verse in the Jerusalem Bible, we read that it sums up the main purpose of the earthly and heavenly mission of Jesus, namely, to pour out his Spirit on all those who would believe in him. That being so, it could be argued that John 1:33 is one of the most significant verses in the entire Bible.

What did John mean when he said that Jesus would baptise believers with the Holy Spirit? The Greek word, *baptizo* literally means 'to go under water'. If a sponge is immersed in water and squeezed, the air is expelled in bubbles and then it is drenched, soaked, inundated and filled with water. So, John the Baptist was foretelling a time when Jesus would expel the foul air of sin from the sponge of people's lives only to fill them with his Spirit of love, together with the fruits and gifts of the Holy Spirit (cf. Gal 5:22-3; 1 Cor 12:8-10).

Although he himself was baptised and filled with the Spirit, Jesus

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And with your spirit.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

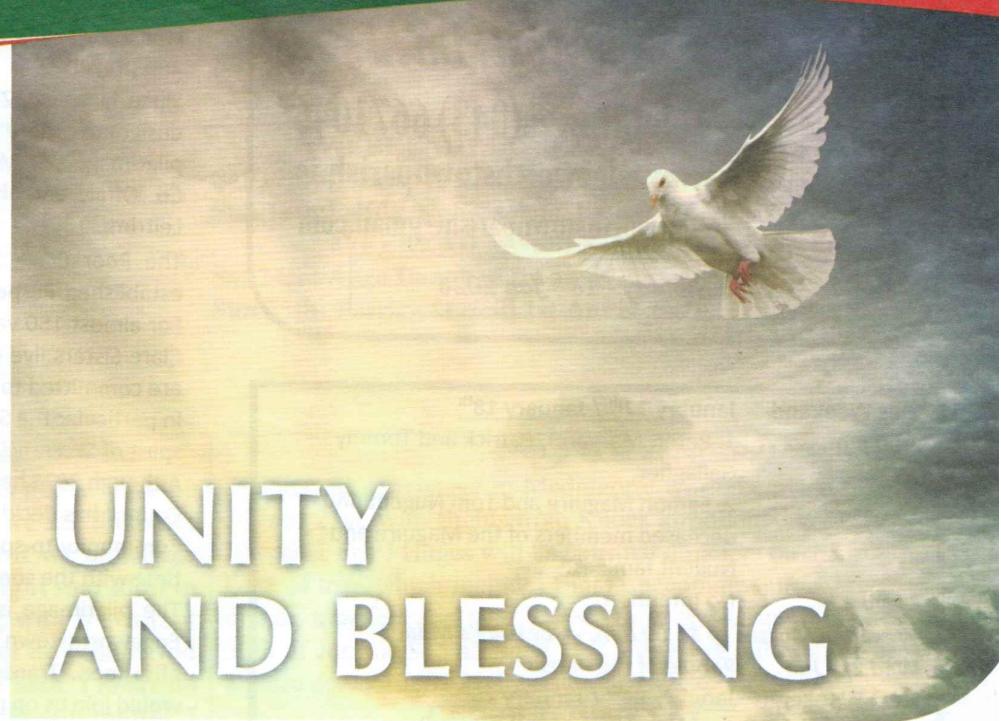
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, grant us peace.

Showing the Host to the people, the priest says:

Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world.

Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.



was unable to pour out the Spirit on anyone during his lifetime, not even his Mother Mary or the twelve Apostles. As he said on one occasion, 'it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you' (Jn 16:7). It was only when he yielded up his Spirit to the Father on the Cross (cf. Lk 23:46), that God could pour it out on all those who believe in Jesus.

We were baptised in the Spirit in a real but sacramental way when we received baptism and confirmation. We can claim those graces in an experiential way when we are baptised in the Spirit,

Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Communion Antiphon (Cf. Ps 22:5)
You have prepared a table before me, and how precious is the chalice that quenches my thirst.

Prayer after Communion

Pour on us, O Lord, the Spirit of your love, and in your kindness make those you have nourished by this one heavenly Bread one in mind and heart. Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

e.g., as a result of attending a Life in the Spirit seminar or an Alpha Course. Speaking about baptism in the Spirit, Pope Francis said in 2019, 'share baptism in the Spirit with everyone in the Church.' Later he went on to say that baptism in the Spirit, 'makes it possible for people to encounter the living Jesus ... which changes lives.'

— Pat Collins



Reflection

What is your favourite title for Jesus? What are the various associations it has for you?



Lesson

Jesus is the new lamb and, led to the slaughter like Isaiah's suffering servant, will pass over from death to life. His blood, like that of the Passover lamb, now sets all people free.



Prayer

Lord, help us to announce your gift of salvation through the lives we lead. Amen.