

Sunday January 10th The Journey of Faith St. Mark Ch 1 v4 – 11

This Sunday we celebrate the Baptism of Jesus Christ which confirms His divine mission and that he was the Messiah, the Christ, the one whom St. Augustine of Hippo called “God’s Self- portrait.” As we recall Christ’s baptism it reminds us of our own baptism when we were brought into the life and fellowship of the Church and we began our Journey of Faith. Every journey needs a light or a guide to show us the way; that guide is Jesus Christ who said, “ I am the light of the world. The one who follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life.” The world was in darkness when Christ was born; the darkness of separation from God. Our Lord came to banish the darkness; to illuminate our lives with God’s presence, grace and love. For lives which open to Him, He becomes the light of life.

However, we all know that there are times when we feel life is overwhelming us with the anxieties and issues we face. The light of Faith may appear to be dimmed. The light of God’s presence can seem like a small candle but in a power cut how grateful we can be for a candle. It helps us to find our way around. So it is with God’s light. It is never extinguished; it is enough light for us to continue our journey of Faith and life when we can be sustained by the fellowship of the Church, by prayer, by the Bible and worship.

How vital it is to play our part in maintaining the life and witness of the Church and to encourage others on their journeys of Faith as we begin this new year and also a third lockdown during this pandemic which highlights peoples’ vulnerability. As Bishop Robert has said, “No government can legislate for friendship, trust, care and love.” The Church, the Body of Christ made visible in our parish churches is a great community builder bringing the healing touch of Christ to fractured communities, where people feel lonely and uncertain, while our hospital staff and our medical staff are giving of themselves in our service. It might seem that the powers of darkness have the upper hand but recall the words of our Lord, “ The one who follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life.” We can make that a reality by reassuring people that they are valued and loved by God; our churches being open to offer places of sanctuary and comfort. For each of us to provide a listening ear or making a phone call because to hear a voice is so important. As one person who lives alone said to me this past week when I phoned her, “I never expected anyone to phone me. It makes such a difference to know I am not forgotten.”

During our journey of faith we will experience good times and sad times. Times when life flows smoothly and times when troubles seem to multiply. Of one fact we can be sure, wherever we are on our journey we are not alone for in Jesus Christ we have a guide who sustains us and illuminates our path supported by His reassuring words “I am with you always even to the close of the age.”