##### LSW

for children

Year A

###### Baptism of the Lord

#### Concepts

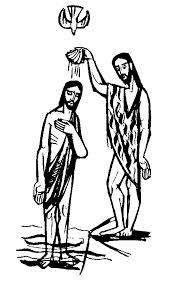
Baptism

Joining a family

Being a new person

#### Points to note

Baptism is a sacrament of initiation. It is important to remember that a sacrament of initiation initiates a person into a community. Baptism is not merely a personal journey to meet God, but is also a person journey to meet a community. The baptism of Jesus was his way of meeting the community he was called to minister, the entire human race.

Emphasis should therefore be placed on the family and the Church when someone is baptised. Nobody goes alone to church to get baptised. We were brought there by our families. After baptism, we then become members of the family of the Church.

Note that as not all the children may have been baptised, discussions and activities must cater for them. For that matter, most probably would not remember their baptism. Perhaps, they may be asked to share their experience of what they see when someone is baptised.

#### Liturgy

### Acclamation

Alleluia! Alleluia!

The heavens opened and the Father’s voice resounded:

‘This is my Son, the beloved. Listen to him.’

Alleluia!

#### Gospel

Explain that this passage starts off with John the Baptist preaching in the desert. Remind the children who John the Baptist is: he was the cousin of Jesus.

The Lord be with you.

*All:*  And also with your spirit.

A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St Luke

(Mt 3:13-17)

Jesus came to Galilee to the Jordan to be baptised by John. John tried to dissuade him. “It is I who need baptism from you,” he said, “and yet you come to me!” But Jesus replied, “Leave it like this for the time being; it is fitting that we should, in this way, do all that righteousness demands.” At this, John gave in to him.

As soon as Jesus was baptised he came up from the water, and suddenly the heavens opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming down on him. And a voice spoke from heaven, “This is my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on him.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord

# Discussion

How many families do we belong to? *Two: the family at home and the family of the Church*

How do we join the family at home? *At birth*

How do we join the family of the Church? *At baptism*

What happens at a baptism? *Go through the various parts of the baptism. The baby is brought to church with the family. The priest asks the parents what name they wish to give the child.*

*You could take this opportunity to ask the children what their parents replied. Go round and ask the children one by one and that’s one way of finding out the children’s name. It will be a good start to the year to find out all the children’s names since all family members know each other’s name and shouldn’t we too as God’s family?*

*The priest then asks if the parents would help the baby grow in faith and love God and neighbours. The priest them baptises the child using the formulation “*With this water, I baptise you [name] in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”  *The family then returns home with a child who is now a member of God’s family.*

Do only babies get baptised? *Bigger children and adults get baptised as well. So did Jesus. It was at his baptism that Jesus met his family of the Church, the one that God had entrusted to him to love and minister to.*

Draw parallels between the family at home and the family of the Church:

1. families love one another;
2. know each other’s name (note that when the priest asked the parents the name of the child at baptism and the parents reply, that was the first time the name of the child was heard in the Church);
3. share with one another;
4. have meals together; etc.