

You Are My Beloved – Discussion and Reflection Questions

This reflection encourages youth to consider how God expresses His love to us as baptized members of His family.

Sometimes we express our love for our friends and family by saying “I love you.” But other times we use non-verbal gestures to express our affection, such as a smile or a hug.

Consider what we hear about declaring love in [Mark 1:7-11](#):

This is what John the Baptist proclaimed: “One mightier than I is coming after me. 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.”

It happened in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized in the Jordan by John. On coming up out of the water he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit, like a dove, descending upon him. And a voice came from the heavens, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.”

[Mark 1:7-11](#)

Wow! The Spirit descended like a dove and God the Father spoke the words “You are my beloved son. In you I am well pleased.” This is an unambiguous statement of the Father’s love for Jesus.

Also think about the Trinity. God the Father is the lover. God the Son is the beloved. And God the Holy Spirit is the love between them, a love which is so strong that it is its own person. So when we hear in the gospel that the Spirit descended, this is actually the love being manifest.

- How do you feel when your parents express their affection for you?
- How do you think the Father’s expression of love affected Jesus as he was starting his public ministry?

Most of us were probably baptized as infants and don’t remember our baptisms. (*If anyone in the group was baptized as a child or adult, ask them what they remember.*) But even though we might not remember it, it did a couple of really powerful things.

It removed the stain of original sin, making us ready for God to dwell in us. It made us adopted children of God.

It might help to imagine ourselves as infants being baptized. Consider that as the water is poured on our heads, it is like a kiss from God our Father. He welcomes us into His family. He implants in our hearts a desire for closeness with Him. He calls us “beloved”.

So like the dove descending on Jesus, our baptism is a sign of God's grace and love for us.

- What does it mean to you to be called a Child of God?
- Do you ever find it difficult to believe that God has called you "Beloved"? Why or why not?
- How does God's love for you impact the way you live in the world and interact with others?
- If you knew someone wasn't baptized, would you be willing to talk to them about what baptism means? Why or why not?

Have some paper and pencils available.

Spread out and write a letter to God about how you feel about being a member of His family. You can write whatever you like. The letter is only for you. Nobody else will see it.

After giving them some time, gather back in.

Sometime this week, read your letter again. Add to it if you feel like you have more to say. After you read it, pray the simple prayer "I am your beloved. I trust in you."