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Based on the gospel for Sunday 10 January – Mark 1:7-11

**“It was at this time that Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptised in the Jordan by John.”**

Mark's account has been called the 'breathless Gospel' because of its rush from event to event. This week, it seems there is hardly a breath between John the Baptist's prophesying and Jesus' baptism. This seeming rush contrasts with the tone of prophecy in the Old Testament, when the Messiah seems a far-off promise. Suddenly, the Messiah arrives, amidst our everyday, wading into the river!

Friends keep mentioning how time feels during lockdown. Some feel that days and weeks are mashed together in an undifferentiated blur... "a lost year." Others, particularly those separated from loved ones, have said that last year was a long year. Lockdown feels like an agonising stretch, a slovenly ticking of the clock.

Although, here, Jesus seems to rush onto the scene, the story reflects a God who has time for us. God enters into our rhythms, going through human rites of passage and feeling the current of the river dragging his clothing.

After the intense rush of procuring a vaccine for coronavirus, there was a moment of sublime slowing when 91-year-old grandmother, Margaret Keenan, was given the first jab. That pause struck me as a moment of God's time, as we witnessed the patient pace of love.

We thank you Lord for immersing yourself in our time,  
May we receive it wisely,  
And hold onto those who are caught in the current,  
giving them our time,  
In the name of your beloved Son,  
on whom your favour rests,  
Amen.



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This reflection and prayer were written by Francis Stewart from our Theology Team.



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