

## St James News: Thought for the day – Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2020

### The Strong and Gentle God – Revd Kit Gunasekera

<sup>9</sup>At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. <sup>10</sup>Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. <sup>11</sup>And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.” - Mark 1:9-11

When Jesus was baptised, heaven was torn open and the Spirit came upon Him. Its like, God could not wait to pour His Spirit on this human being. Heaven being torn open, is a powerful picture of a God who loves us so deeply that He cannot wait to be reconciled to us, to fill us, to be with us, to transform us and He will move heaven and earth to do so. In these times, its good to know that God is strong.

Yet, when the Spirit came upon Jesus, He came as gently as a Dove. God is also so gentle with us. We can be who we are with him. No need to put on special voices or airs or graces. No need to pretend. No exam to pass before we graduate to being a 'true' believer. We can be safe with Him, because He provides a safe place for us. We can be with him, with our faith, and with our doubts and with our questions and with our unbelief. Any one who wants to be with Him, He opens His arms wide and embraces them. In these times, its good to know that God is gentle with us.

A strong and gentle God. They do not contradict each other, they do not cancel each other out: they are the two arms of the God who embraces us.