

BAPTISM OF THE LORD

Please note that the reflections sometimes use examples that come from an American context



January 10, 2021

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

The Baptism of the Lord

Is 42:1-4, 6-7 or Is 55:1-11 | Acts 10:34-38 or 1 Jn 5:1-9 |
Mk 1:7-11

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

Those of us who are parents or godparents remember fondly the day of our child or godchild's baptism. I remember feeling the warmth from the congregation and from extended family and friends as they joined us in welcoming our beloved infant into Christ's Church. The smell of the chrism from the anointing of his head with oil, and the sound of the flowing waters served as visceral reminders of our precious child's birth into new, divine life with Jesus. Today, as we celebrate the feast of the Baptism of the Lord, we give thanks to Jesus, who at his baptism immersed himself into the enormous weight of humanity's sinfulness [while of course remaining sinless himself]. Marking the beginning of his public ministry, Jesus' baptism is the foundation for our own, inviting us to become God's own sons and daughters "in whom he is well pleased." Just as the Spirit descended upon Jesus and anointed him, the Spirit descends on us at our baptism, empowering us to follow Jesus' example and build up the kingdom of God.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

Water and oil are two of the symbols of baptism, a third is the white garment [sometimes a bib placed over a small child] worn by the one being baptized. I know of a pastoral associate who embroiders the name and date of baptism on the white garments of every child or infant baptized at her large parish. As we read in the *catechism*, "The white garment symbolizes that the person baptized has 'put on Christ,' has risen with Christ." (1243) Gratitude is the proper disposition to thinking about our baptism, and the ones who brought us to it. How might our lives be different, and richer, if each morning, as we dress for the day, we pray in gratitude for the ability, and what it means, to, "put on Christ" in our daily lives?

ACT Express gratitude. Are your parents and godparents still alive? If so, call them or send a card thanking them for their presence at your baptism, and assure them of your prayers. If they are not alive, perhaps think of one or two people who have been there for you in your life as instruments of God's grace. And then extend your gratitude to them.

Lockdown restrictions

As you know, the Government have put in place tighter restrictions at present due to the worrying increase in Covid cases. The hope is that by slowing the spread of the virus, the vaccine will be able to do its job and allow us to begin to look forward to a more normal existence.

The main pillar of the new restriction is the legal requirement to stay at home except for some very limited exceptions. This is because we know that amid the many uncertainties these days, the one thing we can be certain about is that the safest place to be is in our own home within our own household.

Of course this has affected our ability to gather in Church for Mass, just as it has affected so many other circumstances where people may come together. This is regrettable, in that we wish it wasn't necessary. It is not a reflection of the safety of Places of Worship but rather the concern for how easily the virus is spreading when people interact.

While it is undoubtedly a big sacrifice, since nothing can fully replace being present at Mass, we know that it is an expression of our care for one another and for the common good – content in the knowledge that God in his great love and mercy always finds the means to be present to us, especially when we suffer.

Please offer up these sacrifices to God, that he may pour out his graces upon those most in need at this time: those with serious illness; those in hospital with Covid; to strengthen healthcare workers, key workers, those in education; for all who are vulnerable or anxious, and for all challenged by the circumstances caused by the pandemic.

Online Services

If you are able then please join together in our celebration of Mass each day (live at 10am or recorded anytime thereafter) and Devotions, which will take place this week at 5pm on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday.

Thank You

For your continuing donations to support the parish over these past months. While these are essential for us, for many people this is a difficult time and everything that you give is very, very gratefully received and much appreciated

While the building closed, donations can be made in various ways -

- many people have started using Standing Orders, the forms are available on our website and should be returned to Fr. Jim.
- Online donations can be made through online offertory button on our website.
- If you are legitimately out of the house for exercise or some other reason, then envelopes can be posted through the Church House letterbox.

Thank You

Many thanks for all the gifts and notes of appreciation that I have received over the Christmas period. They are very much appreciated and I am grateful that the efforts in these have been a comfort and strength. God bless you all, Fr Jim

St. Margaret's Children and Family Care Society – Virtual Crib

Catholic Adoption Agency, St Margaret's Children and Family Care Society, which supports some of Scotland's most vulnerable children, is hosting a 'Virtual Crib' this Advent. Due to congregation sizes being limited due to Covid19 restrictions the charity could lose out on up to £100k in donations made each year by the Catholic

community to its Crib Appeal collection boxes. St Margaret's Virtual Crib is a peaceful, animated crib scene accompanied by a full Christmas Carol Concert from the St Andrew's Cathedral Choir. Donations can be given online at their webpage stmargaretsadoption.org.uk or by cheque posted to the charity's office at 26 Newton Place, Glasgow, G3 7PY.

Adult Education Talks

You are invited to our next talk on **Monday 18th January at 6.30pm** on The Teachings of Saint John Paul II **by Bishop John**. Please click the link below to join the webinar:
<https://zoom.us/j/96974935970?pwd=b04ya2pUOEIxeXJhRElkdXlHVXlwQT09>

Passcode: 758071

Vocations

Families need blessings of patience, forgiveness, gratefulness and love. Can you bring the Gospel to families in your community? If you think God is calling you to be a priest, deacon sister contact Fr. John Morrison 01418895056 or e-mail vocations@rcdop.org.uk

Postponement of Diocesan Lourdes and Youth to Lourdes Pilgrimages to 2022

Unfortunately due to present circumstances and the uncertainty facing us all over the next few months, it is with deep regret that we must inform you that the Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes and Youth to Lourdes has now been postponed to June-July 2022. We are fully aware that the shrine of Lourdes means so much to so many in our Diocese and understand and how disappointing this news will be. However we know that we will all work together and look forward to being welcomed back in 2022. If you already have a place on the Pilgrimage carried over from this year on Joe Walsh tours, their representatives will be

contacting you in writing in the New Year to confirm our decision to reschedule and to explain how your booking can be carried forward.

200 Club

We will be running the 200 Club in the coming year, therefore:

1. If you still wish to take part and already pay monthly through your bank, this will simply continue.
2. If you wish to make a one-off payment, or join for the first time, please contact Joseph McKeeman on 07760 542275 or email joseph.mckeeman@btinternet.com for details on how to do this.
3. If you need a note of your number, or have any other enquiries, please contact Joseph (as above).