

An ending and a beginning

Today's feast is a moment of transition in the Church's year. It's the last day of the Christmas season; from tomorrow we return to so-called 'ordinary time'. So there is a sense of ending, but also a real sense of a new beginning too, since Jesus' baptism was the moment when His public ministry began. After thirty years living a relatively hidden life, growing up in the small and insignificant town of Nazareth, today our Lord steps out into

the open and begins in earnest the work of our salvation. After His baptism Jesus spent 40 days fasting and praying in the desert, before going out to preach the Gospel to the people of Israel. In the coming year we are invited to rediscover Jesus as we hear His story anew, guided most Sundays by the evangelist St Mark.



Today's Readings

In the Gospel we hear Mark's very brief account of the Lord's baptism, preceded by the promise of John the Baptist that Jesus would baptise us "with the Holy Spirit". In this moment we see the climax of the work of John, who has been frequently with us in the readings since the second Sunday of Advent, preparing for the public ministry of our Lord.

In the first reading, we hear of the "Chosen One" in whom God delights, One who will "open the eyes of the blind,... free captives from prison." It is an ancient prophecy of the work of the Saviour, a prophecy fulfilled in the Lord Jesus. The second reading, from Acts, speaks about the baptism of Jesus and of how God will offer salvation to all who will receive Him.

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MASSES THIS WEEK

Office: Psalter week 1; Sundays: year B; Weekdays: year 1, week 1

Morning Mass is livestreamed each day and will be available for viewing later in the day on our YouTube channel. All information and links at www.saintclares.co.uk

Date	Time	Occasion	Intention/Details
Saturday	6pm (vigil)*	THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD	Ints Stephen Brodie
Sunday 10 th	9:30am*		Mary Foy RIP
	11:30am*		Roy Rawlinson RIP
	6pm*		People of the Parish
Monday	9:30am		Richard Anderton
Tuesday	9:30am	St Aelred of Rievaulx	Martin Cliff RIP
Wednesday	9:30am		Frank Higgins RIP
Thursday	9:30am		Tom & Winifred Lacy RIP
Friday	9:30am		Eileen O'Connor RIP
Saturday	9:30am		Allan Dalton RIP
	6pm (vigil)*	SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	Mary & Ronald Airey RIP
Sunday 17 th	9:30am*		People of the Parish
	11:30am*		PM Mathew RIP
	6pm*		Jean & John Cullerton RIP

*** These Masses can only be attended by those who have booked in advance.**

LATELY DEAD: Please pray for all who have died recently.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION: Saturday 11am-12noon and on request.

ROSARY: Prayed after 9:30am Mass, Monday-Friday.

ANNIVERSARIES: Agnes Gavaghan, Nora Jones, Susan Forster, Marie Jackson, William Loughran, Vincent Jorge, Catherine Harrison, Hilda Templeman, John Barbarel.

POPE'S PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR JANUARY: May the Lord give us the grace to live in full fellowship with our brothers and sisters of other religions, praying for one another, open to all.

PRAYERS AND HELP FOR THOSE IN NEED: At this time, please continue to keep in your prayers all those working in the hospital, other healthcare workers, carers and key workers who are doing so much to look after others at this time. Please also remember those who are sick, isolated or bereaved, and those whose jobs or livelihoods are threatened by the pandemic. If you know of anyone in need and the parish may be able to help, please contact Fr Andrew. Finally, please keep our school communities in your prayers as they continue to care for and educate young children, both in school and at home during the current lockdown.

CHURCH OPENING: Under the current lockdown, the church remains open both for public Mass and for private prayer. Any changes will be posted on our website.

WORK IN CHURCH: Due to work going on in the church, we will not be open for private prayer on Wednesday, Thursday or Friday this week. Weekday Mass on these days is likely to be celebrated in the parish hall. We expect further disruption the following week, and possibly later in January. This is because of planned maintenance work, and is unrelated to the pandemic.

VISITING THE CRIB: The main crib will remain in place up to and including Tuesday 2nd February, the feast of Candlemas. This will give us all, and the wider community, the opportunity to further reflect on the Lord's presence with us.

VIRTUAL CRIB VISIT: On our YouTube channel now, a short video exploring the characters of our crib. Although aimed primarily at children, it's suitable for anyone who wants to take a closer look at the nativity scene. You can find the video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o4EkgjBn7Qs>

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS: A list of intentions for prayer is displayed by the sacristy door. Thank you to everyone who contributed to making the church look so beautiful for the Christmas season.

YOUNG PEOPLE: Although our youth groups can't meet at present, there is online material on the Metanoia Project Facebook page for Seekers, and Zoom sessions taking place for members of the 'Sent' group and for young leaders. Please contact Metanoia Project or Father Andrew for more details.

METANOIA PROJECT – 10 YEARS: Last week Metanoia Project marked their 10th anniversary. We give thanks to God for the great work Ruth and Joe and all the volunteers are doing in our parish and beyond, in service of the Lord and His Church.

2021 DIOCESAN DIRECTORIES now available in the narthex, priced £4. Please put money in wall box marked 'CTS, books etc'.

THE DRAMA DISPLAYED: A free series of online talks examining the key moments of salvation history, with the aid of great works of art. At 7:30pm every second Thursday, from 14th January to 25th March. For info and registration: <https://christianheritagecentre.com/events/the-drama-displayed/>

Events this week (occasional/one-off events in bold type)

Day	Time	What?	Where?
Every day	Anytime	Food Bank Collection	House Porch
Sunday 10 th	3pm-4pm	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament	Church
Mon-Wed	5-6pm	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament	Church
Saturday	11am	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament	Church
Sunday 17 th	3pm-4pm	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament	Church

All events marked 'YouTube' are streamed live on our channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/StClaresChurch>

A prayer of spiritual communion

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

The Baptism of the Lord – the chain of faith

“Jesus did not need to be baptized, but the first theologians say that, with his body, with his divinity, in baptism he blessed all the waters, so that the waters would have the power to confer baptism. And then, before ascending to Heaven, Jesus told us to go into all the world to baptize. And from that day forward up until today, this has been an uninterrupted chain: they baptized their children, and their children their own, and those children... And also today this chain continues.

These children are a link in a chain. You parents have a baby boy or girl to baptize, but in some years they will have a child to baptize, or a grandchild... Such is the chain of faith! What does this mean? I would like to tell you only this: you are those who transmit the faith, the transmitters; you have a duty to hand on the faith to these children. It is the most beautiful inheritance you will leave to them: the faith! Only this. Today, take this thought home with you. We must be transmitters of the faith. Think about this, always think about how to hand on the faith to your children.”

From the Homily of Pope Francis
Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, 12th January 2014