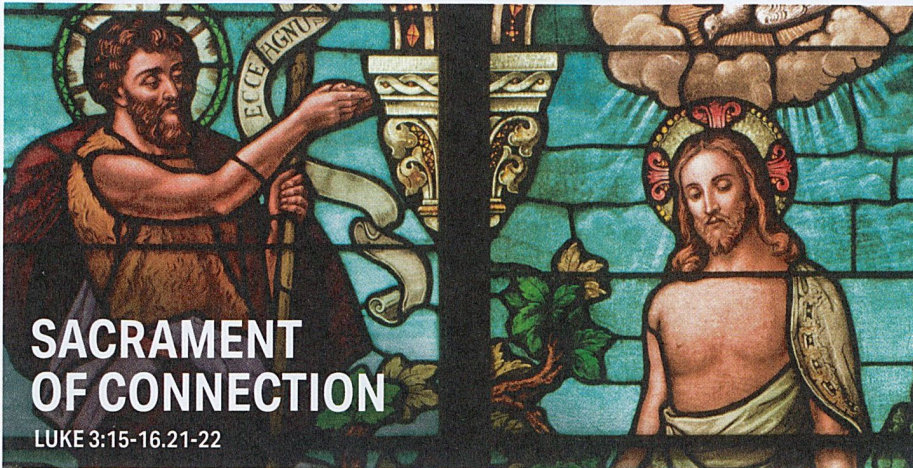


Sunday Message

THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

THE WORD

Year C • 12 January 2025 • Psalter Week 1



SACRAMENT OF CONNECTION

LUKE 3:15-16.21-22

The Baptism of the Lord marks the beginning of the public ministry of Jesus. St Luke tells us that after his baptism in the Jordan, the Holy Spirit descends on Jesus and a voice from heaven reveals that he is the favoured one of God. Now he is anointed for ministry.

Jesus' baptism marks the start of his public life just as our baptism marks the start of our new life as his brothers and sisters. If we have been baptised as infants, it was our parents and godparents who took on the responsibility of nurturing our relationship with God until such time as we were mature enough to live our Christian faith for ourselves. Adult baptism, on the other hand, is a decision taken by the individual for him or her self. By asking to be baptised they have already discerned that they want to follow Christ.

But baptism is not the end of the journey. As in the case of Jesus, it simply marks the beginning. Washed with water and anointed with oils, we are prepared for the journey ahead. Jesus asked to be baptised not only as an example to us but so that he also would be given the strength to follow his true calling. It is encouraging for us to know that Jesus, the human being, knew his need of God. ■

DO

You won't remember the day of your baptism (unless you were baptised as an adult), but take some time to think about that day and its significance. What does it mean to you now?

LEARN

Through our baptism we have become consecrated to Christ, part of a royal priesthood, a holy nation.

Through baptism, we are one family, brothers and sisters of Christ and of each other.

Our baptism impels us to play a full and active part in the life of the Church.

SAY

"I thank you, Lord, for the gift of faith and for being part of your Church. Help me to serve you faithfully every day."

PRAY

Think of your local church, of all who have been baptised there. Think of the members of your own family. Pray for them and for all the baptised throughout the world.

REFLECT

We can understand baptism as the sacrament of connection.

First, it connects us with Jesus. Through baptism, we become Jesus' sisters and brothers, intimately united with him. Being connected with Jesus is like being connected to a life source, a sure guiding force. Simply put, he shows us how to live, illumines the path for us to follow.

If we want to know about love, what true love is - we need only look to Jesus. If we want to know about justice and concern for the common good, we look to Jesus. If we want to know about healthy relationships, what they're like, how to foster them, we look to Jesus. If we want to know about forgiveness, its necessity, its awesome liberating power, we look to Jesus. If we want to find true happiness in this world and salvation in the next, we look to Jesus. If we want to know how to live life well, to live with integrity and moral purpose, we look to Jesus. In good times and in bad, we look to Jesus, who always guides our path, who never lets us down - our comforter, our shield, our hope, our rock, our salvation.

Second, baptism connects us with each other. We become sisters and brothers, members of one family. We know the saying, "Blood is thicker than water," and we know what it means. Family comes first. Our blood relatives - grandparents, parents, children, siblings, nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, cousins - these are the people who mean most to us, the people we treasure above all others. We'd go to any lengths to protect our family. Blood is thicker than water.

Except that, for Christians, it's the other way around. Water is thicker than blood. The water of baptism is thicker than blood. For through baptism, we become part of a new family, a much larger family, the community of believers, the communion of saints. Baptism connects us intimately with each other.

This means we're responsible for each other. The book of Genesis tells us that God created humanity in God's own image, that every person, every single, solitary, human being, is a reflection of God's very self. All are equal in God's eyes because all are

made in God's likeness. We must see each other the way God sees us, and relate to each other as family, as one.

But just as our blood family isn't perfect, we know our Christian family isn't perfect either, that we're a long way from being that community of justice, love and peace we are called to be, that our Church leadership and institution have also shown themselves to be far from perfect.

Our baptism commits us as members of one family to lives of love and service: to see suffering and try to ease it, see injustice and try to end it, see hunger and try to feed it, see brokenness and try to heal it, see racism and try to defeat it, see war and try to stop it, see any situation where love is lacking and try to fill it, see the example of Jesus and try to follow it.

If we live like this, faithful to our baptismal promises, then on judgement day God will say to us as God said of Jesus at his baptism: "Here is my beloved who makes me proud." ■



HASLEMERE
HINDHEAD
CHIDDINGFOLD

Parish Bulletin

The Baptism of the Lord 12th January 2025

In his Pastoral letter Bishop Richard writes,

The Preface of today's Mass offers us a clear reminder that the Lord Jesus has been sent by the Father to bring good news to the poor. Jesus, the Word made Flesh, God-with-us, was born among us so that all may have life. The good news of Salvation is, therefore, the message that the Church is tasked to bring to the whole world.

Just as the Holy Spirit was present at Jesus' baptism by John, "declaring Him" the Son of the Father, so the Holy Spirit dwells in those who are baptised, guiding the mission that is given to us all through our baptism – our sharing in the mission of the whole Church.

We are called to nothing less than living every moment of life caught up, as it were, in the love that exists between Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Baptism brings us to life lived in the love of the Blessed Trinity. It opens for us the way to a relationship with God, in and through Christ, so close that nothing, as St. Paul reminds us in his letter to the Romans, can separate us from this love. Just as Isaiah states in the first reading today, the Lord gathers us in His arms, carries us close to Him and cares for us with the greatest gentleness....

All is gift: life in the love of the Blessed Trinity, closeness to the person of Jesus, the abiding presence in our lives of the Holy Spirit who prompts our actions and prays within us when we cannot find the words. So much is given that we cannot fully describe its wonder. As Jesus reminds us, to those who are given much, much is expected.

How, then, are we called to respond to God's gift? As Christ offered Himself, must we not offer ourselves to be the Lord's instruments in bringing good news to the poor? As the Church we must witness to the good news in an ever-changing world and each and every living stone in the spiritual house that is the Church must take their place in this mission.

In this Jubilee Year, the Holy Father has called us to be Pilgrims of Hope. Our Hope is the Kingdom to which we look forward and it is this Hope, grounded in Faith and expressed also in Love, that is the Christian's Mission – our gift to the world. It is nothing less than the proclamation of the Kingdom of Christ Himself.

Thank you! ...from Fr Jonathan for your very generous Christmas offerings and for the many cards and gifts received. Thanks also to all those who helped prepare our churches and liturgies and are contributing to such joyful Christmas celebrations (which still haven't finished!).

This Sunday is the Baptism of the Lord, the last day of the Christmas season.

Next Sunday (19th January) will be Fr Bruno's last weekend with us. We would like to thank him for his prayerful presence and ministry and assure him of our prayers for his sabbatical. Bishop Richard wishes to send a priest who can work with Fr Jonathan in the pastoral care of Haslemere, Hindhead and Chiddingfold but is not yet able to confirm who that might be or when he might be available. In the coming months Sunday masses will be celebrated mainly by Fr Jonathan, Fr Graham Platt and Fr Gilmour McDermott.

Please do pray for vocations to the priesthood: this persistent prayer is a vital contribution to the life of the church and of its mission.

Crib Offerings this year will go to the Catholic Children's Society's Crisis Fund, which supports families in need in Surrey and Sussex.

Mass with Anointing of the Sick All parishioners are invited to this Mass at 2pm on **Sunday 16th February** in the chapel at Ladywell Convent, followed by afternoon tea. If you plan to stay for tea or need a lift please contact SVP 07379 108009. The sacrament of the sick is available for all members of the church whose health is 'seriously impaired by old age or sickness in mind or body'. If you are unsure about whether this sacrament is appropriate, please speak with Fr Jonathan.

Week of Guided Prayer 2025 This was a great success in 2024, providing fresh energy to the spiritual lives of many of those who took part. We've been lucky enough to secure another one in March (24th-28th). Final details will be confirmed in the coming days and will broadly follow the pattern used last year. You can already sign up at <https://stedsgod.churchsuite.com/events/9qmvqy6d>

Youth Discipleship Group We have had two great gatherings and are looking forward to taking the group forward in the new year. We will continue gathering every other Friday from 7pm-9pm and all young people turning 16+ who are serious about developing their faith are most welcome to come. Our next session is on Friday 17th January, 7pm. Parents/Carers are welcome to stay at the centre and have a cup of tea and a chat with others and Fr Michael. Any questions, please do ask and please spread the word to ensure that the young people who would benefit from this group hear about it. DavidBeresford@franciscancentre.org.uk

Day of Reflection for Ministers of the Word, 25 January, 11am-4pm, St Wilfrid's Parish Centre, Burgess Hill. Join Bishop Richard for talks on the Scriptures, Lectionary, Liturgy of the Word and preparing to minister as a reader; includes Lectio Divina & the celebration of Mass. Reserve your place [here](#).

Evangelisation & Culture Conference, London – The Bible with Bishop Robert Barron, 21-22 February. Word on Fire's first-ever conference on the Bible. For all seeking to gain a deeper love of Sacred Scriptures and the beauty of the Catholic faith and to be ready to share it with others [here](#)

Funerals: Funeral Mass for Simon Fraser will be on **Wednesday 15th January** 11am at St Anselms, Hindhead. Patricia Ives funeral will be on **Friday 7th February** 12.15pm, Our Lady of Lourdes.

Building our capacity for Mission Fr Jonathan would like to hear from anyone who could help our parish staff and volunteers to make the best use of the collaboration tools in Microsoft Teams, initially with some face to face training. This could be on a voluntary or paid basis.

Concelebrated Mass This Tuesday, **14th January**, the priests of the deanery will join together for Mass at 10am at St Joseph's in Guildford. "Concelebration provides a witness to and a service of communion not only for the community directly taking part in the celebration but also for the universal Church, which is always brought into play within the context of the Eucharist." It is an important expression of their shared responsibility for the body of Christ in the area and they hope that many of the faithful may wish to join them in the celebration of the Eucharist on these days.

January Jubilarians—Ashok Affos, Jennifer Alexis, Andrew Dudley, Andrea Durrant, Kathrina Farrugia'Kriel, Mark Fitzgerald, Jaroslaw Galicz, Michael Gaul, David Gent, Janet Gent, Lisa Hamid, Saju James, Kelly Jones, Sumitra Kelly, Susan King, Katharine Meller, Michael Millar, Jolanta Myers, Nigel Parfitt, Bill Payne, Matthew Reeve, Mirko Schiavone, Elaine Sibley, Veronica Slocock and Moira Watkinson.

Parish Quiz Night for Education in Uganda
 Friday 7th February 2025, Parish Hall,
 6.30 for 7.00pm,
 Hot supper, with veg. option, provided.
 Drinks will be available.
 Please bring your own cutlery, plate, napkin and cup/glass for water.
 Donations for raffle appreciated - ring Jo Allen 01428-643565
 £15 per person on door. Cash only
 Please sign up at the back of church,

St Teresa's is hosting a Service of Prayer for Christian Unity on Sunday, **19th January** at 6.30pm. During these times of conflict, it is more important than ever that our communities come together and join each other in prayer. We extend a warm invitation to you to join us, as we join with our Christian friends here in Chiddingfold. Together we can make a difference, we can have an influence! Come and be together!

Pope Francis' prayer intention for January For the right to an education. Let us pray for migrants, refugees and those affected by war, that their right to an education, which is necessary to build a better world, might always be respected

2025 Jubilee Year



Deep within every heart lies an unquenchable thirst for happiness and fulfilment. In the face of life's uncertainties, people long to overcome mistrust, scepticism, and despair. Christ, our hope, responds to this inner longing, inviting us to rediscover the joy of meeting Him. This encounter transforms and renews life itself. As Pope Francis writes: "Christian life is a journey that requires special moments to nourish and strengthen hope, an indispensable companion that helps us glimpse the goal: the encounter with the Lord Jesus". The Jubilee is one of these significant moments.

Introducing the Jubilee Year An online session on **18 January**, 10-30am-12, with special guests Fr Jan Nowotnik, Director of Mission for the Catholic Bishop's Conference, Christine Allen, CAFOD Director, and Kayode Akintola, CAFOD's Head of Africa Programmes. Find out what Jubilee years are about, how we're celebrating as a global and national Church and how we can be signs of hope and build a better world together this holy year. To register: <https://tinyurl.com/bdfds9zm>

Peace Sunday – 19th January This year's message from Pope Francis has the theme 'Forgive us our trespasses: Grant us your peace'. He asks us to seek the true peace granted by God to disarmed hearts and reminds us that disarming hearts is a task for everyone. You can read his message at <https://tinyurl.com/3s8cc74h>. A collection that weekend will be taken for Pax Christi, the international peace movement.

Live Simply Tips
 'Veganuary' - good opportunity to try a new dish, eat less meat, reduce the impact on the environment and improve your health.

Second Collection Next Week
Pax Christi—Peace Day

Please Pray For
The sick: Charlotte Lindsay, Malinda Gabuya, Derek Blades, Kevin Kerrigan, Patricia Ives, Simon Fraser, Martin Parker, Henrietta Lenahan (Holt), Veronica Slocock, Arul Salathian, Diana Molyneux, Louise Milford, Hazel O'Flynn, Abigail Stafford Johnson, Livy Miller, Louise Reeve, Patricia Reidy, Jo Allen, Jane Adolph, Carmel & Roland Murray, Teresa Marshall, Alberto Costantini, Sebastian Codlin, and Betty Harding.

The Deceased: Thomas Albert Levett, Kay Kearney, Maria Miralles, Gerard Bebb, Alan Tomkins, Maureen Rapier, Sister Juliana, Kathleen Pilbeam, Irene Manning, Bridget Boland and Alice Mary Routledge.

Mass Schedule & Intentions	
Saturday 11 Jan	6pm Mass (St Anselm)
Sunday 12 Jan THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD	9.00am Mass (St Teresa) - 9.30am Mass (Holy Cross) 11am Mass (Our Lady of Lourdes) - Ernest Gabuya RIP
Monday 13 Jan <i>St Hilary</i>	11.30am Mass (Holy Cross)
Tuesday 14 Jan	10.00am Deanery Concelebrated Mass (St Joseph's Guildford) 11.30am Mass (Holy Cross)
Wednesday 15 Jan	9.30am Mass (Holy Cross) 11am Funeral Mass for Simon Fraser RIP (St Anselm)
Thursday 16 Jan	9.30am Mass St Joseph's (Milford)
Friday 17 Jan St Antony	10.00am Mass (St Joseph's Guildford)
Saturday 18	6pm Mass (St Anselm)
Sunday 19 Jan SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	9.00am Mass (St Teresa) - 9.30am Mass (Holy Cross) 11am Mass (Our Lady of Lourdes) - Bob Fletcher RIP

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

*After the Lord was baptised, the heavens were opened,
and the Spirit descended upon him like a dove,
and the voice of the Father thundered:
This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.*

COLLECT

Almighty ever-living God,
who, when Christ had been baptised in the River Jordan
and as the Holy Spirit descended upon him,
solemnly declared him your beloved Son,
grant that your children by adoption,
reborn of water and the Holy Spirit,
may always be well pleasing to you...

Or

O God, whose Only Begotten Son
has appeared in our very flesh,
grant, we pray, that we may be inwardly transformed
through him whom we recognise as outwardly like ourselves...

Amen.

FIRST READING Isaiah 40:1-5. 9-11

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah.

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her
that her warfare is ended,
that her iniquity is pardoned,
that she has received from the LORD's hand
double for all her sins.

A voice cries:

'In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD;
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.
And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all flesh shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.'

Go on up to a high mountain,
O Sion, herald of good news;
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good news;
lift it up, fear not;
say to the cities of Judah,
'Behold your God!'
Behold, the Lord God comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
behold, his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.
He will tend his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms;
he will carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead those that are with young.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 104(103):1b-2. 3-4. 24-25. 27-28. 29-30. R. 1

**R: Bless the LORD, O my soul!
My God, how great you are!**

- O LORD my God, how great you are,
clothed in majesty and honour,
wrapped in light as with a robe!
You stretch out the heavens like a tent. **R.**
- On the waters you lay the foundation for your dwelling.
You make the clouds your chariot;
you ride on the wings of the wind.
You make the winds your messengers,
flame and fire your servants. **R.**

- How many are your works, O LORD!
In wisdom you have made them all.
The earth is full of your creatures.
Vast and wide is the span of the sea,
with its creeping things past counting,
living things great and small. **R.**
- All of these look to you
to give them their food in due season.
You give it, they gather it up;
you open wide your hand, they are well filled. **R.**
- You hide your face, they are dismayed;
you take away their breath, they die,
returning to the dust from which they came.
You send forth your spirit, and they are created,
and you renew the face of the earth. **R.**

SECOND READING Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to Titus.

Beloved: The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness, and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

ACCLAMATION BEFORE THE GOSPEL cf. Luke 3:16

R: Alleluia, alleluia.

He who is mightier than I is coming, said John.
He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

R: Alleluia.

GOSPEL Luke 3:15-16. 21-22

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

At that time: As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Christ, John answered them all, saying, 'I baptise you with water, but he who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire.'

Now when all the people were baptised by John the Baptist and when Jesus also had been baptised and was praying, the heavens were opened, and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, 'You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Accept, O Lord, the offerings
we have brought to honour the revealing of your beloved Son,
so that the oblation of your faithful
may be transformed into the sacrifice of him
who willed in his compassion
to wash away the sins of the world... **Amen.**

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

*Behold the One of whom John said:
I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God.*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Nourished with these sacred gifts,
we humbly entreat your mercy, O Lord,
that, faithfully listening to your Only Begotten Son,
we may be your children in name and in truth... **Amen.**