



## PARISHES OF ST PETER, AND ST FERGUS

### Bulletin

SUNDAY 11 JANUARY 2026: THE BAPTISM OF THE

LORD - FEAST

(*Is 42:1-7, Acts 10:34-38, Lk 3:15-22*)



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### THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD



Sunday Mass: St. Peter's 4.00pm (Sat) & 10.00 am, St. Fergus' 5.30pm (Sat) & 11.30 am

Weekday Mass: St Peter's – Tue, Thu, & Fri 10.00am; St Fergus – Mon, & Wed 9.30am

Confessions: St Peter's 3.15-3.50pm, St Fergus' 5.00 -5.25pm; and on request

**PRAYER REQUESTS:** We pray for all who are sick, for all who have recently died, Patricia Byrne, and for all those whose anniversaries occur at this time including, Mary McIntyre, Daniel McIntyre, Eva Stevenson, Rose McGinty, Harry Morin, Sister Marietta, Ronald James and six months mind of Vincent Mothersole.

**SUNDAY COLLECTIONS (04 JAN):** St Peter's - Offertory: £522.00, B. Fund: £365.00. 100 Club: £260.00. St Fergus: Offertory: £173.00, B. Fund: £65.00, Votives: £203.00

**BAPTISM OF THE LORD:** This Sunday 11<sup>th</sup>, the Church celebrates 'The Baptism of the Lord.' We extend a warm welcome to all children who were baptised in the year 2025, and their parents/families. It is a day of 'Thanksgiving to God' for the gift of these children.

**CRIB APPEAL:** Crib donations will fund St Margaret's Children and Family Care Society (Adoption Society). More details on [www.stmargaretadoption.org.uk](http://www.stmargaretadoption.org.uk)

**WESTERN CATHOLIC CALENDAR:** available in the stall. Price: £3.50

**BAPTISM OF THE LORD:** *It happened in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized in the Jordan by John. On coming up out of the water he saw the heavens being torn open*

*and the Spirit, like a dove, descending upon him. And a voice came from the heavens, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." Mark 1:9-11.*

Today's Feast of the Baptism of the Lord marked the official end of the Christmas season. With this, we enter into the Ordinary time runs until Ash Wednesday when the liturgical season of Lent begins, followed by the Easter season, the most holy and sacred time in the life of the Church. During the Christmas season we pondered the Incarnation, Nativity, the Feast of the Holy Family and Epiphany. Today, we see Jesus manifesting Himself to the world as He was seen being baptised by John the Baptist in the river Jordan. His baptism also marks the beginning of his public ministry.

No one ever could imagine that God the Son would be born as human. Actually, the Incarnation of Jesus was an act of deep solidarity with the fallen human race. A number of questions arise in the mind of the believers when they hear Jesus, the author of Baptism, also received baptism from John the Baptist. John had been preaching and offering a baptism of repentance. His baptism was not the same as our baptism today. Instead, it was only a sign of one's willingness to turn away from sin and turn toward God. St Mark says, the baptism that John the Baptist administered was "a baptism of

repentance for the forgiveness of sins" (Mark 1:4). While St Mathew in his Gospel elaborates further (3:1ff), "In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand...they were going out to him, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.... bear fruit in keeping with repentance...even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into fire.... I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I...He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."

Wasn't John's baptism a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins and, surely, Jesus was not a sinner? Jesus, of course, had nothing to repent of. The Scripture says, Jesus Christ, true man, 'like us in everything except sin. But that didn't stop Him from freely choosing to receive the baptism of repentance. Why was He baptized?

It was simply because, as he chose to be born like us, he decided to unite Himself with fallen humanity, and making expiation for our sins. He humbly allowed Himself to be identified as a sinner in need of repentance. This was done out of love for us and out of His longing to become one with us so that we could become one with Him. When we repent today, we meet Jesus in that same water of repentance.

At the time of Jesus' baptism, it was not only the Eternal Son Who was present, but the Father and the Holy Spirit as well. As he was baptized, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him, and behold, voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased" (Mt 3:16-17).

Pope Benedict in his *Jesus of Nazareth*, offers some illuminating insights into the inter relation between Jesus' baptism and our baptism. He says there are two striking images in baptism: death and life. He writes:

On the one hand, immersion into the waters is a symbol of death, which recalls the death symbolism of the annihilating, destructive power of the ocean flood. The ancient mind perceived the ocean as a permanent threat to the cosmos, to the earth; it was the primeval flood that might submerge all life . . . But the flowing waters of the river are above all a symbol of life.

Even the physical act of baptism, especially baptism by immersion, represents death and new life: the descent into the waters is a form of death and burial; the rising to a new life is an icon of resurrection.

Looking at the events (of Christ's baptism) in light of the Cross and Resurrection, the Christian people realized what happened: Jesus loaded the burden of all mankind's guilt upon his shoulders; he bore it

down into the depths of the Jordan. He inaugurated his public activity by stepping into the place of sinners. His inaugural gesture is an anticipation of the Cross. He is, as it were, the true Jonah who said to the crew of the ship, "Take me and throw me into the sea" (Jon. 1:12) . . . The baptism is an acceptance of death for the sins of humanity, and the voice that calls out "This is my beloved Son" over the baptismal waters is an anticipatory reference to the Resurrection. This also explains why, in his own discourses, Jesus uses the word "baptism" to refer to his death (18).

As we commemorate Jesus' baptism liturgically, we celebrate the fact that our Christian baptism was the beginning of this new unity with the Holy Trinity. But we also celebrate our oneness with God, which is renewed every time we make an interior act of repentance for our sins. If we fully understood what happens every time we acknowledge our sins and repent of them, we would never grow tired of repenting. Every time we acknowledge and repent of our sin, we meet Christ anew, receive a greater outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and affirm and deepen our adoption by the Father in Heaven.

He comes as the "Lamb of God" to take upon Himself and to take away the sin of the world (Jn 1:29,36). After all, he is the sinless, divine Son of God. Christian baptism is of course greater than John's baptism, even as Jesus himself is far greater than John (Matt. 3:14, John 3:30). Christian baptism not only forgives sins, but infuses the life of God into the soul, making us God's children. And the origin of this sacrament is Jesus' own baptism. Jesus had no need to be cleansed by the waters of baptism, for he had no sins to be washed away. Rather, he sanctified the waters by his descent into them.

The baptism of the Lord also reminds us, of course, of our own baptism. The Church teaches that baptism not only lets us participate in Jesus' victory over sin and death, but calls us to our own personal holiness and apostolate, sharing our faith.

TEA AND COFFEE in the parish hall. All welcome.  
Note: Please do not leave the bulletin behind in the church. Take it home and perhaps pass it on to someone who cannot come to church. They'll be glad to know they're still in our thoughts.

NEW VOCATIONS WEBSITE: You can visit the new diocesan vocations web pages at [rcdop.org.uk/dp-vocations](http://rcdop.org.uk/dp-vocations); Please pray for more vocations to the Diocese of Paisley – "He is There!". You can also support us by liking, sharing and following our Vocations social media pages:

Instagram: @dioceseofpaisleyvocations

TikTok: @paisleyvocations

X: @DoPVocations