

The Baptism of the Lord

First Reading Isaiah 40:1-5. 9-11
The prophet consoles God's people who are in exile in Babylon.

Responsorial Psalm 103:1-2,3-4,24-25, 27-30
Bless the Lord, my soul!
Lord God, how great you are!

Second Reading Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7
The writer tells us that God has saved us by the cleansing water of rebirth.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, Alleluia!

Some is coming, said John, someone greater than I. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

Alleluia!

Gospel Luke 3:15-16. 21-22
At his baptism, Jesus hears the voice of God his Father: "You are my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on you."

Parish of Corpus Christi

Sacred Heart (Goldthorpe), Sacred Heart & St Helen (Hoyland) and St Michael & All Angels (Wombwell)



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Sunday 9th January 2022

Sunday Year C

The Baptism of the Lord

Weekday Cycle I

"You are my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on you."

Service Times & Intentions

Saturday (St Michael`s)	8 Jan	5.30pm	People of the Parish
Sunday (Sacred Heart)	9 Jan	9.00am	Gordon English RIP
Sunday (St Helen`s)	9 Jan	11.00am	Barry Cooper RIP
Tuesday Live Streamed	11 Jan	12.00pm	
Wednesday (St Michael`s)	12 Jan	12.00pm	Holy Souls
Thursday (St. Helen`s)	13 Jan	12.00pm	
Friday (Sacred Heart)	14 Jan	12.00pm	Mary Gibson RIP
Saturday Live Streamed	15 Jan	12.00pm	Holy Souls
Saturday (St Michaels)	15 Jan	5.30pm	People of the Parish
Sunday (Sacred Heart)	16 Jan	9.00am	Irvin and Stella Bennett RIP
Sunday (St Helen`s)	16 Jan	11.00am	People of the Parish

Divine Mercy Chaplet is at 3.00pm on Fridays at St. Michael's Church

Lectio Divina is at 7.00pm on Tuesdays in the Lady Chapel of St. Michael's Church

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is available after the noon Mass in Goldthorpe on Fridays, after the Divine Mercy Chaplet in Wombwell on Fridays, and starting at 6:15 pm in Hoyland on Thursdays. It is always available upon request.

On the east coast of Scotland, in the River Forth, they do it on New Year's Day: it's typically bitterly cold. At Varanasi, on the River Ganges in India, the climate is much kinder to participants; people do it all year round. In some exotic holiday places, people do it from cliffs. The common theme is diving into water. It's not to everyone's taste, but in each of the places where it happens, those who take part find the experience invigorating. Not everyone agrees, however – in fact, it's probably safe to say that most people think the practice is utter madness.

There is clearly a feeling of comfort and satisfaction in being immersed in something, especially if we are feeling insecure. To be wrapped in warmth, or the company of those close to us, is reassuring. The same can be true in water – as long as you can swim, of course.

Immersion as part of rituals is commonplace and plays a part in many religious practices – Christian immersion practices in particular, when they usually go under the name of baptism. In fact the word "baptism" comes from the Greek word for immersion.

We often associate baptism with John the Baptist. And it's true that baptism only appears in the Gospels at the beginning of Jesus' ministry, although there are also references to people being baptised in the Acts of the Apostles.

Baptism as a ritual was used by various communities, the best known being the Essenes who lived in the mountain caves near the Dead Sea. This community produced a large number of scrolls, known to us today as the Dead Sea Scrolls. The Essenes were a Jewish sect and they adopted the practice of baptism – the immersion in water was a symbol for immersing themselves in a new way of living. John the Baptist may have belonged to the Essenes at one point, which might help explain his appearance, although that is usually attributed to him emulating the prophet Elijah. John famously encouraged people to immerse themselves in water. This is often described as a spiritual cleansing, but there is much more to it than that. John's baptism was a baptism of repentance.

Today we think of "repentance" as feeling sorrowful – a change of heart. This is because we in the West think of the heart as the seat of emotions in humans; therefore a change of heart means a change of the way we feel – sorrow, the need to change our ways.

This, however, would not have occurred to the people of the Middle East in Jesus' time. For them a change of heart meant a change of thinking. John's repentance, then, was about inviting people not to be sorrowful, but to announce a change in their own lives. It is at this point that Jesus begins his ministry and the kingdom of heaven is inaugurated. It is because of these two events that Jesus can announce the Good News: the kingdom of God is at hand.

So far, so good, but we are not finished yet. When Jesus comes out of the water, a voice proclaims, "You are my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on you." And the Spirit descends in the form of a dove. If we think about this for a moment, we can see how remarkable the event is: in the Gospels we seldom hear the Father's voice; it's Jesus who is the voice of God – and we *never* see the Holy Spirit. This, therefore, is the only time when we have perception through human senses of the Trinity: the voice of God the Father; the taking of visible form by the Holy Spirit – usually spirits are invisible – and, of course, the Son of God, the Word of God in human form, is Jesus himself.

What a commitment this is: God – Father, Son and Spirit – entering the world of humans in a way that humans can perceive. The River Jordan is, therefore, the interface between the two worlds, and Jesus immersed in the Jordan is the point of contact between heaven and earth, divinity and humanity. This action of the Trinity is a commitment to humanity. Jesus' immersion in water is symbolic of God's immersion in humanity. Jesus' immersion in water is also symbolic of our immersion in God. It's a truly unique moment in human history.

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Prayers for the Sick

We pray for our sick and/or housebound parishioners. We remember especially Clare Dingwall, Dominic Kilroy, Michael Bennett, Chris Haigh, Janette Barber, Claire Selby, Paddy McNicholas, Peter Hutchinson, Anne Whittingham, Sue Bird, David Hardy, Tess Lynch, Edna Yates, Justin Phillip Collins, Hannah Prentiss, Pat and Colin Hermitage, Thomas Collins, Norma Marshall, Val Armstrong, Minnie Helen Pozorski, Terry Mullins, Matthew Deakin, Margaret Booker, Kath Cragg, Michael Foy, Shirley Broadhead, Norah Preuss, Mavis Guilcher, Andrew Chandler

Requiescant in Pace

We pray for the souls of Anne Lacey and Mary Gibson who both died recently. Mary's funeral will be held on Thursday 13th January at 10.30am at Sacred Heart, Goldthorpe. Please keep their family and friends in your prayers

Marist Way and Rosary at Goldthorpe

Rosary at Goldthorpe will be every **Wednesday** at 1.30pm.
The first Marist Meeting with Rosary is on Wednesday February 9th.

First Holy Communion Programme 2022

The next meeting will be on Monday 10th January from 6.00pm to 7.15pm in St Michael's Church Hall and is for the children only.

Bonus Ball – Goldthorpe

The winning number was 42, therefore next week be a rollover and some lucky person may win £50! Since recommencing in mid October, £340 has been raised for parish funds and there are still free numbers. Please see George Burnitt if you would like a number, so you not only have a chance of winning, you are also helping the parish.

Wombwell Luncheon Club – St Michael's Parish Hall

The Lunch club meet each Thursday at noon, providing a freshly made two course lunch, followed by tea or coffee and biscuits, There is also Bingo and a free raffle. The cost is £4 and is open to anyone.

Synod 2021-2023

Pope Francis has asked every one of the People of God to let him know how things are for them in the Church. He believes we are all trying to journey together through life, finding ways to communicate the fundamental message of Jesus, to love one another, in how we live our lives and in our words. That is the meaning of the word "Synodal" – it means "journeying together".

He has asked the Bishops of the world to ask you and then tell him. You can do this with other people in your parish; tell Bishop Ralph what you think between October 2021 to 7th March 2022. Our three Parish Representatives, Amanda Campbell, Elizabeth Salmon and Helen Grayson, will be inviting you to share your thoughts. Please collect the information from church, or find more information at synod@hallam-diocese.com

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; He descended into hell; on the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from there He will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen

Prayer for Vocations

Loving and generous Father: it is you who call us by name and ask us to follow you. In particular, you call some to serve you as ministers in your church. Bless our Diocese of Hallam by raising up faith-filled and dedicated priests, deacons and religious. Bless our families and choose from our homes those who are needed for your mission.

Blessed John Anne	Pray for us
Blessed Robert Ludlam	Pray for us
Blessed Nicholas Garlick	Pray for us
Blessed William Richardson	Pray for us
O Mary, Mother of Perpetual Help	Pray for us