

St Mary of the Annunciation Catholic Church

THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

NEWSLETTER



Our Lord's Baptism and its meaning for us

Today is the **Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord**, and a good opportunity for a little catechesis on the **Sacrament of Baptism**, which is the **gateway to eternal life**. While this Feast is about what happened to JESUS, it is even more about what He came to **restore in us**.

Due to the **original sin** of our first parents in the **Garden of Eden** (Genesis 3:1-7), Heaven was closed to mankind, the **supernatural life of grace was lost**, and no mere human effort could reopen to us the gates of eternal life. **The Church teaches that without sanctifying grace in our souls, we cannot enter Heaven**. So from the moment of that first sin, sanctifying grace was lost, and we were gravely wounded and powerless to save ourselves. Therefore, mankind needed a **Saviour**, and that is the whole reason for the **Incarnation**, why Christ came into this world – to **redeem us** and **repair the damage** done to our relationship with God.

When Our Lord entered the **River Jordan** to be baptised by John, being God and being sinless, He didn't need any cleansing or purification. **He sanctified the waters themselves for our Baptism**. And the Gospel tells us that, *"immediately He went up from the water ... the Heavens were opened to Him"*, signifying that what was closed by Adam is now reopened by Christ. And from that moment forward, Baptism became the Sacrament of **regeneration**, the means by which souls **are reborn to supernatural life**. *"Unless a man is born again of water and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God"* (John 3:5).

In Baptism, original sin (the sin that barred us from Heaven) is completely removed. Also, if the person being baptised has reached the **age of reason**, all their personal sins are forgiven as well as any punishment due, meaning there is nothing now barring them from Heaven. So through the Sacrament of Baptism, we become **heirs to eternal life**. If sanctifying grace is lost through mortal sin, it can be regained through the **Sacrament of Penance or Confession**.

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St Mary of the Annunciation Catholic Church

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Served by the Rosminians

Parish Priest

Fr Paul Gillham, IC
On attachment
Fr David Jones, OLW
Safeguarding Rep
Jane Monaghan
01509 262123

Parish Catholic Schools

St Mary's Primary
Hastings Street
Loughborough LE11 5AX
01509 212621
office@stmarys-rc.leics.sch.uk
Headteacher: Miss P Jordan

De Lisle College

Thorpe Hill
Loughborough LE11 4SQ
01509 268739
enquiries@delisle.leics.sch.uk
Headteacher: Mr C Maher



St Hilary of Poitiers

Please pray for those who are sick

for those who have recently died:

Anna Maria Mrowiec

Cedric Newton

May they rest in peace

and for those whose anniversaries occur at this time:

Mary Brookes

Margaret Woodhouse

Clarice Ryder

Amelia Blake

Carmela Brunetti

Helen McGreechan

Eamon Keating

Costantino Lallo

Clelia Paciolla

Emildio Chiavetti

Linda Goodby

Thomas Jones

Joanna Kalinowska

PLEASE NOTE

Due to government regulations regarding personal data (UK-GDPR), we are not able to publish name details of Mass intentions for the living in this online version of the newsletter.

MASS INTENTIONS AT ST MARY'S

Sat 10th **Vigil Mass**
6.00pm May Hollingsworth (RIP)

Sun 11th **Baptism of the Lord**
9.00am For the Parish
11.15am Josephine Merwick (RIP)
2.30pm *Baptism*
4.00pm Italian Mass

Mon 12th **St Aelred of Rievaulx, Religious**
9.15am Andrzej Fras (RIP)

Tues 13th **Feria**
9.15am Denis O'Neill (RIP)
12.45pm *Requiem Mass: Anna Maria Mrowiec RIP*

Weds 14th **St Hilary, Bishop, Confessor & Doctor**
6.30pm Dec'd & suffering from fire in Tai Po, Hong Kong (Latin)

Thurs 15th **Feria**
9.15am Jimmy McDonagh (RIP, Anniversary)

Fri 16th **Feria**
6.00-6.25pm *Confessions*
6.30pm Deceased of the Borowiec Family

Sat 17th **St Anthony, Abbot**
10.30am *Private prayer with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament*
-12.30pm *with Confessions 10.30-11.30am & Benediction 12.20pm*
6.00pm **Vigil Mass:** Gregory Baker (RIP, Anniversary)

Sun 18th **Second Sunday in Ordinary Time**
9.00am Giovanni & Carmela Brunetti (RIP)
11.15am For the Parish
4.00pm Italian Mass

Rosary *Mon, Tues, Thurs after 9.15am Mass; Wed, Fri at 6.00pm;*
First Saturday of each month after 10.00am Mass

THIS WEEK AT ST MARY'S

Weds 14th UCM (AGM): 2.00pm in the hall
Thurs 15th RCIA: 7.00pm in the parish library

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Baptism also gives us a new identity: we become the **adopted sons and daughters of God**, and a **member of the Mystical Body of Christ**, which is the Catholic Church, and a **temple of the Holy Spirit**. Baptism also imprints an **indelible mark** upon the soul – a spiritual branding – which can never be erased. Therefore Baptism is never repeated. If there is doubt as to whether a person has been validly baptised, the Sacrament may be administered **conditionally**.

It is good to know the date of our Baptism. We celebrate our natural birthdays, so why not our supernatural birthdays, which is the day **Heaven was opened to us personally?** Baptism also involves a **solemn promise made to God by parents**. A newborn child cannot yet profess the Faith, so the parents and godparents speak on their behalf. **They promise to bring up the child in the Catholic Faith**, which involves teaching them to pray, and bringing them to Mass each week, and leading them to the other Sacraments. **This is why a godparent must be a practising and confirmed Catholic in good standing.** To neglect the religious instruction of a child is to neglect the very life given to them in Baptism.

Finally, Baptism is not only a gift received; it is a **lifelong commitment**. At the font, **Satan is solemnly renounced** along with **“all his works and empty promises.”** We were claimed for Christ and belong to His army. So we have committed to saying no to sin, practicing self-control, and to striving to live according to God’s commandments. And with the help of God’s grace through prayer and the Sacraments, this is always possible.

Fr Paul Gillham, IC

Enabling Our Mission Campaign: As many of you know, our parish is currently involved in the diocesan Enabling Our Mission Campaign which aims to support our mission of becoming more outward looking, while also striving to ensure that the fewer priests now available for active ministry across the Diocese are best able to serve our communities. We will be hosting some additional small gatherings at the Church to explain this initiative to members of the parish and hope you might be able to make one of the following dates: **Saturday 17th January** – 5.15pm (in the Parish Library) **Sunday 25th January** – after the 11.15am Mass (in the Church). In order to confirm your attendance, would you please email office@stmarysloughborough.org.uk or call the parish office on 01509 262123. Thank you.

Fr Paul

Blessed chalk: On Tuesday, the Solemnity of the Epiphany, chalk was blessed for the traditional blessing of homes. If you were unable to attend, it’s not too late. Blessed chalk and the text of the blessing are available from the back of the church. *Fr Paul*

Altar Servers:

Congratulations to Matthew, Adwin and Emmanuel who have been enrolled into the Guild of St Stephen, their Patron, over the Christmas period.

Crib: As is our custom, we will leave the crib up until Candlemas on **2nd February**, the traditional end of Christmastide.

Loughborough Food

Bank/Your Store: Once again thank you for your tremendous donations to the Christmas appeal for the food bank. Your generosity is outstanding. A particular thank you to the “stocking makers” these treats made a lot of families very happy. The next collection will be on **Saturday 24th January** 10.30 to 11.00am in the car park. Please see list on church door for suggested items. Thank you.

Jane and Bernard Monaghan

Prayer for vocations to the priesthood and religious life

- Leader:** Please kneel for our prayer for vocations. Let us ask God to give worthy Priests to His Holy Church and Brothers and Sisters to Religious Orders.
- All:** O God, we earnestly beseech You to bless this diocese with many priests, brothers and sisters, who will gladly spend their entire lives serving Your Church and making You known and loved.
- Leader:** Bless our families. Bless our children.
- All:** Choose from our homes those who are needed for Your work.
- Leader:** Mary, Queen of the Clergy!
- All:** Pray for us. Pray for our priests and religious. Obtain for us many more. Amen.
-

Prayer to Saint Michael

Holy Michael, the Archangel, defend us in the day of battle. Be our safeguard against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray; and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly host, by the power of God thrust down to hell Satan and all the wicked spirits who wander through the world for the ruin of souls. Amen.

Hats and hoods in church: Out of reverence for the sacredness of the church, it is a long-standing tradition that men remove their hats or hoods in church. In Scripture (1 Corinthians 11:4), St Paul teaches that men should pray with uncovered heads as a sign of humility and respect before God. While it may feel cultural, it is deeply tied to our Christian understanding of honouring the sacred. It's true bishops and priests sometimes wear special liturgical head gear such as the mitre or biretta, but this is not as personal clothing, but as a sign of their office and role during the Liturgy. We kindly ask all men to please remove hats and hoods while inside the church, unless worn for medical reasons. Thank you for showing respect for God's house and for helping maintain the sacred atmosphere of our worship.

Fr Paul

From the Saints

"The Lord was baptised, not to be cleansed Himself, but to cleanse the waters, so that those waters, cleansed by the Flesh of Christ which knew no sin, might have the power of Baptism."

(St Ambrose of Milan, ca 340-397)



Fr Charles Sormany:

Your prayers are requested for Fr Charles who is unwell and in hospital. Thank you.

Continued thanks go to our teams of regular counters.

You are not forgotten during the festive season. Your commitment to accuracy in what can be an irksome task, is always much appreciated.

Geoff Mercer

This weekend there will be a mandatory second collection for the Sick and Retired Priests of the Diocese.

Last Week's Finance

Collection: £863 (of which £90 was G/A)

Standing orders: £852 @ 30/11 (of which £740 was G/A)

Attendance: 627

Thank you

St Mary's bank account details for online donations

Bank: Lloyds

A/c name: St Mary of Annun Lough RCP

Sort code: 30-95-21

A/c no: 00481028

Alternatively, scan this QR code to donate securely from your phone

