



## PARISH NEWS FOR THE CATHOLIC PARISH OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, ANDOVER

### NORTH WEST HAMPSHIRE PASTORAL AREA

St John the Baptist, Andover and St John Fisher, Whitchurch

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**Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday: 9.00am - 3.00pm. NB: CLOSED on Wed.**

### 12th and 13th January - The Baptism of the Lord - YEAR C

#### THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

At first glance, the scene makes little sense. John's strident call to repentance provokes an overwhelming response. People of all shapes and sizes flock to him in the wilderness. They are baptized in the Jordan as a sign of repentance and cleansing. Suddenly, out of the crowd steps John's cousin, Jesus. Wait a minute. What's Jesus, the sinless one, doing in a crowd of repenting sinners? What's he doing coming forward to be baptized by John, who is by his own admission, inferior to his cousin?

Jesus does not enter the water to be sanctified. No, the Holy One enters the water to sanctify. He empowers the water to become no longer just an outward sign, but a vehicle of the Holy Spirit bringing inner cleansing, rebirth, and transformation. Here Jesus institutes the sacrament of Christian baptism, something essentially different and greater than the baptism of John, which foreshadowed it.

Immediately after coming out of the water, the Spirit descends upon him in the form of a dove. Now another sacrament is instituted by Christ, the sacrament of confirmation or, as the Eastern churches call it, chrismation. Notice that as the Spirit descends upon Jesus, the Father announces from heaven that this is His beloved Son. Here we have a majestic revelation of the Most Holy Trinity, one God in three persons. Then notice that Peter, speaking of this event in Acts 10:37, calls it Jesus' "anointing."

In the Old Testament, people were anointed with a special type of perfumed olive oil called "chrism" which was stored in a bull's horn, a symbol of strength. The first people to be so anointed in the Old Testament were priests, authorized to offer sacrifice on behalf of the people. Then came prophets, anointed to proclaim God's challenging and energizing word. Finally kings were anointed by God to save their people from their enemies. Actually, the reigning king of Judah was called the anointed one, "messiah" in Hebrew or, in Greek, "Christ."

So this feast is Jesus' "name day." Of course he is the Word made flesh, full of the Spirit, and saviour of Israel from the moment of his conception. But on this day, the Spirit anoints his human nature in a new way, empowering and equipping him for battle, for his mission to smash the oppressive powers of sin, Satan, and death, and to lead his people into freedom. He is anointed or "christened" not just as saviour-king, but as perfect prophet who speaks God's final word, and perfect priest who offers the perfect sacrifice taking away all sin.

Some wonder why we need the sacrament of confirmation. To some it appears to be an afterthought, as anti-climactic. After all, we receive the Spirit in baptism and receive Christ bodily in the Eucharist. So what else do we get when we are confirmed?

Simple. We receive our mission and the power to carry it out. For being a "Christian" is not about just "getting saved." It's about sharing in Christ's anointing to transform the world. The mission is an essential part of the package, not an option. That's why we are called "Christians" or anointed ones. It is not just priests and religious who are supposed to make it happen. Every single one of us is called and anointed. And that's why confirmation is one of the essential sacraments of initiation. Without it, one is not fully incorporated into the Church, which is a missionary community.

*The question for those of us who have received this power-packed sacrament is this - what are we doing with it?*

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#### **DIOCESAN PRAYER INTENTIONS: 13TH JANUARY - 19TH JANUARY**

*These are arranged so that in the course of a year we pray for each parish of our Diocese and the Catholic organisations within it. **Sunday:** Those to be baptised this year, their godparents, families and catechists.*

**Monday:** *Verbum Dei Communities in the Diocese. **Tuesday:** Royal Navy and Royal Air Force Chaplains and Personnel.*

**Wednesday:** *Army Chaplains and Personnel. **Thursday:** 'Churches Together'.*

**Friday:** *Diocesan Committee for Christian Unity. **Saturday:** Parish of Holy Family, Southampton.*

**Roll up! Roll Up! Come and see Unity Christian Theatre's new pantomime: 'JACK THE LAD!' at The Lights, Andover on Friday 18th January at 7.30pm and Saturday 19th January at 2.30pm and 7.30pm.**

Tickets from The Lights Box Office - Adults £7/Children £5

**AND Tickets will be on sale in the hall after Mass this weekend. Last chance to buy!**

**MASS TIMES AND INTENTIONS FROM 12TH JANUARY - 21ST JANUARY**

*Reconciliations each Saturday in Andover from 5.15pm - 5.45pm, and in Whitchurch before Sunday Mass.*

*Congratulations to Francis John Sey who is to be baptised this weekend.*

**Sat. 12th**      **Andover Mass 6.00pm** *Thomas Bush RIP - Memoriam*

**Sunday 13th - The Baptism of the Lord**

**Whitchurch Mass 9.00am** *For healing through medical science.*

**Farleigh School Mass 10.00am -**

**Andover Mass 10.30am** *Sheila Scott RIP - Anniversary*

**Andover Polish Mass 6.00pm - Confessions (Polish) from 5.00pm**

There will be  
after Mass  
refreshments  
this Sunday.

**Mon. 14th**      **Andover Mass 10.00am** *Audrey Stephenson - Birthday Blessings*

**Tuesday 15th - Friday 18th : No Masses or Services and no Healing Prayers.**

**Sat. 19th**      **Andover Mass 6.00pm** *For the Intention of the Antrobus Family.*

**Sunday 20th - Second Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**Whitchurch Mass 9.00am** *Veronica McDonagh RIP*

**Farleigh School Mass 10.00am -**

**Andover Mass 10.30am** *Margaret Ann Jordan RIP - Anniversary*

Apologies, but there will  
be no after Mass  
refreshments this  
Sunday.

**Mon. 21st**      **Andover Mass \*9.00am** *Esmé Kelly RIP - Anniversary*

**Andover Funeral Service for Maureen Meikle RIP at 10.00am**

**Please pray for:** Patrick Pacini, Daphne Channing, Audrey Stephenson, Jo Parker, Nan Mundy, Esmé Coveney, Jess Dukes, Doreen Burke, Rita Lane, Valerie Muir, Mary and Alan Daws, Tom Wilkins, Cynthia Manning, Fr Gerry Mackrell SMM, Mary and Albert Bullough, Margaret Williams, Patrick Arnold, Ann Scicluna, Christopher Walter, Allan Wickens, Di Mussert, Lisa Ramage, Sam Hearn, Elaine Demptser, Christine Budden, Carol Casson, Derek Moss, Diane Banks, Sheila Muir, Barbara Long, Antonio Ricci, Myra Thompson, John Mills, Rod Stones, Jean Murphy, Rita Loader, Rollin Thomas, Tony Downing, Rod Stones, Katherine Flood, Baby Samuel Thomas, Jo Hibberd, Therese Ayres and Tim Sellars. Please pray for the repose of the souls of Margaret George, Antonio Ricci, Maureen Meikle and Mabel Glenn. May their souls, and the souls of all the faithful departed, rest in peace.

**Healing Prayers** Join us on **Tuesday evenings between 7.00pm and 7.30pm.** If you would like to choose a theme, scripture reading and music, have a copy of the El Shaddai Healing Prayer or further info., contact Frank Saunders on 01264 365764

**MOTHERS PRAYERS** Mothers' Prayers are held each Thursday from 7.00pm - 7.45pm. All women, all ages, are invited and welcome to join Mothers' Prayers every week. This is a house-based prayer group. Please email: [mothers\\_prayers@btinternet.com](mailto:mothers_prayers@btinternet.com) for more information.

**PARISH BAPTISM COURSE**

The next Parish Baptism Course will be on Tuesday 12th February at 7.00pm in the Parish Hall. Please complete a registration form (found on the website or in the porch) and return it to the Parish Office before Monday 11th February.

***BAPTISM - When choosing Godparents!***

To be admitted to undertake the office of Godparent a person must:

Be not less than sixteen years of age and be a Catholic, who has received the Blessed Eucharist, has been confirmed, and who lives a life of faith which befits the role to be undertaken. The minimum requirement is one Catholic Godparent. Any other person asked to act as a Godparent should be a believing, baptized Christian, 'they may participate in Catholic Rites of baptism but obviously they cannot offer the guarantees required of the true godparent so they are called "witnesses". Any non-Catholic person will be entered onto the Baptismal Certificate as 'witness' provided that they have been baptised/christened into a Christian Faith. Unbaptised people cannot act as Godparents or Witnesses.

**ANDOVER FOODBANK**

**A Happy New Year** to all our friends and supporters! Due to all the fantastic food donations we received in the run up to Christmas (for which many, many thanks) we only need help with **NON-FOOD ITEMS** this week:  
**Shampoo/Conditioner (2in1 if possible); Deodorant; Kitchen cleaner; Bathroom cleaner and Washing Up liquid.**