



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

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

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Office Hours: Monday: 8.30am - 3.30pm; Tues. & Thurs.: 8.30am - 12 noon; Fri. 8.30am - 2.30pm.

NB: The Office is CLOSED on Wednesdays / Father Austin's Day off: Wednesday.

11th and 12th January 2025 - The Baptism of the Lord

'WWJD' What Would Jesus Do? In the 1990's this acronym became a part of popular culture. People sported 'WWJD' bracelets as a reminder to use Jesus as a guide for their behaviour. Regrettably the true meaning of 'WWJD' disappeared as adaptations became popular. I had not thought about 'WWJD?' movement until I began reflecting upon the gospel from Luke.

Today we celebrate the Baptism of Jesus. This is a beautiful culmination of the Christmas season during which we have been praying about the incarnation of God becoming human in the birth of the baby Jesus for the purpose of our salvation.

As I read Luke's gospel, I am overwhelmed by the deep faith of the people who followed John to the river to be baptized. I am moved by their quiet hope and curiosity: *The people were filled with expectation, and all were asking in their hearts whether John might be the Christ.* John clarifies his role and assures the people that Christ is coming by telling them: *"I am baptizing you with water, but one mightier than I is coming. I am not worthy to loosen the thongs of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."*

But rather than arriving in a blaze of glory, the 30-year-old Jesus quietly gets in line with the others and gracefully asks John to baptize him. From the beginning of his public ministry Jesus provides a template of how we should live with humility. I wonder how I might have reacted when as Jesus was praying after being baptized by John, I see the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove and hear the voice of from heaven proclaiming: *"You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."*

Reflecting upon the baptism of Jesus invites me to learn more about the sacrament of baptism. It was so important to me to have my daughters baptized and I always take the renewal of my baptismal promises seriously, yet I feel eager to learn more. I am reminded that baptism reveals the equality and dignity of each member of the community, leads us to imitate Christ's example, makes us disciples to the world and baptism requires us to reject sin and evaluate our values, decisions and lifestyles.

I pray with these questions: How have my actions demonstrated my faith? Have I considered all people, especially my rivals, to be members of our community? What are some obstacles in my life that keep me from Jesus? How can I be generous with my spirit?

And the simplest, yet most important question: WWJD?

MLB

Baptism of the Lord "You are my beloved Son; with you, I am well pleased." God takes great pleasure in those who respond to His call. Do you hear His voice? He may be calling you to the priesthood or consecrated life. Talk to your priest or contact Cn. John Cooke. vocations@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk or call 01329 318 869

A YEAR OF HOPE – AN INTRODUCTION TO THE JUBILEE YEAR – Saturday 18th January from 10.30am to 12 noon.

Christine Allen (CAFOD's Director) and Kayode Akintola (CAFOD's Head of Africa). Co-hosts Nana Churcher (Catholic talkshow host and author), and CAFOD's Simon Giarchi will lead you with prayers, reflections and music from Ooberfuse (and more!), to help you celebrate Jubilee and explore how to be a tangible sign of hope throughout this holy year.

Link to register (copy and paste): <https://cafod.org.uk/news/events/a-year-of-hope-an-introduction-to-the-jubilee-year>

Baptism Preparation Evening

There will be a Baptism Preparation Evening on Wednesday 19th February in the Parish Hall from 7.00pm to 9.00pm. Completion of the session is required before booking a baptism. To register for the course, please email / telephone the Parish Office. Both parents are requested to attend - but not children - and you must be registered with the Parish. *A reminder that Godparents must not be less than sixteen years of age; must 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, but unbaptised people cannot act as Godparents or Witnesses.*

MASS TIMES AND INTENTIONS FROM 11TH JANUARY 2025 – 24TH JANUARY 2025

Confessions will be from 5.30pm to 5.45pm each Saturday or you can ring the office to make an appointment.

Sat. 11th Andover Mass 6.00pm *Jim Cullen RIP - Anniversary*

Sunday 12th January – The Baptism of the Lord

Whitchurch Mass 9.00am

Farleigh School Mass 10.00am -

Andover Mass 10.30am *Harry Lane RIP*

Mon. 13th **No Mass or Service** - *Beginning of 'Ordinary Time'*

Tue. 14th **Andover Mass 10.00am**

Andover - Healing Prayers 6.30pm - 7.00pm

Wed. 15th **No Mass or Service** -

Thur. 16th **Mass at St John the Baptist School at 9.30am**

Fri. 17th **Andover Mass 10.00am**

Sat. 18th **Andover Mass 6.00pm** *50th Wedding Anniversary Blessings -Allan and Paula Degg*

Sunday 19th – Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Whitchurch Mass 9.00am

Farleigh School Mass 10.00am -

Andover Mass 10.30am

Mon. 20th **Andover Mass 10.00am**

Tue. 21st **Andover Mass 10.00am**

Andover - Healing Prayers 6.30pm - 7.00pm

Wed. 22nd **No Mass or Service** -

Thur. 23rd **No Mass or Service** -

Fri. 24th **Andover Mass 10.00am** *Jonathan Cronin RIP - Anniversary*

Please pray for: Esmé Coveney, Rita Lane, Margaret Williams, Patrick Arnold, Sheila Muir, Mary Oak, Bernard Ivinson, Fiona Hilleard, Tony Fabian, Helen O'Connell, Douglas Manning, Diane Mahoney, Catherine Ash, Sile Monnelly, Bill Jago, Linda Creaven, June Saunders, Jane O'Kelly, Rita Casey, Wendy Rawlings and Rose Bull.

Please pray for all the sick and housebound of our parish.

Please pray for the repose of the souls of Teresa Blackwell, Susan Perry and Jules Denée.

May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, rest in peace.

DIOCESAN PRAYER INTENTIONS: 12th January – 19th January

Sunday: *Those to be baptised this year, their godparents, families and catechists.*

Monday: *Catenian Association. Tuesday: Verbum Dei Communities in the Diocese.*

Wednesday: *Army Catholic Chaplains and Personnel. Thursday: Royal Navy and Royal Air Force Catholic Chaplains and Personnel. Friday: 'Churches Together'. Saturday: Diocesan Committee for Christian Unity.*

For all those preparing to marry in 2025:

Marriage Care will be hosting another in-person 'Preparing Together' Day on 8th February 2025 at Corpus Christi Catholic Church, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG40 2HE. Please visit our website: www.marriagecare.org.uk for more information.

THE VINE TRUST is an independent Christian charity that runs a bookshop on Bridge Street Andover. We are currently looking for more volunteers to help run the store, we especially need help on Wednesday afternoons and Saturdays. We operate two shifts per day (10.00am to 1.00pm and 1.00pm to 4.00pm Tuesday to Friday, and 9:30am to 12 noon and 12 noon to 2.30pm on Saturdays) . We have two volunteers helping in each shift. If you are interested in joining us, you can collect an application form from the shop or we can send you one electronically (email: vinetrustandover@gmail.com). All our volunteers get full training on working at the shop.

SECOND COLLECTION: *There will be a Second Collection on 25th and 26th January for the Cathedral of St John the Evangelist, the Mother Church of our Diocese. We can claim Gift Aid on this collection, a claim of 25% of all Gift Aided donations, so please use an envelope if you are able.*