

**ST DOMINIC'S, DURSLEY**  
**&**  
**ST JOSEPH'S, NYMPSFIELD**

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**SUNDAY 9 JANUARY 2022**

**FEAST OF THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD, YEAR C**



**Collect**

Almighty ever-living God, who, when Christ had been baptised in the River Jordan and as the Holy Spirit descended upon him, solemnly declared him your beloved Son, grant that your children by adoption, reborn of water and the Holy Spirit, may always be well pleasing to you.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

**Amen**

## **Gospel** (Luke 3: 15 – 16, 21 - 22)

A feeling of expectancy had grown among the people, who were beginning to think that John might be the Christ, so John declared before them all, 'I baptise you with water, but someone is coming, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to undo the strap of his sandals; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

Now when all the people had been baptised and while Jesus after his own baptism was at prayer, heaven opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily shape, like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on you.'

### **Reflection**

The baptism of Jesus is reported in each of the three Synoptic Gospels—Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Clearly, it was an event of great significance for Jesus and for the early Christian community. The Evangelists Mark and Luke report the story from Jesus' perspective; the voice from heaven is addressed to Jesus. Compare this to Matthew's Gospel in which the voice from heaven speaks to everyone. In Luke, however, the Holy Spirit descends upon Jesus during his time of prayer after his baptism. Through his Gospel, Luke will show Jesus to be a person of prayer who withdraws regularly from the crowds and his disciples to pray to his Father.

The baptism of Jesus is considered a manifestation of God in Jesus, another "epiphany." On this, the last day of the Christmas season, our Gospel reveals to us Jesus' relation to God: the son of Mary and Joseph is also God's own Son. In Luke's Gospel, all three members of the Trinity are manifested here: God the Father in the voice, the Holy Spirit descending, and Jesus the Son. At the beginning of his Gospel, Luke is communicating to us important information about the identity of Jesus. In the verses that follow, Luke lists the genealogy of Jesus, tracing Jesus' ancestry back to the first person, Adam, who is also identified as the son of God. We, the children of Adam and Eve, are again made children of God through Baptism.

| <b>Celebration of Mass</b> |         |      |            |
|----------------------------|---------|------|------------|
| Friday 7 January           | 7.00pm  | Mass | Dursley    |
| Saturday 8 January         | 5.30pm  | Mass | Nympsfield |
| Sunday 9 January           | 10.30am | Mass | Dursley    |
| Wednesday 12 January       | 9.00am  | Mass | Dursley    |
| Thursday 13 January        | 10.00am | Mass | Nympsfield |
| Friday 14 January          | 7.00pm  | Mass | Dursley    |

## **Pope Francis: Christmas Message**

### **Patient dialogue for unity and peace**

The Pope observed that our world needs dialogue, especially in these pandemic times where unity and solidarity are essential to overcoming the hurt in social relationships.

### **Hear the cry of the suffering**

Decrying the “great number” of seemingly unending conflicts, crises and divisions we are witnessing today, the Pope contrasted them with how today we celebrate the message of the Saviour’s birth, “source of true peace”. The Christmas message calls on us to respond to the tragedies in our world, he stressed, recalling the people of Syria who have suffered from ten years of war, and Iraq struggling to recover from decades of strife.

### **Be open to dialogue**

Despite these shadows, there is “the sign of hope”, the Pope underscored, “the Love that moves the sun and the other stars” became flesh, sharing in our plight and breaking down the walls of indifference. The Pope encouraged everyone then to ask the Lord for “the strength to be open to dialogue” and create in our hearts a real desire for “reconciliation and fraternity,” turning to Him in prayer.

### **Reconciliation and solidarity in Africa and the Americas**

The Pope prayed for Ethiopia and that it might find the path to peace once again remembering first the needs of its suffering people. He also remembered those living in the Sahel region affected by the violence of international terrorism, for North Africa struggling to overcome social and economic instability, and for those suffering from conflicts in Sudan and South Sudan. May dialogue, mutual respect, solidarity and reconciliation prevail in the hearts of peoples in the Americas.

### **Safety for women, children, elderly**

During this time of pandemic, the Pope prayed in particular for those feeling its affects, especially women who are the victims of violence, children suffering due to bullying, the elderly who are even more isolated.

### **Global health and solidarity**

May we all pray for ways to overcome the current health emergency, the Pope continued, and the Lord grant health to those who are infirm, and vaccines for those who need them most. He remembered those generously caring for the sick and most vulnerable.

### **Care for our common home**

The Pope also remembered our need to be attentive to our common home, our planet and the environment suffering from how we often treat it, praying for inspiration for political leaders to reach agreements to assure its viability future generations.

### **Happy Christmas to all!**

Acknowledging and praying over the many challenges we are facing today, the Pope underscored that “hope prevails”, a child is born, who is the Word of God. May we “learn to listen to God, our Father, to listen to one another and to dialogue as brothers and sisters,” he concluded, and ask the Lord to “teach us” to walk beside Him “on the paths of peace.”

## **Café Dominic ...**

... will be open this Sunday, 9 January, after the 10.30 Mass in the Parish Hall

## **200 Club December winners:**

1<sup>st</sup>: Mary Bucci, £40

2<sup>nd</sup>: Jerry Whitney, £30

3<sup>rd</sup>: Susan Terry, £20

## **Bishop Declan**

From Bishop Declan's letter for the feast of the Holy Family:

Pope Francis has invited us as members of the family of the Church to participate in a process of preparing for the Synod in Rome in 2023. The Synod is about synodality, of walking together along the way of Jesus. The Pope has called us to listen to God through the Scriptures and the Sacraments; to listen to one another as members of the Church; to listen to the wider community with its needs and hopes and to become a Church that preaches and lives the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The wish of God is to have conversation with all humanity not just the few. At Christmas we celebrate the Word of God who enables us to be at peace within ourselves and with the whole of creation of which we are part.

We are called to be a people of Communion, Participation and Mission. We are to grow in our union with Christ and with one another as members of a Universal Church. We are called to participate in the work of Christ giving the world reasons for hoping and living. We are challenged not to be a Church for ourselves but a Church which is of service to all.

*The full text of the letter is available on the Parish website*

### **Our Parish**

PLEASE PRAY for those who have died recently

#### **Diocesan Prayer Link:**

St Ambrose / Diocesan Curia / Diocesan Services

#### **Churches Together Prayer Rota:**

Church of the Holy Cross, Owlpen

#### **Parish Prayer Rota:**

The congregation at Dursley