

BRINDLE St JOSEPH'S

Chapel Fold, Hoghton, PR5 0DE

Parish Priest: Fr Raphael Jones OSB

Telephone: 01254 852026 – Mobile (emergency) 07944 255541

Email: pp@brindlestjosephs.org.uk

Website: www.brindlestjosephs.org.uk

Ampleforth Abbey Trust – Registered Charity no: 1026493

The Baptism of the Lord

12th January 2025

(Sunday cycle year C, weekday cycle year 1, psalter week 1)



“You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased”

God of grace and glory, you call us with your voice of flame to be your people, faithful and courageous. As your beloved Son embraced his mission in the waters of baptism, inspire us with the fire of your Spirit to join in his transforming work. We ask this in the name of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Sat 11 th	10.30am	Abbot's intentions	Saturday after the Epiphany
	6.00pm	For the Parish	The Baptism of the Lord
Sun 12 th	9.30am	Jean Dowse	
Mon 13 th	No Mass today		Feria (week 1)
Tue 14 th	9.30am	Ray Jackson	St Kentigern (memorial – secondary patron of the Archdiocese)
Wed 15 th	9.30am	Joe Moorby	Feria
Thu 16 th	9.30am	Deceased of the Walmsley and Sempers families	Feria
Fri 17 th	11.30am	Requiem Mass: Mary Griffin	St Anthony (memorial)
Sat 18 th	10.30am	EBC	BVM
	6.00pm	Frank Thompson	Second Sunday in Ordinary Time
Sun 19 th	9.30am	For the Parish	
	11.00am	Baptism: Sophia Louise Firth	

First Saturday of the month: Confessions at 10.00am, Anointing of the sick during 10.30am Mass

This week		Reader		Eucharistic Minister		Bookshop	
Sat 11 th		G Kellett		J Hothersall		Not open	
Sun 12 th		B Cook		M Gardner		Not open	
Bidding prayers	G Hopkinson	Children's Liturgy	As arranged		Collection counters	P & J Kitchen	
Next week		Reader		Eucharistic Minister		Bookshop	
Sat 18 th		L Lomax		P Fawcett		Not open	
Sun 19 th		F Fordyce		B Gore		Not open	
Bidding prayers	B Kellett	Children's Liturgy	As arranged		Collection counters	B Kellett & M Russell	

Last weekend – attendance: 75, collection £274.96 – thank you!

Readings: Isaiah 42:1-4,6-7, Acts 10:34-38, Luke 3:15-16, 21-22.

This feast of the Baptism of our Lord reminds us that his baptism is no more a historical event of the past which bears no relevance to the here and now than our own baptism, which for many of us was years ago.

Our baptism reminds us of our past and present status before God which was, that before the *fall*, Adam and Eve enjoyed a perfect relationship with God due to sanctifying grace, but they lost all of this through their sin.

So we, their descendants, are born without this grace and are subject to sin, suffering and death. But through baptism, sanctifying grace is restored, though not the other gifts that were lost such as happiness, integrity and knowledge; at least, not in full, for they will only be fully restored in the next (eternal) life.

Of course, we cannot really comprehend this mystery, but it helps to explain the present condition of evils and imperfections in the world and has firm basis in scripture.

What is important is the restoration of the grace, because it restores us to the intimate relationship with God lost through Adam and Eve. It makes us righteous with him by opening for us the way to happiness, knowledge of God and the immortality that was meant for us in the first place – though as St Augustine reminds us: we will never truly be at rest until we rest in God.

In choosing to be baptised, Christ identifies with our fallen humanity. If he had been with sin in the sense that we are, then he would have been enslaved by it as we are – continually wanting to scratch the scar of the wound that was original sin, healed at our baptism.

But, unlike Christ, we do sin after our baptism; we keep scratching the scar and opening the wound and as a result, we lose that grace.

The *Good News* is that through the sacrament of reconciliation (confession), the lost grace is restored to us and thereby salvation is once again made possible and the wound healed for each one of us and all the baptized.

It is true that even after this reconciliation, certain and often painful consequences of our sin still need to be undergone in this life known as **temporal punishment** and then there is the notion of **purgatory**. But *God uses pain and sorrow to open our hearts to tenderness and sympathy; to teach us that this world offers no lasting happiness and to make us look with the eye of hope to our true home, where he will wipe away every tear and death will be no more...He could have spared us, but under his loving providence, it will be like the plant whose root is bitter but whose fruit is sweet.* (*Apologetics and Catholic Doctrine* – Michael Sheehan)

So, on this feast of Christ's baptism, we celebrate and reaffirm our own baptism and the restoration of the grace that makes us one with God, through his Son and in the love that is the Holy Spirit.

Two Reflections on Grace and Intimacy with God

*In his first creation, he gave me myself. But in his new creation, he gave me **Himself** and by that gift, restored to me the gift that I had lost.* (St Bernard of Clairvaux)

As all people are touched by God's love, so also are they touched by the desire for his intimacy. No one escapes this longing; we are all kings in exile, miserable without the Infinite. Those who reject the grace of God have a desire to avoid God, as those who accept it have a desire for God. (Ven Fulton J Sheen)

With prayers,

Fr Raphael

This Week's Saints

St Kentigern also known as Mungo (one dearly beloved) was the founder and first bishop of Glasgow. He was vigorous in his defence of the faith and outstanding in his piety and zeal. He died about 603.

St Anthony Abbot and Hermit (251-356): Born in upper Egypt to a wealthy family. In his *Life of St Anthony*, St Athanasius tells us that at the age of about twenty, his parents died and about six months later, while thinking of the sacrifices followers of Christ had made, he entered a church just as the Gospel was being read which was about the rich man whom Jesus told to sell all he had, give the money to the poor and then to come and follow him.

He immediately left the church, sold and gave away his property but retained enough to maintain himself and his younger sister but after another visit to the church where he heard the words '*Do not be anxious about tomorrow*', he gave away all he had, put his sister into a convent and embarked upon the ascetic life, living by the work of his hands and praying constantly. He attracted a following and contributed to orthodoxy against the heresies circulating at that time. He encouraged those being persecuted – even seeking martyrdom himself, but ended up living to a great old age. Although he wasn't the first monk or hermit, he is thought of as the Father of Monasticism.

According to the Oxford Dictionary of Saints and various articles on the internet, in the Middle Ages he is associated with the healing of a medical condition caused by a fungal poisoning in rye grass called Ergot which caused Ergotism or Erysipelas known as St Anthony's Fire and in France around 1095, a Roman Catholic congregation was formed to care for those suffering from this disease. He is Patron of monks and of healing including the healing of animals.

MASS ON FRIDAY is at **11.30am** – Requiem Mass for Mary Griffin.

FOODBANK COLLECTIONS 2025. As ever, the list was filled very quickly – thank you to those who signed up. The first collection this year will be over the weekend of 22nd/23rd February.

There is a '**FOXTON BOX**' at the back of church for any donations of items such as hats, scarves, toiletries or sleeping bags. They will be taken down to the Foxton Centre on a regular basis. It will make a real difference to peoples' lives and, given that the average age of people without a home or roof is 43 years, you may even begin to help change that.

REGISTRATION FOR CONFIRMATION opens this Monday (13th January) until 17th March. More details at: <https://www.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk/departments/pastoral-development/confirmation-programme>.

PLEASE PRAY for Mary Griffin and John Towers who have died, for those who are sick or housebound including Alan Thompson, Fr Laurence Mayne and Bill Warbrick, as well as for those who have died and whose anniversaries occur about this time.

100 CLUB: The winner for week 5 is number 15, Trevor Greenwood.

BRINDLE ST JOSEPH'S PRE-SCHOOL NURSERY – limited places available. Open 8.30am-3.30pm. 15 & 30 hour government funding for 3 & 4 year olds accepted. All local primary schools served. Contact: 07956242409 or email nursery@st-josephs-hoghton.lancs.sch.uk.

CYCLE OF PRAYER: During Ordinary Time (Winter), ie up to Lent, we are asked to pray for: Peace on Earth; Openness to the Word of God; Christian Unity; The Sick and Those Who Care for Them; Victims of Trafficking and Those who Work to Combat it; The Unemployed.

TEA AND COFFEE are served after Mass on Sunday mornings. Please come along – you'll be very welcome.

Bidding Prayers for the weekend of 11th/12th January 2025 – The Baptism of the Lord

Priest: Heavenly Father, Almighty God, graciously hear the prayers of your people which we bring before you today.

Reader: Let us pray for the Church, the people of God that we, whether ordained or laity, promote and live the life of your Son here on Earth. Lord, hear us...

Let us pray for a renewal and increase in our love for your Word, that to know your Word is to know you, and to know you is to know your word. Lord, hear us...

Let us pray for the removal of the veil over the eyes of the Jews, that they will see clearly and recognise Jesus as their Saviour. Lord, hear us...

Let us pray for your persecuted Church throughout the world, that they will be fortified by their faith and strengthened by your love. Lord, hear us...

Let us ask Mary, the mother of Jesus, to pray with us as we say: Hail Mary...

Father, we now bring our own needs before you in silent prayer.

Priest: Heavenly Father, fulfil the needs of your children and bless those you love. We ask this in the name of Jesus, your Son. Amen

PRAYER FOR THE SICK

Priest: As we thank God for the gift of his Son in Holy Communion, let us remember those of our Parish who are sick or housebound.

All: May the body and blood of your Son, which we now send to them through our Eucharistic Ministers, bring them consolation and peace. We ask this in the name of Jesus, Our Lord. Amen.