

*Welcome to the Parishes of  
St Andrew's Cathedral, Dundee  
& Our Lady of Good Counsel, Broughty Ferry  
& St Thomas of Canterbury, Arbroath*



*St Thomas', Arbroath*



*St Andrew's Cathedral*



*Our Lady of Good Counsel*

**Solemnity of the  
Baptism of the Lord**

3 January 2021

*Next Sunday:*

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Year of Mark (B)

<b>Priests:</b> Canon Kevin J Golden	<b>Telephone:</b> 01382 225228	<b>Email:</b> kevinjamesgolden@hotmail.com
Father Andrew Marshall	<b>Telephone:</b> 01241 873013	<b>Email:</b> stthomas@dunkelddiocese.org.uk
<b>Deacon:</b> Rev Arthur Grant ( <b>Arbroath Parish</b> )		
<b>Postal address:</b> St. Andrew's Cathedral, 150 Nethergate, Dundee DD1 4EA		
<b>Dunkeld Diocese Charity Number</b> SC001810	<b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.standrewscathedraldundee.com">www.standrewscathedraldundee.com</a>	

**Dear Friends and Parishioners,**

As I write, the events of Wednesday night in Washington are in my thoughts, and my prayers are for all people of good will who work and strive for truth, justice and peace, in the USA and across the globe. Such a happening shows the fragile nature of democracy, just as the Covid crisis is showing us still that human life and a stable economy are ever vulnerable too.

The cries of the ancient Prophets - as we hear so consistently in the Liturgy - dig deeply into the quest for justice, generosity, peace and the common good. The prophets sometimes wept at how the people could be seduced by words of seeming security and power, which those prophets knew would ultimately not bring harmony or enable people to truly live in the image and likeness of God. The prophetic vocation and response was to consistently call the people back to the life of faith and to the confession of God's Kingship and Reign.

It is the *Good News* of that Reign which unfolds, and that we unashamedly celebrate as the People of the Church, in our communal liturgy when we are able to gather together in the House of the Church - and in our own hearts when at a time like this, we are unable to physically stand alongside each other, but can still keep the Lord's Day holy in our homes.

Last Sunday's "Epiphany" Solemnity was just that.

We received a fresh experience of the *Revelation* of the Christ to the Gentiles, symbolised in Saint Matthew's vivid narrative of the "wise men", their journey and their seeking, following the movement. The power and value of this story is in the deepest truths it expresses: salvation being brought about in Jesus; the graciousness of God coming into his world in simplicity, poverty and vulnerability; the glory and majesty of God residing not in a palace but in a simple home, the presence of God's Kingship not in a mighty warrior-ruler, but in a child with all his human neediness.



The mystery of God's self-revelation continues this Sunday, when we go in faith to the Jordan River. Jesus is an adult now and has left his home village and has sought out John for Baptism. It seems that he leaves behind his human family and in the circumstances of his Baptism is announced as the Son of the Divine Father in the

voice that comes from the torn–open heavens. He is a *Beloved Son* upon whom his Father’s favour rests. The Gospel of Mark shows Jesus being addressed directly by the heavenly Father, a greeting which will be repeated - in the third person - at the Transfiguration scene when it is the turn of Peter, James and John hear that divine voice. Mark surely expects those who hear the Gospel proclamation or who read his text to also acknowledge this divine source of Jesus’ honour of beloved sonship, as Jesus did throughout his ministry. The question of Jesus’ true identity was of course a critical matter: the son of a carpenter would have little claim to be an authoritative public figure or preacher — *Where did the man get all this?* the crowds would ask! But the legitimacy and authority of a beloved Son of God is incontestible!

The heavenly voice is very necessary! No one would have seriously expected the Messiah to go to *Jordan John* for baptism; for the Messiah would have no need to repent! Even the Baptist himself knew it to be very odd that Jesus should come to him. And yet, go for John’s baptism he does, for he follows faithfully in the tradition of Israel. And when he was baptised, something new emerged from that river. The parting of the Red Sea, centuries before, as a sign of freedom for God’s people, was now being re-echoed in the plunging of Jesus into the Jordan.

When we were baptised, our “Christenings” were tame affairs by comparison, a little drop of water, not a river, and yet the reality is the same: something new, mysterious, glorious emerges from the font when we are baptised.

The catastrophe of sin was universal – tainting our very origins and our personal choices; we are all too aware of how it still lurks in the shadows of our lives, ever ready to bring us down, to make us unfaithful. Subtly, it makes us feel powerless for things of grace, unable to overcome the very things in our lives we know break us. Just as sin threatens to finish us off, just as the waters of the flood could have finished it all, God gives signs of hope. The love and grace and worship we share and for which we long again in the parish community and in the communion of the whole Church, gives us a recipe for living according to the Gospel. An ark of salvation, remember, was fashioned by God to survive the flood - the water which had caused such chaos would become the very touch of life at the Red Sea, at the Jordan River, even down to our Baptismal Font today.



The water and blood which flowed from the side of Christ on Calvary would later be signs both of the struggle to which we are called, in terms of the shedding of the blood of the martyrs, and the passion called forth from us all to make sense of our world, of nature, of our own personal stories, and also to know that in the blood of Christ, experienced by us in the water of Baptism and the wine of the Eucharist, we truly are saved.



As Jesus emerges from the Jordan River, the image of a dove is employed by Saint Mark: the dove of beauty, the dove of peace, the dove of the Spirit, echoing Isaiah’s prophecy of the beautiful servant of Yahweh, the Chosen One in whom God would be glorified, with whom he would be well pleased, the One who would bring good news and light where there is darkness and gloom.

Who would really have expected the Messiah, the sinless one, to be plunged into the murky waters of the Jordan? And yet there he was. Today on this feast we reconnect with that moment, in the light of a world that needs faith, needs Christ and needs the Gospel. In our part of the world - Covid notwithstanding - the Church is going through a lean period; it has been that way in other parts of the world at times in history. At this moment the Church flourishes in other places and cultures. Now perhaps, in this new year, God has new things to teach us, that being lean and may lead to a deeper faith, a faith that we will no longer take things for granted, that we might value more deeply Community, Sacraments, Liturgy,

the Scriptures and see how needy we really are for the things of heaven, and how blessed we are in what God has already given us. May this feast and this year draw forth from us above all a grateful heart for the things of grace and a deep desire to overcome the things of sin and selfishness.

God bless you all during this coming week.

There's perhaps not a lot we can do for you at this time, but don't hesitate to be in touch with myself or Father Andrew if we can be of assistance. You are in our hearts as we celebrate Mass in private each day.



### **Our Prayers:**

**for those who are sick:** Isobel Blackmore, Bishop Vincent Logan, Robert Marshall, Peter McLaren, Karen Dammer, Katie Shephard, Monsignor John Harty, Maria Robertson, Frances Young, Tony Beck, Mel Caullay, Jackey Forrest-Moore, Catherine Gallacher, Baby Ben Welsh, Bill Boland, Thinley Chodron, Sharon McNally, Natalia Lucka, Benedict Stephens, Gillian Steedman, Steven Kennedy, Aubrey McMullan, Sonya Rostan, Lily Jane Douglas, Alexander McNeil, Bridie Mossey, Sheila McCallum, Marie Manunga, Allison Matthew.

**for those who have died recently:** Jean Mair, Aileen McAulay, Teresa Miskell;

**those whose anniversaries fall at this time:** Frances Lynch, Patrick Lynch, Margaret McKinlay, Alice Prea, Charles McLaren, Jack Hood, Margaret Culloch, James Haughey, Cathie Brown, Edith Garrigan, Chris McCrorie, William Small, Phylis Brosnan, Elizabeth Haney, Daniel Robbins, Mrs H Walker, Elizabeth Brown, Thomas Reilly, Giuseppe Vettraino, Silverio Calucin, Owen Murell, George Moody, Margaret Cargill.

## Keep this Sunday Holy with a Home liturgy

### **A prayer to begin**

Good and gracious God, at the Jordan River  
you proclaimed Jesus as your Son, the *Beloved*,  
and in him, we too have become  
your favoured children.

Bless us with the gifts of your Spirit,  
that we who have been baptised in water  
may today be renewed in faith  
and ready to share  
the gracious love of your Son, with all people.  
Amen.

### **Read the Scriptures of the day**

**Isaiah 42:1-4. 6-7:**

*Here is my servant in whom my soul delights.*

### **Our Response – Psalm 28**

**The Lord will bless his people with peace.**

**Acts of the Apostles 10:34-38**

*Jesus is anointed with the Holy Spirit.*

**The Gospel of Mark 1: 7-11**

*You are my Son, the Beloved!*

### **Some intercessions**

Be present with your Church, Lord.  
May she announce the Gospel  
with the gentleness of your Spirit,  
without ever “crushing the bruised reed”,  
without ever “snuffing out the smouldering wick”.

Be present with your Church, Lord.  
May she be a light to the anointed,  
a sign of your covenant with all people.

Be present with your Church, Lord.  
May she be a land of hope for all who feel captive,  
purposeless, fragile, vulnerable.

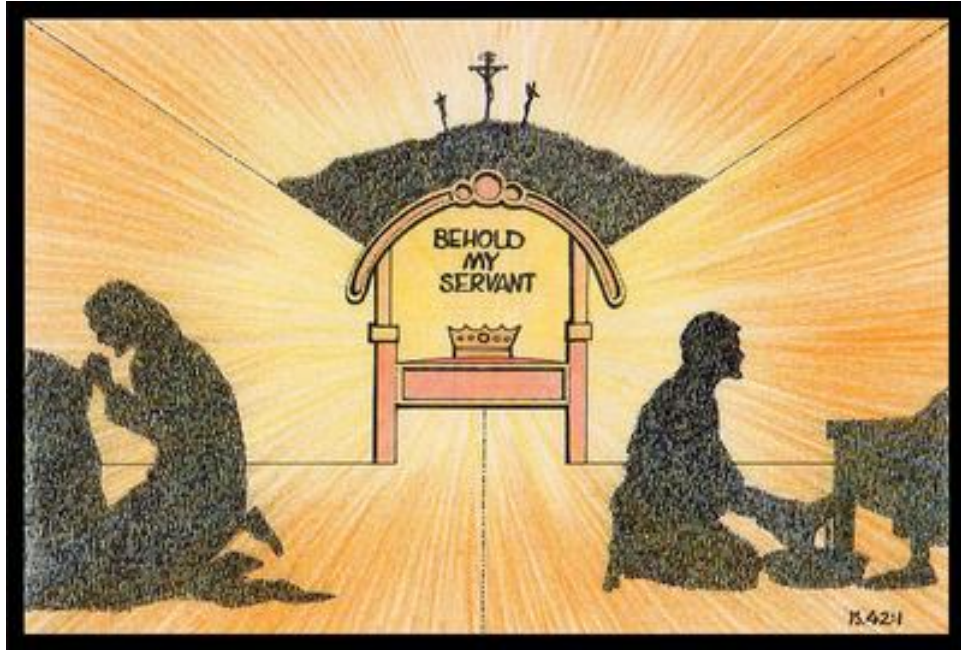
Be present with your Church, Lord.  
May she find the word and gestures of love  
to announce your saving grace  
to peoples across the earth.

Be present with your Church, Lord.  
May she be resplendent in holiness;  
may the day dawn when your people  
can sing your praise in the great assembly  
in the House of your Church.

### **Conclude with *The Lord's Prayer***

### **Final thought**

The Father takes us by the hand: all through our lives, let us hold firmly to this hand, which leads us. Wherever we go, like Christ Jesus, we seek to act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with our God.



### **Behold my servant!**

I have made him strong.  
He is my chosen one; I am pleased with him.  
I have given him my Spirit, and he will bring justice to the nations.

He won't shout or yell or call out in the streets.  
He won't break off a bent reed or put out a dying flame,  
but he will make sure that justice is done.

He won't quit or give up  
until he brings justice everywhere on earth,  
and people in foreign nations long for his teaching.

I am the LORD God.  
I created the heavens like an open tent above.  
I made the earth and everything that grows on it.  
I am the source of life for all who live on this earth, so listen to what I say.

I chose you to bring justice, and I am here at your side.  
I selected and sent you to bring light  
and my promise of hope to the nations.  
You will give sight to the blind;  
you will set prisoners free from dark dungeons.