

**Welcome to
Our Lady of Good Counsel
& St Mary's, Forebank
& St Andrew's Cathedral**

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**Solemnity of the Baptism
of the Lord
9 January 2022**

*Next Sunday: 2nd Sunday of Ordinary Time -
Year of Luke (C)*

Dear Friends and Parishioners,

“God has no favourites!”, proclaims St Peter in this Sunday’s Scripture from the *Acts of the Apostles*. God loves all his children, each in their uniqueness. The gift of Baptism and our Sacramental life in the church is truly a *commissioning*, a call to give ourselves to the service of God’s Kingdom in the church and in the world. Our Holy Father Francis will call us to rediscover this in the synodal process this year.

This Sunday we are called in spirit to the Jordan River, to the scene of Jesus’ Baptism as an adult. The Baptism of Jesus set him up for mission. In our Masses this Sunday, as we either renew our Baptismal promises or profess our faith in the recitation of the Creed we celebrate again that call we have been given to *serve the cause of right*, as Isaiah the prophet puts it.

The concert of **Polish Christmas Carols** planned for this Sunday afternoon in St Mary’s, Forebank at 2.30pm has had to be **postponed**. Apologies. Details of rescheduling in next week’s newsletter.

Memorial Mass

for Bishop Vincent Logan RIP

To mark the first anniversary of the death of our Bishop Emeritus Vincent Logan there will be a special **Memorial Mass**

in St Andrew’s Cathedral

this Friday 14 January at 1pm.

Everyone is welcome to attend.

This week’s Masses

St Andrew’s Cathedral

Monday – Friday at 1pm

**Friday’s Mass will mark the First Anniversary
of the death of Bishop Vincent Logan RIP**

Saturday Mass at 10am (with Novena)

St Mary’s, Forebank

Monday – Friday at 11.30am

Our Lady of Good Counsel

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday at 10am

Tuesday at 9.30am – Please note

Our Prayers for the sick: Ross Murray, Ian Davidson, Janet Isherwood, Theresa Kay, Dawn Wood, Heather Moffit, Hilda McGinness, Steven Hackney, Jane Budge, Alan McKenzie, Joyce Scott, John McCarry, Margaret McMenemy, Tony Beck, Isobel Blackmore, Karen Dammer, Allison Matthew, Jackey Forrest-Moore, Catherine Gallacher, Thinley Chodron, Natalia Lucka, Benedict Stephens, Steven Kennedy, Aubrey McMullan, Sonya Rostan, Lily Jane Douglas, Alexander McNeil, Sheila McCallum, Marie Manunga;

for those who have died recently: Liam Glen, Margaret McKay, Ian Duncan;

those whose anniversaries occur at this time: Margaret Macbeth, Mary Mudie, Irene Watt, Tina Iannetta, Phylis Brosnan, Louis Gillspie, William Small, Frances Lynch, James Turnbull, E.U. Chacko, Patrick Lynch, Margaret McKinlay, Alice Prea, Adelina Black, Charles McLaren, Jack Hood, Margaret Culloch, Archbishop Philip Tartaglia, Bishop Vincent Logan, Emeritus of Dunkeld, Harry Neville, James Haughey, Cathie Brown, Edith Garrigan.

In the absence of a Children’s Liturgy of the Word at Mass at this time we hope to offer a printed resource for families to take home. These will be at the back of the Church.

Thank you for your generosity to our parishes last Sunday of £531 in St Andrew’s Cathedral, £465 in St Mary’s, Forebank, £453 in Our Lady of Good Counsel, and from the Polish Community £141 on New Year’s Day and £225 last Sunday:

*The annual special collection for the work of the Church in the field of **Justice and Peace** will be taken this Sunday at all Masses. There will be a bucket at the back of the church as you leave.*

“When the Church baptises a child, that action concerns me,
for that child is thereby connected to that which is my head also,
and integrated in that body where I am a member”.

These words are of the poet John Donne, who lived 1572-1631 and they are an apt reminder to us when we witness the Baptism of a child. Baptism reminds us that everyone belongs to God. Though the parents take the child home after baptism, they know that this child is a gift to them from God and God is closer to their child than even they can be. This is true for all of us and it is a reality that continues throughout our lives. We may commit ourselves to many people and endeavours in our lives, we may give most of our waking hours to work and activity, but in the depths of our being we are made for God.

John the Baptist baptised with water and it was a symbol of cleansing, like ritual Jewish washings of the time. The history of most religions is full of cleansing services, from ritual hand washing to being baptised in the River Jordan or bathed in the Ganges. Most religious people around the world try to get rid of some stain, be it sin or ignorance, or some other shadow, for we know we are broken, imperfect people. But eventually we realise that we cannot cleanse ourselves, and that is when the “heavens open” and a light dawns. The light reveals to us that salvation comes from above, from outside us.



When Jesus was baptised, a dove descended and a voice said *You are my Son, the beloved*. Although the Jews thought they knew who Jesus was, since “they knew his father and mother”, they did not really know him. And the same voice speaks to us at our baptism and at the baptism of our children. We will not truly understand each other until we see each other as God sees us.

Ordinary Time begins again on Monday, following this Sunday’s Solemnity the Baptism of the Lord (which brings the Christmas season to its conclusion). Then next Sunday recalls the miracle of the Wedding at Cana.

Did you know that originally, the Epiphany celebration encompassed three manifestations?

1. Christ revealed to the Gentiles through the Magi (*Wise Men*) - last Sunday;
2. Christ baptised and revealed as the beloved Son of God the Father - today;
3. The miracle of *water into wine* and the public revelation of Christ's divine power - next Sunday.

On the Baptism of the Lord — the day on which we celebrate his commissioning or *sending out* by the Father — we also recall our own Baptism, our sharing in that commission. The church stresses to us that Baptism is not just something we receive, but it is a *new way of life*, a commitment on our part to lead a new life and to share in the work of Jesus Christ and his Church. To be a member of the Church is not simply a mark of individual favour on us from God; rather, to join the church is to undertake a life of service, of order, of fellowship and working for others, with a common goal.

The Second Vatican Council declared that “*through Baptism and Confirmation we are commissioned to the apostolate of the Church by the Lord himself...The Baptised are called in a special way to make the church present and operative in those places and circumstances where only through them can she become salt of the earth*” [Constitution on the Church].

Jesus’ Baptism was the starting point for his public ministry, and so too our Baptism prepares us for service, not only with regard to the Church but in all those places and circumstances of our world that are so much in need of the salt and light that we, the baptised, have to offer. We surely need to teach and work to explain that Baptism is no mere personal favour, but a lifelong commitment of service for the Kingdom of God.

