

Parish of St Wilfrid, Widnes

10th January 2021

THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD (B)

“Listen!

I am standing at
the door
knocking.”

Rev 3:20



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PARISH WEBSITE:

catholicchurches-widnes.org.uk

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to date news.

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Parish of St Wilfrid Widnes

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Reflection: THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

Today we celebrate the feast of the baptism of the Lord. Jesus had gathered with those who were seeking baptism from John. John's baptism was to prepare the people for the coming of the Messiah, God's Anointed One. The Messiah, John said, '... will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.' Unlike us, Jesus did not need to be baptised because he was without sin.

Mark's gospel does not have a narrative of the birth of Christ. The baptism of the Lord is the revealing of the depth that the Son of God has gone to, to enter humanity and to save us from sin. His humility enabled him to receive a baptism that he did not need, as a sign that he is one with us in every way, except sin.

We receive baptism with water and the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit unites us with Christ and with all those who are baptised. The faith of the Church and those who were present when we were baptised marks the beginning of our journey towards God. At the beginning of a new year, it is good to stop and to reflect on our baptism into Christ. May the fact that we are baptised into Christ strengthen our resolve during this coming year to live with the limitations and the restrictions that have been imposed on all of humanity because of the virus.

Fr Tom

CLOSURE OF CHURCHES

After a long discussion on Thursday afternoon, we priests have made the decision to **close** the four churches in St Wilfrid's Parish for Public Worship from **Friday 8 January 2021**. We will continue to celebrate Requiem Masses and Funeral Services in the churches. Our decision was taken after consultation with local Public Health and in the light of the alarming rise in COVID-19 cases in Halton Borough. Places of Worship and our churches have been safe places for people to come, to pray and to celebrate Mass. There will no opportunity for the Sacrament of Reconciliation at St Bede's on a Saturday morning until further notice.

We are willing to give up once more what is dear to the faith and life of the Church for the good of the local community. Once the rate of infection falls to a more acceptable level, we will review and look again to a cautious reopening of our churches. The priests will continue to offer Mass privately and there will be the opportunity for parishioners to view Sunday Masses on You Tube. If you have intentions that you want us to pray for please use email or the telephone to pass them on. If you or someone you know is finding this strange time in which we are living particularly trying, please do get in touch with one of the priests.

The Clergy team

THANK YOU for your prayers, cards, and generous gifts, which we priests received at Christmas. You are so kind and thoughtful.

Christmas was so different from any we have experienced in our lifetime. The limitations, and the restrictions that we are living with, do not detract from the one who is at the heart of our celebration – Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour.

Nothing that we have been able to do in our churches in St Wilfrid's Parish could have happened without the generous sacrifice of time and the sharing of the gifts of so many people. Thank you to our stewards who keep us safe; those who cleaned and decorated; those who prepared the cribs; those who read or provided music and carols for the Masses in our churches or on You tube. Thank you to those who have expressed their gratitude for the work of so many in our parish over the past 10 months, during this strange time.

All the Clergy team

How to access Mass

St Wilfrid's Widnes

YouTube videos are being prepared so that you can participate in Mass.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC52-K27EaYwySzRmeP3f3eA>

Mass from St Wilfrid's will be available each Sunday morning.

Across the Archdiocese:

New resources now available include:

- [Reflection for the Feast of the Holy Family \(also available as an audio download\)](#).
- [Reflection for the Second Sunday of Christmas \(also available as an audio download\)](#).
- [Readings for Christmas, the Feast of the Holy Family and the Second Sunday of Christmas.](#)
- [Week 16 and 17 in the series of 'Armchair Retreats' with Fr Denis Blackledge SJ.](#)

We pray for those who have died:

Margaret Heaton, Frances Broome, Winifred Marston, Jean Bernard, Joan Fenney, Christopher Topping, John McGrath, Roseanne McCabe, Frances Brown, Elizabeth Hammond, Carl Lenaghan, Kevin Pybus



May God give wisdom and courage
to those who work for peace.

We pray that their efforts may be blessed,
that they may bring an end to violence
and solace and stability to suffering peoples.

May the gift of peace permeate all troubled souls,
convert all who live by violence
and comfort all children who live in menacing situations.
that the freedom to enjoy life and grow in safety may be theirs.
And may each one of us know
peace of mind and heart, peace of body and spirit,
peace of community and world.

Holy Spirit of Peace, grant our prayer. Amen.