



A BEAUTIFUL LIFE

The day of Baptism is a precious time in the family. Whatever about the temperature of the water - ideally warmish - the relationship of faith that it begins is meant to be anything but lukewarm. Some priests feel a little caught on the matter: the weak responses, the simple lack of any familiarity with the church of some present being pretty clear indicators that, while faith is 'caught not taught', some of us (priest

included) have a lot of 'catching up' to do. But everyone enters into Baptism with a good heart and great goodwill and it is my favourite sacrament.

Times have changed and one priest, Fr Stephen Wang, wrote in *The Tablet* (5/1/13) that he was startled to have one participant at a Catholic retreat answer his question, 'What would you do if you had one hour left?' with the sincere reply, 'I'd get baptised.' Yes - adults are increasingly presented for baptism. But - be it child, adolescent or adult and whatever the type or length of preparation - it is a simple ceremony of word and ritual: pouring of water, anointing with oil, lighting a flame -

Next Sunday's Readings



Isaiah 49:3,5-6

Psalms 39:2,4,7-10

1 Corinthians 1:1-3

John 1:29-34

but it is immense in the road it opens up for the baptised.

Those missing at a Baptism who are lost to us in death are missed, but all present are caught up in the happiness that, whatever past circumstances or the past year have brought, the family tree is still growing. No doubt parents, and all the family, will strive to make each home an ideal environment for their child. The priests hope that their local church will be the second home of peace and prayer for all of them.

'Don't be a stranger,' used to be the farewell to a visitor or welcome guest. Hands will be used to greet and hug and caress the little one. 'Keep the hand in' is one colleague's request to

parents and it's a lovely thing to reflect upon. All the hands and help each of these little ones will need – all reflecting the hand of God at work. In seven or eight years time, many present at the day of Baptism will gather again to celebrate the day of First Communion, a day of beauty and wonder, with First Confession beforehand a reminder of how brittle we are and how we can hurt instead of help one another. Another few years on, the children will be confirmed with the power of the Holy Spirit as they face into adolescence and the journey of life.

So today is a day to remember our Baptism, maybe to reflect on Fr Wang's question on what we would do, if we knew our life was to end very shortly? Just maybe to ask, what would God want us to do with the one wild, wonderful life that we have no matter how long or short it is? ■

- Tom Cox



Reflection

Reflect on the experience of Jesus, symbolised by the opened heavens, the dove resting on him, and the voice from heaven.



Lesson

For Christians, Matthew's presentation of the Baptism of Jesus by John prefigures Christian Baptism, where the presence of the Father works through Christ.



Prayer

Lord, pour on us the great gift of your Holy Spirit to be our lifelong companion and comforter. Make us aware of this form of the divine presence, especially in the dark moments of our life. Amen.



This Week (13-19 January)

- 13 M** St Kentigen
- 14 T** St Felix of Nola, bishop
- 15 W** St Ita, virgin
- 16 T** St Fursa, abbot and missionary
- 17 F** St Anthony, abbot
- 18 S** St Prisca, virgin and martyr
- 19 S** 2nd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME



The Parish of St Anthony's is part of the Diocese of Down and Connor and operates in accordance with the Diocesan Privacy Notice, copies of which are available in porch.

St. Anthony's Parish, Belfast

PARISH PRIEST: Fr. Henry McCann (and Chaplain to the Ulster Hospital, Dundonald)
3 Willowfield Crescent, BT6 8HP. Tel. 028 90458158. Mobile 07740603643.

Email: h.mccann@downandconnor.org, stanthony@downandconnor.org.

henrymccann@hotmail.com, **Website:** www.saintanthony.co.uk

MASS TIMES & SERVICES (UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED)

Saturday Evening at 6.30pm. (English Parish Mass)

Sunday Morning (in Polish): 9.30am, 1pm & 7pm. (English Parish Mass): 11.30am

Weekdays: Monday, Tuesday & Thursday at 9.30am. Friday at 7.00pm.

Wednesday: **Communion Service discontinued until further notice** (Day off)

Holy Days of Obligation: Vigil Mass at 7.00pm & Morning of Feast Day 09.30am

Confessions: Before each Mass and By Arrangement.

Baptisms: Saturdays at 4pm (3 weeks notice required)



FEAST OF THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

*And a voice came from the heavens saying,
"This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."*

*Jesus,
you are baptized,
and the very heavens
are opened.*

*We see the holy dove
and hear the
Father's voice
on high.*

*Let us come
up from the water too,
into a new life of
your Spirit
and of your
love.*

*And take
the grace of our
Baptism to everyone
on earth.*

Anne Osdieck

WE REMEMBER OUR DECEASED LOVED-ONES

Recently Deceased: Kevin Smith (Upper Knockbreda Road), Kevin McCaughan (father of Fr Aidan), Teresa Strain (sister of Fr Paul)

Anniversaries: Peter Hughes, Terence & Sarah McCartan, Minnie Tanney, Marie Matthews, Jim McCann, John O'Connor, John Higney, Michael Gallagher (Sun 12th Jan at 11:30am), Arthur Hughes (Sun 19th Jan at 11:30am), Patrick Gunn (Sun 26th Jan at 11:30am)

READERS AND EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS

Sun 12th Jan 2020

READERS:

Easter Vigil Mass: Eamon Blancy
Morning Mass: Margaret Sheppard & Catherine Curran

EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS:

Vigil Mass: Frank Doherty
Morning Mass: Séamus Monaghan

Sun 19th Jan 2020

READERS:

Vigil Mass: Phyllis McGrillen
Morning Mass: Sarah Corscadden & Eileen Dunn

EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS:

Vigil Mass: Sean Rafferty
Morning Mass: Louis Corscadden

COLLECTIONS: Many thanks for your contributions to last week's collection: Weekly Collection £562.93, Shrines £110.24

Epilepsy Society Calendar of Church leaders in the Cregagh area. Calendar in aid of the Epilepsy Society. Calendars £3.50 each or two for £6. Any of the photos in the calendar can be purchased, 10x8 £4, 8x6 £2.50. Contact 07762139629. Money for calendars can be placed in the Collection Container.

Diocesan Directory containing lists of parishes, clergy, organisations and Liturgical Calendar is available in the Sacristy, priced £4

No Greater Love Lenten Programme. The Living Church is hosting a Faith Development Conference in the Crowne Plaza Hotel on Saturday 18th January from 10am - 4pm. The aim of this event is to encourage and resource you and any of your parishioners who might like to lead the Lenten programme No Greater Love within your Parish. Best-selling author Dr Edward Sri guides participants through the last hours of Christ's life in this biblical pilgrimage, walking step-by-

step with Jesus from the Garden of Gethsemane to the Mount of Calvary. This is a five part programme ideally suited to be run once a week during Lent. Delegates on Saturday 18th January will have the opportunity to experience the programme. There will be input from the Living Church team on how to promote the programme within your parish, how to run small groups, manage group dynamics, and continue to support people on their faith journey. There are two registration options: **Group Leader £100** **Delegate £35** You can register a group or individual by completing the attached registration form and returning it with payment to Living Church. If you require any additional information or assistance, please do not hesitate to contact Fr McCann

St Joseph's College - Open Night on Thursday, 16th January 2020 from 7-9pm. Parents and prospective Year 8 pupils are very welcome to attend. This will be an excellent opportunity to see the school and to talk to pupils and staff. The Principal, Mrs Michele McCormick will address parents and pupils in the Assembly Hall at 7pm. Students who are interested in joining Sixth Form are also welcome.

Polish Community Nativity Play. You are all welcome to attend the Nativity Play to be held in St Anthony's Church on Sunday 12th January at 2pm.

4 Corners Festival Belfast This inter-denominational arts festival aimed at promoting reconciliation runs from January 31 to February 9. You are invited to attend as many as possible of nearly 20 events throughout Belfast, including a talk by Fr Peter McVerry SJ, the famous champion of the homeless. The theme this year is "Building a City of Grace" and the intention is to promote through music, drama and prayer discussion about the need we share for the gift of grace in our divided society.

One of the keynote events sees Church of Ireland bishop, Alan Abernethy return to St Anthony's Catholic Church, Willowfield, where as a horrified fifteen-year-old he witnessed a sectarian attack that he says changed his life. This Conference will be on Sunday 2nd February at 7pm.

The Festival was co-founded in 2012 by Falls Road priest, Fr Martin Magill and Presbyterian minister, Rev Steve Stockman. The events are free and further details can be found at the website www.4cornersfestival.com

Retrouvaille - A Lifeline for Married Couples: The Retrouvaille programme can help marriages at all stages. Next programme starts 7th - 9th February 2020. For information contact Tony & Anne (01) 495 3536, Mike & Anne (01) 450 0922, text or call 086 413 5440, or email info@retrouvaille.ie or visit www.retrouvaille.ie.

A Marriage Enrichment Weekend. The next (residential) Weekend (Fri 8pm to Sun 4:30pm) will be held in Dromantine, Newry from 31st January- 2nd February For information and to book, visit our new website www.marriageencounter.ie or phone 0770 281 2321 [NI] or 00353 (87) 2162436-- Tom and Madeline McCully with Fr. Seán Coyle

Easter Pilgrimage to Fatima 8th - 13th April 2020 All Easter Ceremonies in Fatima Mass in Santarem where the bleeding host took place and Prayers, and Hungarian Stations of the Cross in Fatima. Contact James Treacy 086-0572216

Public Lecture - The Global Persecution of Christians. Dr Michael Kinsella from Aid to the Church in Need will address the issue of the global persecution of Christians in a public lecture at Queen's University Catholic Chaplaincy, 28 Elmwood Avenue, Belfast on Tuesday 21 January at 7pm. Everyone is welcome.

"Hope for the Planet" Re-inhabiting the Earth Spring Conference - Drumalis, Larnac, Fri, 14 - Sun, 16 February 2020. We are delighted to have Andy Lester, Head of Conservation for Christian Charity A Rocha UK, as the keynote speaker for this annual environmental conference. It is possible to attend on a residential or non-residential basis for the full weekend and there is also the opportunity to attend for the day only on Saturday. For further details or to book a place, please contact Drumalis - tel 028 28272196/28276455 (Mon- Fri, 9am - 5pm) Booking forms can also be downloaded from <http://www.drumalis.co.uk>

Parish Safeguarding. Can you please ensure that all Children and Vulnerable Adults are accompanied at all times when entering the Sacristy / Toilet facilities. If you have any queries regarding the Safeguarding Policy please contact a member of the Parish Safeguarding Committee. Many Thanks. Fr Henry McCann PP.