



Sunday Readings

12th January 2025 - The Baptism of the Lord.

FIRST READING

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah 40:1-5. 9-11.

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her
that her warfare is ended,
that her iniquity is pardoned,
that she has received from the LORD's hand
double for all her sins.

A voice cries:

'In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD;
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.
And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all flesh shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.'

Go on up to a high mountain,
O Sion, herald of good news;
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good news;
lift it up, fear not;
say to the cities of Judah,
'Behold your God!'
Behold, the Lord GOD comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
behold, his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.
He will tend his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms;
he will carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead those that are with young.

The word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

Responsorial Psalm

Ps. 103:1-2. 3-4. 24-25. 27-30. R/. v.1.

R/. Bless the Lord, my soul! Lord God, how great you are.

Lord God, how great you are,
clothed in majesty and glory,
wrapped in light as in a robe!
You stretch out the heavens like a tent. **R/.**

Above the rains you build your dwelling.
You make the clouds your chariot,
you walk on the wings of the wind,
you make the winds your messengers
and flashing fire your servant. **R/.**

How many are your works, O Lord!
In wisdom you have made them all.
The earth is full of your riches.
There is the sea, vast and wide,
with its moving swarms past counting,
living things great and small. **R/.**

All of these look to you
to give them their food in due season.
You give it, they gather it up:
you open your hand, they have their fill. **R/.**

You take back your spirit, they die;
returning to the dust from which they came.
You send forth your spirit, they are created;
and you renew the face of the earth. **R/.**

SECOND READING

A reading from the letter of St Paul
to Titus 2: 11-14. 3:4-7

Beloved: The grace of God has appeared, bringing
salvation for all people, training us to renounce
ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-
controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age,
waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the
glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, who
gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness,
and to purify for himself a people for his own
possession who are zealous for good works.

But when the goodness and loving kindness of God
our Saviour appeared, he saved us, not because of
works done by us in righteousness, but according to
his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and
renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us
richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that being
justified by his grace we might become heirs according
to the hope of eternal life.

The word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

GOSPEL

Luke 3:15-16. 21-22

The Lord be with you. *And with your Spirit.*
A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.
Glory to you, O Lord.

At that time: As the people were filled with expectation,
and all were questioning in their hearts concerning
John, whether he might be the Christ, John answered
them all, saying, 'I baptise you with water, but he who
is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose
sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptise you
with the Holy Spirit and fire.'

Now when all the people were baptised by John the
Baptist and when Jesus also had been baptised and
was praying, the heavens were opened, and the Holy
Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove;
and a voice came from heaven, 'You are my beloved
Son; with you I am well pleased.'

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.



The Baptism of the Lord - 12th January 2025

The Word of God

Saints of the Week

“I baptise you with water, but someone is coming, someone who is more powerful than I am and I am not fit to undo the strap of his sandals; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire.”



Because we live in the power of the Holy Spirit, in the power of our baptism, we are always orientated to the future, to the coming Kingdom. It’s a difficult thought, for it is hard to imagine the future as keenly as we can imagine the past, but we have a lot of help. We have the Spirit of God, leading us on, the Spirit of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, trustfulness, gentleness and self-control. We have the

picture of the Kingdom that is the mass, a vision of a world without conflict and pain, a world in which all are reconciled. We have the power of the Holy Trinity pulling us on to a glorious future. We just have to step, not back, but forward to be lifted into a future that is a glorious affirmation of all that it is to be human under God. We just need to take that step, not back, but forward.

It helps us to remember that the future is where God’s promises are, the God who is reconciling all things to himself and who is bringing all things to fulfilment. All things are getting better, even if that process is far from clear to us now and, of course, we have to remember that as we are not there yet, we, and those around us are not yet perfect.

Prayer of the Week

A Prayer of St Aelred of Rievaulx

Lord I sometimes wander away from you, not because I am deliberately turning my back on you, but because of the inconstancy of my mind.

I weaken in my intention to give my whole self to you. I fall back into thinking of myself as my own master. When I wander from you, my life becomes a burden, and within me I find nothing but darkness fear and anxiety. So I come back to you and confess that I have sinned. Forgive me Lord. Amen.

Sunday 12 January 2025

St Aelred of Rievaulx (1110 - 1167)

The son of a priest, Aelred was educated at Durham and in the household of King David of Scotland. In 1134 he visited the newly-founded Cistercian abbey of Rievaulx, and was so attracted to the place and its life that he chose to become a monk there, and was eventually elected abbot.

He died on 12 January 1167. He is remembered for his gift of friendship, for his sensitive and gentle rule, and for his enduringly popular spiritual writings, especially that on friendship.



St Benet (Benedict) Biscop (c. 628–690)

He was born of a noble Northumbrian family and was for a time a thegn of King Oswiu.

While returning from a journey to Rome, he visited Lérins, a monastic island off the Mediterranean coast of Provence, and stayed there for two years, from 665 to 667, during which he took monastic vows and the name of “Benedict”.

In 674, Benedict was granted land for the purpose of building a monastery. He went to the Continent to bring back masons who could build a monastery in the Romanesque style, and St Peter’s, at Jarrow, was the first ecclesiastical building in England to be built in stone. Its library became world-famous and it was here that Benedict’s student Bede wrote his famous works.

For the last three years of his life Benedict was bed-ridden. He suffered his affliction with great patience and faith. He died on 12 January 690.