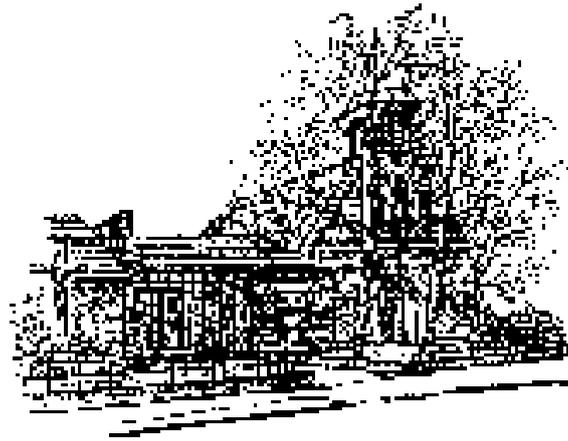


the baptism book





CHURCH OF OUR LADY IMMACULATE AND ST ANDREW

16 Nightingale Road, HITCHIN, SG5 1QS
(In the care of the Augustinians of the Assumption)



**AUGUSTINIANS
OF THE
ASSUMPTION**

Thy Kingdom Come

The Rite of Baptism during Mass for One Child

Introductory Rites

Priest: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Parents: Amen

Reception of the Child

Priest: What name(s) have you given your child?

Parents: The parents give the child's name.

Priest: What do you ask of God's Church for **NAME(S) of CHILD**?

Parents: Baptism.

Priest: You have asked to have your child baptised. In doing so you are accepting the responsibility of training him/her in the practice of the faith. It will be your duty to bring him/her up to keep God's commandments as Christ taught us, by loving God and our neighbour. Do you clearly understand what you are undertaking?

Parents: We do.

The priest now addresses the godparents as follows:

Priest: Are you ready to help the parents of this child in their duty as Christian parents?

Godparents: We are.

The priest says to the child:

Priest: **NAME of CHILD**, the Christian community welcomes you with great joy. In its name I claim you for Christ our Saviour by the sign of his cross. I now trace the cross on your forehead, and invite your parents and godparents to do the same.

He signs the child on the forehead and invites parents and godparents to do the same.

Gloria, Collect, Liturgy of the Word (Readings, Sermon)

Bidding Prayers

The bidding Prayers (Page 6) are now said, to which extra invocations may be added for the needs of the Church and the world.

Baptism

The celebration of Baptism continues as follows:

This is done at Parish Welcome or before the Mass

[Exorcism and Anointing Page 8]

Celebration of the Sacrament and other ceremonies **Page 8**

The Mass

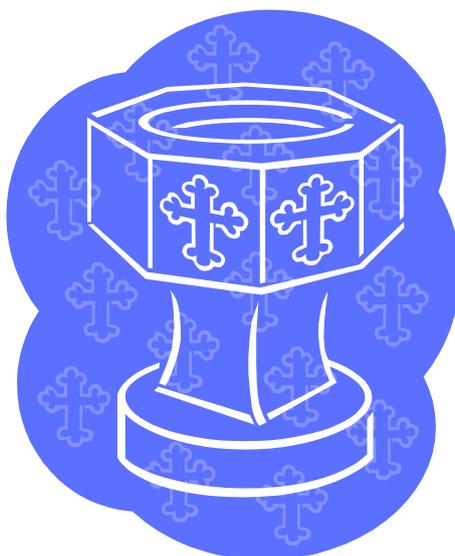
After the Celebration of Baptism, the Mass continues in the usual way with the Offertory. Members of the family often bring up the gifts to the altar and should proceed to the back of the church and process with the gifts behind the Altar Servers.

Our Father

The Community and the Family proclaim our Family Prayer on behalf of the child.

Final Blessing

The blessing at the end of Mass may be that which concludes the Baptism Rite **Page 13**



The Rite of Baptism for One Child (outside of Mass)

Reception of the Child

Priest: What name(s) have you given your child?

Parents: The parents give the child's name.

Priest: What do you ask of God's Church for **NAME(S) of CHILD?**

Parents: **Baptism.**

Priest: You have asked to have your child baptised. In doing so you are accepting the responsibility of training him in the practice of the faith. It will be your duty to bring him up to keep God's commandments as Christ taught us, by loving God and our neighbour. Do you clearly understand what you are undertaking?

Parents: **We do.**

The priest now addresses the godparents as follows:

Priest: Are you ready to help the parents of this child in their duty as Christian parents?

Godparents: **We are.**

The priest says to the child:

Priest: **NAME of CHILD**, the Christian community welcomes you with great joy. In its name I claim you for Christ our Saviour by the sign of his cross. I now trace the cross on your forehead, and invite your parents and godparents to do the same.

He signs the child on the forehead and invites parents and godparents to do the same.

Celebration of God's Word

Readings, Homily

Bidding Prayers

Priest: My dear brethren, let us ask our Lord Jesus Christ to look lovingly on **NAME of CHILD** who is to be baptised, on his/her parents and godparents and on all the baptised.

Reader: By the mystery of your death and resurrection, bathe **NAME of CHILD** in light, give him/her the new life of baptism and welcome him/her into your holy church.
Lord hear us.

All: **Lord, graciously hear us.** (or response for the Mass as led by the reader)

Reader: Through baptism and confirmation, make **NAME of CHILD** your faithful follower and a witness to your gospel.
Lord hear us.

All: **Lord, graciously hear us.** (or response for the Mass as led by the reader)

Reader: Lead **NAME of CHILD** by a holy life to the joys of God's kingdom.
Lord hear us.

All: **Lord, graciously hear us.** (or response for the Mass as led by the reader)

Reader: Make the lives of **NAME of CHILD's** parents and godparents examples of faith to inspire him/her.
Lord hear us.

All: **Lord, graciously hear us.** (or response for the Mass as led by the reader)

Reader: Keep **NAME of CHILD's** family always in your love.
Lord hear us.

All: **Lord, graciously hear us.** (or response for the Mass as led by the reader)

Reader: Renew the grace of our baptism in each one of us.
Lord hear us.

All: **Lord, graciously hear us.** (or response for the Mass as led by the reader)

Invocation of the Saints

Priest: Holy Mary, Mother of God,

All: Pray for us.

Priest: Saint John the Baptist,

All: Pray for us.

Priest: Saint Joseph,

All: Pray for us.

Priest: Saint Peter and Saint Paul,

All: Pray for us.

Priest: Saint Andrew,

All: Pray for us.

Priest: You may add the names of other patron saints eg those of the child.

All: Pray for us.

Priest: All holy men and women,

All: Pray for us.



Exorcism and Anointing

Prayer of Exorcism

The Prayer of Exorcism and the Anointing with Oil of Catechumens prepare the child for the coming of the new life of God in baptism.

Priest: Almighty and every-living God,
you sent your only Son into the world
to cast out the power of Satan, spirit of evil,
to rescue man from the kingdom of darkness,
and bring him into the splendour of your kingdom of light.
We pray for this child:
set him/her free from original sin,
make him/her a temple of your glory,
and send your Holy Spirit to dwell with him/her.
Through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen

Anointing

Priest: We anoint you with the oil of salvation
in the name of Christ our Saviour;
may he strengthen you
with his power,
who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

All: Amen

The priest anoints the child on the breast with the Oil of Catechumens, to strengthen him/her with the power of Christ.

Celebration of the Sacrament

At the font the priest reminds those present of the wonderful work of God whose plan it is to sanctify humankind, body and soul through water. He may use these or similar words.

Priest: My dear brethren, God uses the sacrament of water to give his divine life to those who believe in him. Let us turn to him, and ask him to pour his gift of life from this font on this child he has chosen.

All: Amen

Blessing and Invocation

Now follows the Blessing, and Invocation of God over the baptismal water, of which the following is one form:

Priest: Father, God of mercy, through these waters of baptism you have filled us with new life as your very own children.

All: **Blessed be God.**

Priest: From all who are baptised in water and the Holy Spirit, you have formed one people, united in your Son Jesus Christ.

All: **Blessed be God.**

Priest: You have set us free and filled our hearts with the Spirit of your love, that we may live in your peace.

All: **Blessed be God.**

Priest: You call those who have been baptised to announce the Good News of Jesus Christ to people everywhere.

All: **Blessed be God.**

If Water is not blessed

Priest: You have called your child **NAME of CHILD**, to this cleansing water and new birth that by sharing the faith of your Church he/she might have eternal life. Bless  this water in which he/she will be baptised. We ask this in the name of Christ our Lord.

All: **Amen.**

If Water is already blessed

Priest: You have called your child **NAME of CHILD**, to this cleansing water that he/she may share in the faith of your Church and have eternal life. By the mystery of this consecrated water lead him/her to a new and spiritual birth. Through Christ our Lord.

All: **Amen.**

Renunciation of Sin and Profession of Faith

A renunciation of sin and Profession of Faith follows next. The priest addresses the parents and godparents.

Priest: Dear Parents and Godparents:
You have come here to present this child for baptism. By water and the Holy Spirit he/she is to receive the gift of new life from God, who is love. On your part, you must make it your constant care to bring him/her up in the practice of the faith. See that the divine life which God gives him/her is kept safe from the poison of sin, to grow always stronger in his/her heart.

If your faith makes you ready to accept this responsibility, renew now the vows of your own baptism. Reject sin; profess your faith in Christ Jesus. This is the faith of the Church. This is the faith in which this child is about to be baptised.

Do you reject Satan?

Parents & Godparents: I do.

Priest: And all his works?

Parents & Godparents: I do.

Priest: And all his empty promises?

Parents & Godparents: I do.

Priest: Do you believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth?

Parents & Godparents: I do.

Priest: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified, died, and was buried, rose from the dead, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father?

Parents & Godparents: I do.

Priest: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

Parents & Godparents: I do.

Priest: This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church. We are proud to profess it, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

All: Amen.

Baptism

Before the Baptism itself, the Priest asks parents and godparents this final question:

Priest: Is it your will that **NAME of CHILD** should be baptised in the faith of the Church, which we have all professed with you

Parents & Godparents: **It is.**

The Priest pours water over the child's head three times, saying:

Priest: **NAME of CHILD** I baptise you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Anointing with Chrism

After Baptism comes the Anointing with Chrism, the Christian's consecration to God. The Priest introduces it as follows:

Priest: God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has freed you from sin, given you a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, and welcomed you into this holy people. He now anoints you with the chrism of salvation. As Christ was anointed Priest, Prophet, and King, so may you live always as a member of his body, sharing everlasting life.

All **Amen.**

The Priest anoints the child on the crown of the head with the sacred chrism.

Clothing with a White Garment

The clothing with a white garment follows: if possible, one provided by the parents or friends. The priest introduces it as follows:

Priest: **NAME of CHILD,** you have become a new creation, and have clothed yourself in Christ. See in this white garment the outward sign of your Christian dignity. With your family and friends to help you by word and example, bring that dignity unstained into the everlasting life of heaven.

All **Amen.**

The white garment is put on the child.

Lighted Candle

The Giving of the Lighted Candle now follows. Holding the Paschal Candle, the Priest says:

Priest: Receive the light of Christ

A member of the family, eg Father or Godfather, lights the child's candle from the Paschal Candle.

Priest: Parents and godparents, this light is entrusted to you to be kept burning brightly. This child of yours has been enlightened by Christ. He/she is to walk always as a child of the light. May he/she keep the flame of faith alive in his/her heart. When the Lord comes, may he/she go out to meet him with all the saints in the heavenly kingdom.

Conclusion of the Rite

As a new member of the Church, the child has a right to take part in the Eucharist, and, when old enough, will receive Holy Communion from the altar, God's table. As a sign of this future event, all say the *Our Father* on behalf of the child. First the Priest addresses all present:

Priest: My dear brethren, this child has been reborn in baptism. He/she is now called the child of God, for so indeed he/she is. In confirmation he/she will receive the fullness of God's Spirit. In holy communion he/she will share the banquet of Christ's sacrifice, calling God his/her Father in the midst of the Church. In the name of this child, in the Spirit of our common sonship, let us pray together in the words our Lord has given us:

All: Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed by thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us,
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
Amen.

BLESSING

The Priest now blesses the Mother, who holds her child in her arms, then the Father, and lastly the entire Assembly in a form such as the following:

Priest: God the Father, through his Son, the Virgin Mary's child, has brought joy to all Christian mothers, as they see the hope of eternal life shine on their children. May he bless the mother of this child. She now thanks God for the gift of her child. May she be one with him in thanking him for ever in heaven, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

All: Amen.

Priest: God is the giver of all life, human and divine. May he bless the father of this child. He and his wife will be the first teachers of their child in the ways of faith. May they be also the best of teachers, bearing witness to the faith by what they say and do in Christ Jesus our Lord.

All: Amen.

Priest: By God's gift, through water and the Holy Spirit, we are reborn to everlasting life. In his goodness, may he continue to pour out his blessings upon these sons and daughters of his. May he make them always, wherever they may be, faithful members of his holy people. May he send his peace upon all who are gathered here, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

All: Amen.

Priest: May almighty God, the Father, and the Son,  and the Holy Spirit, bless you.

All: Amen

The Rite of Baptism for Several Children

Reception of the Children

The Priest greets the Parents, Godparents and Friends and speaks to them of the special joy of this occasion. He then questions the parents of each child, in these or similar words.

Priest: What name have you given your child?

Parents: The parents give the child's name.

Priest: What do you ask of God's Church for **NAME of CHILD**?

Parents: **Baptism.**

The Priest addresses all the Parents together.

Priest: You have asked to have your children baptised. In doing so you are accepting the responsibility of training them in the practice of the faith. It will be your duty to bring them up to keep God's commandments as Christ taught us, by loving God and our neighbour. Do you clearly understand what you are undertaking?

Parents: **We do.**

The priest now addresses the godparents as follows:

Priest: Are you ready to help these parents in their duty as Christian mothers and fathers?

Godparents: **We are.**

The priest says to the children:

Priest: **NAME of CHILDREN** , the Christian community welcomes you with great joy. In its name I claim you for Christ our Saviour by the sign of his cross. I now trace the cross on your forehead, and invite your parents and godparents to do the same.

He signs the child on the forehead and invites parents and godparents to do the same.

Celebration of God's Word

Readings

Homily

The Bidding Prayers

Priest: My dear brethren, let us ask our Lord Jesus Christ to look lovingly on these children who are to be baptised, on their parents and godparents and on all the baptised.

Reader: By the mystery of your death and resurrection, bathe these children in light, give them the new life of baptism and welcome them into your holy church.
Lord hear us.

All: **Lord graciously hear us.**

Reader: Through baptism and confirmation, make them your faithful follower and a witness to your gospel.
Lord hear us.

All: **Lord graciously hear us.**

Reader: Lead them by a holy life to the joys of God's Kingdom.
Lord hear us.

All: **Lord graciously hear us.**

Reader: Make the lives of their parents and godparents examples of faith to inspire these children.
Lord hear us.

All: **Lord graciously hear us.**

Reader: Keep their families always in your love.
Lord hear us.

All: **Lord graciously hear us.**

Reader: Renew the grace of our baptism in each one of us.
Lord hear us.

All: **Lord graciously hear us.**

Invocation of the Saints

Priest: Holy Mary, Mother of God,

All: Pray for us.

Priest: Saint John the Baptist,

All: Pray for us.

Priest: Saint Joseph,

All: Pray for us.

Priest: Saint Peter and Saint Paul,

All: Pray for us.

Priest: Saint Andrew,

All: Pray for us.

Priest: You may add the names of other patron saints eg those of the child.

All: Pray for us.

Priest: All holy men and women,

All: Pray for us.

Exorcism and Anointing

Prayer of Exorcism

The Prayer of Exorcism and the Anointing with Oil of Catechumens prepare the children for the coming of the new life of God in baptism.

Priest: Almighty and every-living God,
you sent your only Son into the world
to cast out the power of Satan, spirit of evil,
to rescue man from the kingdom of darkness,
and bring him into the splendour of your kingdom of light.
We pray for these children:
set them free from original sin,
make them a temple of your glory,
and send your Holy Spirit to dwell with them.
Through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen

Anointing

Priest: We anoint you with the oil of salvation
in the name of Christ our Saviour;
may he strengthen you
with his power,
who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

All: Amen

The priest anoints each child on the breast with the Oil of Catechumens, to strengthen him/her with the power of Christ.

Celebration of the Sacrament

At the font the priest reminds those present of the wonderful work of God whose plan it is to sanctify humankind, body and soul through water. He may use these or similar words.

Priest: My dear brethren, God uses the sacrament of water to give his divine life to those who believe in him. Let us turn to him, and ask him to pour his gift of life from this font on the children he has chosen.

All: Amen

Blessing and Invocation

If Water is already blessed

Priest: You have called your children, **NAME of each CHILD**, to this cleansing water that they may share in the faith of your Church and have eternal life. By the mystery of this consecrated water lead them to a new and spiritual birth. Through Christ our Lord.

All: **Amen.**

If Water is not blessed. Now follows the Blessing, and Invocation of God over the baptismal water, of which the following is one form:

Priest: Father, God of mercy, through these waters of baptism you have filled us with new life as your very own children.

All: **Blessed be God.**

Priest: From all who are baptised in water and the Holy Spirit, you have formed one people, united in your Son Jesus Christ.

All: **Blessed be God.**

Priest: You have set us free and filled our hearts with the Spirit of your love, that we may live in your peace.

All: **Blessed be God.**

Priest: You call those who have been baptised to announce the Good News of Jesus Christ to people everywhere.

All: **Blessed be God.**

Priest: You have called your children **NAME of each CHILD**, to this cleansing water and new birth that by sharing the faith of your Church they might have eternal life. Bless  this water in which they will be baptised. We ask this in the name of Christ our Lord.

All: **Amen.**

Renunciation of Sin and Profession of Faith

A renunciation of sin and Profession of Faith follows next. The priest addresses the parents and godparents.

Priest: Dear parents and godparents:
You have come here to present these children for baptism. By water and the Holy Spirit they are to receive the gift of new life from God, who is love. On your part, you must make it your constant care to bring them up in the practice of the faith. See that the divine life which God gives them is kept safe from the poison of sin, to grow always stronger in their hearts.

If your faith makes you ready to accept this responsibility, renew now the vows of your own baptism. Reject sin; profess your faith in Christ Jesus. This is the faith of the Church. This is the faith in which this child is about to be baptised.

Do you reject Satan?

Parents & Godparents: I do.

Priest: And all his works?

Parents & Godparents: I do.

Priest: And all his empty promises?

Parents & Godparents: I do.

Priest: Do you believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth?

Parents & Godparents: I do.

Priest: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified, died, and was buried, rose from the dead, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father?

Parents & Godparents: I do.

Priest: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

Parents & Godparents: I do.

Priest: This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church. We are proud to profess it, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

All: Amen.

Baptism

Before the Baptism of each child, the Priest asks parents and godparents this final question:

Priest: Is it your will that **NAME of CHILD** should be baptised in the faith of the Church, which we have all professed with you

Parents & Godparents: **It is.**

The Priest pours water over the child's head three times, saying:

Priest: **NAME of CHILD** I baptise you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Anointing with Chrism

When all the children have been baptised there follows the Anointing with Chrism, the Christian's consecration to God. The Priest introduces it as follows:

Priest: God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has freed you from sin, given you a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, and welcomed you into this holy people. He now anoints you with the chrism of salvation. As Christ was anointed Priest, Prophet, and King, so may you live always as a member of his body, sharing everlasting life.

All **Amen.**

The Priest anoints each child on the crown of the head with the sacred chrism.

Clothing with a White Garment

The clothing with a white garment follows: if possible, one provided by the parents or friends. The priest introduces it as follows:

Priest: **NAME of each CHILD,** you have become a new creation, and have clothed yourself in Christ. See in this white garment the outward sign of your Christian dignity. With your family and friends to help you by word and example, bring that dignity unstained into the everlasting life of heaven.

All **Amen.**

The white garment is put on the children.

Lighted Candle

The Giving of the Lighted Candle now follows. Holding the Paschal Candle, the Priest says:

Priest: Receive the light of Christ

A member of each family, eg Father or Godfather, lights the child's candle from the Paschal Candle.

Priest: Parents and godparents, this light is entrusted to you to be kept burning brightly. These children of yours have been enlightened by Christ. They are to walk always as children of the light. May they keep the flame of faith alive in their hearts. When the Lord comes, may they go out to meet him with all the saints in the heavenly kingdom.

Our Father

As a new member of the Church, the children have a right to take part in the Eucharist, and, when old enough, they will receive Holy Communion from the altar, God's table. As a sign of this future event, all say the *Our Father* on behalf of the children. First the Priest addresses all present:

Priest: My dear brethren, these children have been reborn in baptism. They are now called the children of God, for so indeed they are. In confirmation they will receive the fullness of God's Spirit. In holy communion they will share the banquet of Christ's sacrifice, calling God his Father in the midst of the Church. In their name, in the Spirit of our common sonship, let us pray together in the words our Lord has given us:

All: **Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed by thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us,
And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil.
Amen.**

BLESSING

The Priest now blesses the Mothers, who hold their children in their arms, then the Fathers, and lastly the entire Assembly in a form such as the following:

Priest: God the Father, through his Son, the Virgin Mary's child, has brought joy to all Christian mothers, as they see the hope of eternal life shine on their children. May he bless the mothers of these children. They now thank God for the gift of their children. May they be one with them in thanking him for ever in heaven, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

All: **Amen.**

Priest: God is the giver of all life, human and divine. May he bless the fathers of these children. With their wives they will be the first teachers of their children in the ways of faith. May they be also the best of teachers, bearing witness to the faith by what they say and do in Christ Jesus our Lord.

All: **Amen.**

Priest: By God's gift, through water and the Holy Spirit, we are reborn to everlasting life. In his goodness, may he continue to pour out his blessings upon all present, who are his sons and daughters. May he make them always, wherever they may be, faithful members of his holy people. May he send his peace upon all who are gathered here, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

All: **Amen.**

Priest: May almighty God, the Father, and the Son,  and the Holy Spirit, bless you.

All: **Amen**

Celebration of God's word

READINGS

1. Romans 6:3-5 *Baptism, a sharing in Christ's death and resurrection.*

You have been taught that when we were baptised in Christ Jesus we were baptised in his death; in other words, when we were baptised we went into the tomb with him and joined him in death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the Father's glory we too might live a new life.

If in union with Christ we have imitated his death, we shall also imitate him in his resurrection. The Word of the Lord.

2. 1 Corinthians 12:12-13 *Baptised in one spirit to form one body.*

Just as a human body, though it is made up of many parts, is a single unit because all these parts, though many, make up one body, so it is with Christ. In the one Spirit we were all baptised, Jews as well as Greeks, slaves as well as citizens, and one Spirit was given to us all to drink. The Word of the Lord.

3. 1 Peter 2:4-5;9-10 *A chosen race, a royal Priesthood*

He is the living Stone, rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him; set yourselves close to him so that you too, the holy priesthood, that offers the spiritual sacrifices which Jesus Christ has made acceptable to God, may be living stones making a spiritual house. But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a consecrated nation, a people set apart to sing the praises of God who called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people at all and now you are the People of God; once you were outside the mercy and now you have been given mercy.

The Word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Reader: The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

All: **The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.**

Reader: The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

Fresh and green are the pastures where he gives me repose.

Near restful waters he leads me, to revive my drooping spirit.

All: **The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.**

Reader: He guides me along the right path; he is true to his name.
If I should walk in the valley of darkness no evil would I
fear.
You are there with your crook and your staff, with these
you give me comfort.

All: The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

Reader: You have prepared a banquet for me in the sight of my
foes.
My head you have anointed with oil;
My cup is overflowing.

All: The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

Reader: Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me all the days
of my life.
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell, for ever and ever.

All: The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

ALLELUIA

Alleluia, alleluia!

**I am the Light of the world says the Lord; anyone who follows
me will have the light of life.**

Alleluia!

GOSPEL READINGS

1. John 3:1-6 *The meeting with Nicodemus*

There was one of the Pharisees called Nicodemus, a leading Jew, who came to Jesus by night saying, " Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who comes from God; for no one could perform the signs that you do unless God were with him." Jesus answered: "I tell you most solemnly, unless man is born from above, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." Nicodemus said, "How can a grown man be born? Can he go back into the mother's womb and be born again?" Jesus replied "I tell you most solemnly, unless a man is born through water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God, what is born of the flesh is flesh, what is born of the Spirit is spirit."

The Gospel of the Lord.

2. Matthew 28:18-20 *The apostles are sent to preach the gospel and to baptise.*

Jesus came up and spoke to them. He said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you. And know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time.'

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3. Mark 1:9-11 *The baptism of Jesus*

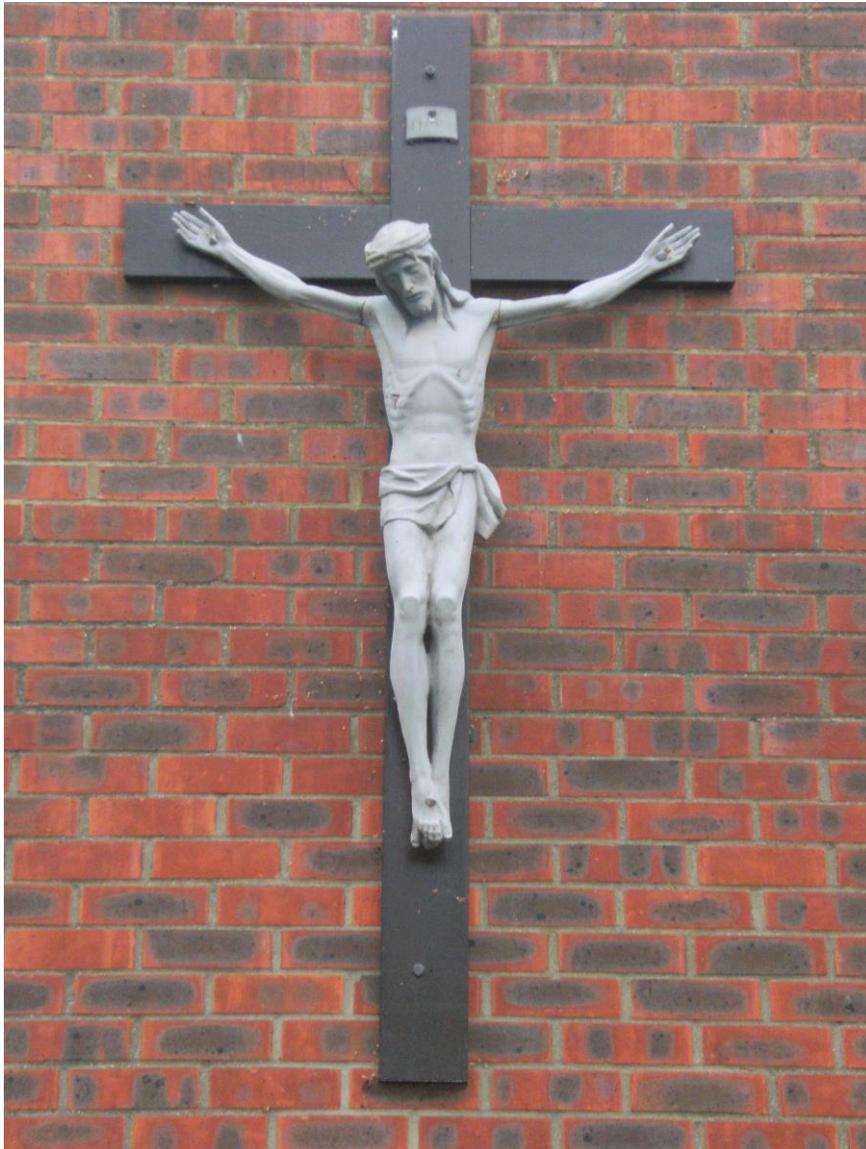
It was at this time that Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptised in the Jordan by John. No sooner had he come up out of the water than he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit, like a dove, descending on him. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on you'.

The Gospel of the Lord.

4. Mark 1:10:13-16 *Let the little children come to me*

People were bringing little children to him, for him to touch them. The disciples turned them away, but when Jesus saw this he was indignant and said to them, 'Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. I tell you solemnly, anyone who does not welcome the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.' Then he put his arms round them, laid his hands on them and gave them his blessing.

The Gospel of the Lord.



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