

# St Thomas More – Parish Newsletter

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## Sunday 8th January 2023, THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD (Year A)

### From the Holy Father

Dear brothers and sisters: Today we conclude our catechesis on discernment as the process of coming to a sound understanding of the Lord's will for our lives.

An important aid to discernment is the practice of spiritual direction, in which we share with another person the movements of the Spirit in our heart and, in confronting our own frailty, draw closer to the Lord, who took upon himself and redeemed the weakness of our humanity. The Gospels speak of Jesus' many encounters with persons who opened their hearts to him and experienced his mercy and forgiveness.

In conversation with a spiritual guide, we often discern more clearly the true direction of our lives and the quiet working of God's grace in our hearts. Spiritual accompaniment also expresses the communitarian nature of our journey to perfection, since together we are members of Christ's body, sons and daughters of the Father and sharers in the life of the Spirit.

As our teacher in the art of discernment we can look to the Blessed Virgin Mary, who leads us to Jesus, who urges us not to fear, but to trust in him and in his words of eternal life.

*Audience 4th January 2023*

### Mary's Meals

Until 31 January 2023, donations made to Mary's Meals will be doubled by a group of generous supporters, up to £1.5 million. It costs just £15.90 to feed a child with Mary's Meals every day for a school year. And this winter, a donation of £15.90 will feed two children.

We shall take up a retiring collection for Mary's Meals Sunday 22nd January.

### Valentine's Day Mass

Our traditional celebration of Christian Marriage, will be on Friday 10th February 2023. Mass at 6pm, followed by a reception in the Hall. All married couples, especially the recently married, and those preparing for marriage are welcome to attend.

### Diocesan Accounts

We have been sent a copy of the 2021 Annual Report & Accounts and Annual Review with a short Financial Summary. These will be in the Narthex for people to review, but please **do not remove them**. There is also a poster with details of where the full report can be found on the diocesan website. <https://rcdow.org.uk/about-us/>

### Westminster Catholic Children's Society Crib Collection

The candle stand at the Thomas More Chapel will be used for this collection until the end of the Christmas Season.

### Cathedral Adult Confirmations

"The next Adult Confirmation dates are 21st January 2023, 22nd April 2023 and 23rd September 2023.

If anyone wishes to put forward as an adult candidate for Confirmation at the Cathedral, please contact your parish priest."

### **"Mini Retreat" for Women**

Second Tuesday of each month: A time set aside to look at our lives in God's presence. On **January 10th**, from **10 am Mass till 12.40** Ending with coffee etc in the Hall. You are welcome for all or part of it.

### **Seniors' Coffee Morning**

The next Coffee Morning will be Wednesday 18th January. Please sign up on the list in the Narthex.

### **Magnificat — January**

Copies of the January Magnificat are available. Please ask Maggie, or one of the priests for a copy. Price £5.

### **Club Lodwar — December Draw**

1st	£161.60	77	Fr. Stefan Hnylycia
2nd	£121.20	43	Maris Hunt
3rd	£40.40	54	Karen Brookes
4th	£40.40	45	David Strinati
5th	£ 40.40	83	Thomas Sharman

### **Dates for your diary in 2023**

Ash Wednesday: 22nd February  
Easter Sunday: 9th April  
Ascension: 18th May  
Corpus Christi: 11th June  
All Saints: 1st November  
1st Sunday of Advent: 3rd December

### **Christmas Tree**

The Christmas Tree in the Narthex will be taken down on Saturday 14th after the 10am Mass. Sunday 15th January is the last day Christmas trees can be taken to the Camden collection points. If you can help, for about an hour or so, then please let Fr Stefan know.

### **Pope Benedict XVI Funeral Mass**

*In his homily at the Requiem Mass for Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, Pope Francis commends his predecessor into the loving hands of God the Father, and prays that his joy may now be complete as he contemplates the Lord face to face.*

### **"Father, into your hands I commend my spirit"**

Recalling the final words spoken by the Lord, as heard during the Gospel reading at the funeral, Pope Francis said this summed up the Lord's entire life, "a ceaseless self-entrustment into the hands of his Father." The Lord's were hands of "forgiveness and compassion, healing and mercy, anointing and blessing," he recalled, as he entrusted Himself also into the hands of his brothers and sisters, offering the ultimate sacrifice of life in loving and serving others.

### **Grateful devotion**

The Pope said the Lord's invitation to entrust our spirit in the hands of the Father, is a programme of life inspiring and shaping the heart of every pastor so that he may be "attuned in grateful devotion, in service to the Lord and to his people, a service born of thanksgiving for a completely gracious gift." He said this shows the great "closeness of God," who entrusts Himself into the "frail hands of his disciples," so they can care for His people in loving service and sacrifice.

### **Prayerful devotion**

Continuing to describe the characteristics of a pastor who strives to follow the Lord, the Pope noted that "prayerful devotion," is required, one that is "silently shaped and refined amid the challenges and resistance that every pastor must face."

"Like the Master, a shepherd bears the burden of interceding and the strain of anointing his people, especially in situations where goodness must struggle to prevail and the dignity of our brothers and sisters is threatened."

The Lord, he said, then offers his "spirit of meekness that is ready to understand, accept, hope and risk," a spirit that sustains a pastor despite the challenges, born from a pastor's confident trust in the Lord.

"A trust itself born of prayer and adoration, capable of discerning what is expected of a pastor and shaping his heart and his decisions in accord with God's good time."

### **Spiritual accompaniment**

He noted the importance of this aspect of mutual, prayerful support, in entrusting one

another to the Lord, as we remember

Benedict XVI, saying:

“God’s faithful people, gathered here, now accompanies and entrusts to him the life of the one who was their pastor. We want to do this with the same wisdom, tenderness and devotion that he bestowed upon us over the years. Together, we want to say: ‘Father, into your hands we commend his spirit’.

“Benedict, faithful friend of the Bridegroom, may your joy be complete as you hear his voice, now and forever!”

### Mass times

Please note that 7am Masses, Monday to Friday, resume on Monday 9th. As before, the church opens at 6.50am and entry is via the car park entrance.



*You will see that the Wise Men have made their appearance in the Crib Scene. We shall keep the Crib up a little longer to give us all the chance to pray and meditate on the presence of these men who saw the Star in the East and came to worship the Child Jesus.*

*I hope to be able to start saying Masses again in public next week. Many thanks, once again, for all the prayers and kind messages of support.*

*God Bless you all!*

*Fr Stefan*

## On Baptism

“Today let us do honour to Christ’s baptism and celebrate this feast in holiness. Be cleansed entirely and continue to be cleansed. Nothing gives such pleasure to God as the conversion and salvation of men, for whom his every word and every revelation exist.

“He wants you to become a living force for all mankind, lights shining in the world. You are to be radiant lights as you stand beside Christ, the great light, bathed in the glory of him who is the light of heaven.

You are to enjoy more and more the pure and dazzling light of the Trinity, as now you have received – though not in its fullness – a ray of its splendour, proceeding from the one God, in Christ Jesus our Lord, to whom be glory and power for ever and ever. Amen.”

*Saint Gregory Nazianzen, the Patriarch of Constantinople in the fourth century.*



# ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC CHURCH      THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

8<sup>th</sup> January – 14<sup>th</sup> January 2023

Tel: 020 7435 1388;      <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/swisscottage/>

	MASS	OTHER ACTIVITIES
<b>SUN 8<sup>th</sup> January</b> THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD  The season of Christmas ends  (Readings. Year A)	<b>9.30am</b> Abbaz Sayar (RIP) <b>11am Mass</b> Jim and Hildegard Charles (intentions) <b>6pm Mass</b> People of the Parish	The Church opens at 9.15am <b>10.30am</b> Confessions  <b>5.30pm</b> Confessions
<b>MON 9<sup>th</sup> January</b> feria	<b>7am Mass</b> Angela Carpos (RIP) <b>10am Mass</b> Pope Benedict XVI (recently deceased)	The Church opens at 6.50am (Monday to Friday)
<b>TUE 10<sup>th</sup> January</b> feria	<b>7am Mass</b> Carmine Albano (intentions) <b>10am Mass</b> Zosia Lisowska (intentions)	<b>11.00am</b> Ladies' Recollection
<b>WED 11<sup>th</sup> January</b> feria	<b>7am Mass</b> Michael Crook (RIP) <b>10am Mass</b> John Stopplecamp (RIP)	
<b>THU 12<sup>th</sup> January</b> St Aelred of Rievaulx	<b>7am Mass</b> For Peace in Ukraine <b>10am Mass</b> Elizabeth Covenden (RIP anniversary)	
<b>FRI 13<sup>th</sup> January</b> St Hilary, Bishop & Doctor <b>Friday abstinence</b>	<b>7am Mass</b> Helen Birch (intentions) <b>10am Mass</b> Joan Ross (intentions)	<b>10am – 12pm</b> Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
<b>SAT 14<sup>th</sup> January</b> Blessed Virgin Mary on Saturday	<b>10am Mass</b> Maria Fernanda (RIP anniversary)	The Church opens at 9.30am

## Prayer Intentions:

**Recently deceased:** Thomas Smullen; Helen Conlon; Gwen McGill; Dave Naicker; Emma Murphy; Nora Scott; Mike Cipolla; Michael Crook; Pope Benedict XVI; Angela Carpos; John Stopplecamp

**Anniversary:** Sofia da Silva; Maryann Estrella; James Patrick McNally; Brigid Monaghan; Josephine Abdala-Tabet; Christine Banks; Mark Sharman; Elizabeth Covenden; Maria Fernanda

## Confessions:

Monday to Friday (before and after 10am Mass)  
Saturday: before and after 10am Mass  
Sunday: 10.30am and 5.30pm (before Mass)

## Forthcoming Events:

**18<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> January: Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity**  
**22<sup>nd</sup> February: ASH WEDNESDAY**