

A short Gospel reflection Matthew 3:13-17

In today's Gospel, we witness a moment of profound humility and revelation: Jesus approaches John the Baptist to be baptised in the Jordan. John resists, recognising his unworthiness— "I need to be baptised by you." Yet Jesus insists, not because He is in need of repentance, but to "fulfil all righteousness." In this simple act, Jesus fully enters into the human condition, standing in solidarity with sinners and revealing the depth of God's saving love.

The baptism of Jesus marks the beginning of His public ministry, but it also unveils who He truly is. As He rises from the water, the heavens open, the Spirit descends like a dove, and the Father's voice proclaims, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased." Here, the mystery of the Trinity is made visible: the Son in the waters, the Spirit descending, and the Father speaking from heaven. God reveals Himself not in power or spectacle, but in humility, obedience, and love.

For us as baptised Christians, this Gospel invites reflection on our own baptism. Just as Jesus enters the waters to sanctify them, so too we enter into Christ's life, death, and resurrection. In baptism, we become beloved sons and daughters of the Father, temples of the Holy Spirit, and members of the Body of Christ. This identity is not something we earn; it is a gift freely given.

Yet baptism is not only a moment in the past—it is a call for the present. Jesus' obedience to the Father sets the pattern for our lives. To live our baptism means to choose humility over pride, service over self-interest, and trust over fear. It means allowing the Spirit to shape us daily, even when the path leads through the ordinary waters of sacrifice and faithfulness.

As we contemplate Jesus standing in the Jordan, may we hear anew the Father's words spoken over us: You are my beloved. Strengthened by this truth, may we live as witnesses to God's mercy, carrying Christ into the world with courage and love.

Prayer for Vocations to the Priesthood: The Baptism of Jesus reminds us of our own baptism and that each one of us is called to be holy and to fulfil our vocation in life. We pray that the men called to serve the diocese as priests will know that, like Jesus, they are beloved sons of the Father, and that they will find fulfilment in spreading the Good News of God's love for everyone.

The 7.30pm Mass at St Columb's Church, Waterside, Derry, on Tuesday 13th January, will be followed by a Holy Hour for Vocations, from 8-9pm. Anyone who cannot attend in person can join in the Prayers and Devotions via the parish webcam.

Catholic Schools Week 2026 begins on Sunday 18th January and continues until Saturday 24th January. The theme "Catholic Schools – Normal Lives, Called to Holiness," highlights the call to holiness found in everyday life, drawing inspiration from the teachings of Pope Francis and the witness of Saint Carlo Acutis. Through daily reflections, it explores how prayer, love, family, service, and joy shape ordinary lives into paths of holiness.

To launch Catholic Schools Week in our diocese, the Eucharist will be celebrated by Bishop Donal McKeown in Saint Eugene's Cathedral, Derry on **Thursday 15th January at 10.00am** and everyone is welcome to attend.

Sympathy

We offer our sympathy to the family and friends of:

*Michael Sweeney
Louise McLaughlin
Charlie Lamberton
Theo DeGroot
Ann McLaughlin*

May they rest in peace

Anniversaries

Please pray for the repose of the souls of:

*PJ Doyle
Matt McColgan
Billy McColgan
Lawrence Moran
Alanna McDonagh
Manny Carlin
Charlie Hickey
Ronnie Kennedy
Georgina Doherty*

May they rest in peace

Collection

Weekly Collection: £4,426
Parish Development: £722
Parish Missionaries: £3,621

Thank you for your generosity

Thank you

Fr Farren acknowledges with thanks the following donations for:

SVdP: £10

Flowers for Altar: £20

Gaza Appeal: £20

Smile Train: £40, £100, £10, £50, £50

Cathedral Funds: £300

Readers 17th /18th January

06.15pm Claire O'Kane
07.30pm Michael McCaul
09.30am Rosemary Finan
11.00am McGinley Readers
12.30pm Kevin Finan
07.00pm Marian Boyle

St Vincent de Paul (St Eugene's Conference) acknowledges with gratitude receipt of donations of £100 and £200.

Grúpa Ceoil Beag, a group of young traditional Irish musicians will be performing in The Cathedral Hall this Sunday after the 12.30pm Mass. Entry is free and everyone is welcome.

To mark Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2026, the City Centre Churches are holding a Walking Service on Monday 19th of January, starting at St Augustine's Church on the Walls at 7.00pm. We will visit several areas of the city's business and residential sectors before finishing at Carlisle Road Methodist Church, approximately an hour later, with light refreshments. Everyone is welcome.

Derry Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes 2026: Monday 29th June to Friday 3rd July (4 nights) ex City of Derry Airport. Cost £895 inclusive of local taxes but exclusive of single supplements and insurance. The Pilgrimage office will open for bookings on Saturday 17th January 2026 at 11.00am. However, Gift Vouchers to any value are now available (Monday to Thursday) from the Diocesan Pastoral Centre, 164 Bishop Street, Derry BT48 6UJ.

Happy New Year from Children in Crossfire! With Christmas now over, Children in Crossfire would like to thank all the parishioners who have already supported their Advent Appeal. If you still have your box/envelopes at home, please return them via the sacristy before/after Mass, or drop them off during the week at the parish office.

The focus of this appeal is on children living in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, whose days are split between going to school and scavenging on a huge rubbish dump nearby, searching for items to sell for food. Children in Crossfire's goal, with your support, is to give those children the better future they deserve. Thank you for your support. Best wishes to you all for 2026!

Burt Charity Concert with Michael English– St Aengus Church, Burt on Sunday 22nd February. Tickets cost €30 – proceeds for installation of new heating system in the Church. To book or for more information contact Sinead at 00353 86 1673669 or Siobhan at 07599278823.

Lumen Christi College Open Evening – Tuesday 13th January 2026 between 4.00pm and 6.30pm. Principal's Address: **4.00pm** in College Assembly Hall. Guided tours of departments will be provided by pupils. Parents of current pupils will be available to share their experience with visitors. Details may be accessed on the College website-www.lumenchristicollege.co.uk

Thornhill College Open Day - Saturday 17th January 2026 from 10.00am–1.00pm. Address by the Principal at **10.00am and 12.30pm.** For parents/guardians and prospective Year 8 students. Prospective Year 13 students are also welcome to come along and discuss A-level or Applied GCE courses. Visit our website at www.thornhillcollege.org.uk

Pre-School or Primary One places for September 2026. There are three excellent Catholic Schools in the Parish, which take both boys and girls. The three schools are St Anne's Primary School (Tel no 71 263046) St Eugene's Primary School (Tel no 71 261601) and Rosemount Primary School (Tel no 71 265605). Nursery class places are available in St Eugene's and Rosemount Primary Schools. If your child is starting pre-school or primary school in September 2026, you can apply online for their place at www.eani.org.uk/parents/admissions. The closing date for applications is 12 noon on Wednesday 21st January 2026.

St Eugene's Cathedral is monitored by CCTV cameras and by two live streaming cameras. Live streaming can be viewed online at www.churchservices.tv, www.watchmenmedia or the parish website. The Diocese of Derry Privacy Notice is displayed on the parish website and Cathedral notice board, or you may obtain a copy from the Parish Office.

Safeguarding Notice: If you have any concerns with regard to the Safeguarding of children within the Church please contact Marie O'Kane, the Diocesan Designated Liaison Person (DLP) on +447596500793 or email: dlp@derrydiocese.org.

Northern Ireland emergency services: PSNI (Police Service of Northern Ireland): 101 Social Services: Gateway Services, Western HSC Trust: 028 7131 4090 (and ask for the Duty Social Worker), Gateway Services, Northern HSC Trust: 028 9442 4459, Regional Emergency Social Work Services: 0800 1979 995. **Republic of Ireland emergency services:** Garda Síochána Buncrana: 00353 749 320 540 Letterkenny: 00353 749 167 100, TUSLA (ROI) Child and Family Agency: 00353 749 102 233

*Vol 54 No 2
The Baptism
of the Lord
11th January 2026*

Priests: Fr Paul Farren, Fr Shaun Doherty