

Gospel Reflection Luke 3:15-16, 21-22

'I am baptizing you with water but one mightier than I is coming. I am not worthy to loosen the thongs of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.'

John the Baptist's passionate allegiance to the ministry entrusted to him by God and made manifest in the powerful eloquence of his preaching, convinces many of his followers that he is the promised Messiah. John's response to their assumption is beautiful in its clarity, its truth, and its humility. It prepares his followers for the greatness which is to come in the person of Jesus, the true Messiah, the Son of God and the Saviour of humankind, the One who will baptize, not with water, but with the Holy Spirit and with Fire.

There follows the baptism of Jesus by John on Jesus' own insistence.

Jesus, the sinless one, insists on being baptised by John and by doing so, becomes one with the kingdom of God on earth. He becomes one with humankind in this as in everything else: suffering, grief, terror, loneliness, rejection, death. And his heavenly Father lovingly and dramatically acknowledges His Son's courage.

Jesus, we kneel humbly before the magnificence and courage of your sacrifice on the altar of our salvation. May we always honour the promises made at our baptism to be faithful to the powerful love beating at the heart of your ministry. Let us seek and find the pure and innocent heart of the child which lies sleeping within us, waiting for us to awaken it and let it lead us joyfully through the green and fresh pastures of our true home.

It is time for us to begin our preparations for the beating heart of Christmas.

Prayer for Vocations to the Diocesan Priesthood – With St Paul we pray for our diocesan seminarians and those discerning their vocation, that "...the peace of God will guard [their] hearts and thoughts..."

The season of Advent - Take some time out from the pressures of getting ready for Christmas to pray and meditate on the true meaning of Advent.

Morning Prayer of the Church will be prayed in the Cathedral each morning at 7.45am, Monday to Friday.

On the Way Home - In preparation for Christmas, there will be an opportunity for Confession and Adoration each Monday during Advent (16th & 23rd) from 5.00pm to 7.00pm

Eucharistic Adoration: every Sunday from 3.00pm to 6.00pm and every Tuesday from 10.30am until 7.20pm

St Eugene's Cathedral Carol Service will take place in the Cathedral at 4.00pm on Sunday 22nd December. St Eugene's Cathedral Choir will lead the carols. We invite children to bring presents of new unwrapped toys and adults to donate sweets, biscuits, vouchers or cash. St Vincent de Paul Society will distribute the gifts.

The St Dymphna Mass with Anointing of the Sick will be celebrated here at St Eugene's Cathedral on Tuesday 17th December at 7.30pm. This Mass is to give thanks to God for positive mental health and to pray for those who are struggling with mental health issues and those who care for them.

Sympathy

We offer our sympathy to the family and friends of:

Martin O'Connell

Ann Breslin

Kitty Doherty

Kay Hamill

May they rest in peace

Anniversaries

Please pray for the repose of the souls of:

Olive & Johnny McFadden

Mary Leman

William Monaghan

Peggy Caldwell

Nora Mullan

Mary Given

Nellie & Davy Barr

Manus Carlin

May they rest in peace

Baptisms

We welcome as members of God's family:

Anna Maria McCourt

Roma Niamh Archbold

To book a Baptism contact the Parish Office 02871 262894

Readers 21st /22nd December

06.15 pm Mary Morrison

07.30 pm Amuyla George

09.30 am Kate Doherty

11.00 am Piaras O Meallain

12.30 pm Claire O'Kane

07.00 pm Anna Begley

Collection

Last week's collection: £4,816

Parish Development: £948

Thank you

Fr Farren acknowledges with thanks the following donations for:

SVdP: £20, £300, £100, £100, £60

Cathedral Funds: £200

Trócaire: £200

Mary's Meals: £50, £10

Sight Savers: £25

Smile Train: £25, £20, £10

Ukraine: £20

Save the Children: £20, £10

Sick Visitation

Fr Paul Farren will attend the sick and housebound in his care during the coming week:

Tuesday: Lisfannon Park, Glenfada Park, William Street, Creggan Street, Fahan Street, Chamberlain Street, Cable Street, Lower Road, Abbey House

Wednesday: Mulvey Park, Elmwood Terrace, Gartan Square, Clarendon Manor, Grangemore, Northland Road

Sick Visitation

Fr Shaun Doherty will attend the sick and housebound in his care during the coming week:

Tuesday: Academy Terrace, Tutor Close, Northland Parade, Northland Crescent, Edenmore Street, Glenbank Road, Glenbank Gardens, Glenside Gardens, Marlborough Road, Marlborough Avenue, Marlborough Street, Creggan Road, Helen Street, Oakfield Crescent

Friday: Glenowen Park, Cashelmore Park, Hatmore Park, Turasmore Park, Ardglen, Nassau Crescent, Rosemount Gardens, Baldrick Crescent, Osborne Street, Lawrence Hill, Joseph Place, Beechwood Avenue

St Vincent de Paul (St Eugene's Conference) acknowledge with gratitude receipt of donation of £1000.00

Invitation to 33 Days of Family Prayer: Bishop McKeown will lead the diocese in 33 days of Family Prayer towards Consecration to Jesus Christ through Mary, as part of a diocesan programme for the Jubilee Year of 2025, *Pilgrims of Hope*. It will be delivered online on the Diocese of Derry Facebook, each evening at 7.00pm, starting on Thursday 9 January 2025 and concluding on the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, Tuesday 11 February 2025. Bishop McKeown explains, *"It is a journey I set out to make to entrust myself and my priesthood to Christ through the Mother of God. I extend an invitation to you and your families from the parishes of the diocese to join me"*. Details and times of the prayer programme with a video message from Bishop McKeown can be viewed at derrydiocese.org/consecration.

Derry Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes 2025 led by Bishop Donal McKeown, from Monday 30th June to Friday 4th July, leaving from City of Derry Airport. Price £849 plus insurance and single supplement if required. Enquiries can be made by email to derrypilgrim@outlook.com

The annual Derry City GOAL Mile Walk will take place on Thursday 26th December leaving from Sainsbury's car park at 12 noon. The GOAL Mile is an opportunity for local people to walk in solidarity and show support for those struggling to survive in countries ravaged by war, famine, disease and the effects of climate change. There are no administrative costs associated with the GOAL Mile so every penny raised will go directly to supporting the charity's work with the poorest of the poor. Irish humanitarian charity GOAL is currently working in Gaza, Lebanon, Ukraine, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, Zimbabwe, Niger, Uganda, Sudan, Colombia, Haiti and Honduras.

Mary's Meals – Double The Love. All donations made to Mary's Meals are being doubled by a group of generous supporters, up to £900,000 Find out more at marysmeals.org.uk

Accord Derry - Marriage Preparation Workshops 2025. The following dates available: January 24th/25th February 21st/22nd March 28th/29th April 11th/12th May 30th/31st and June 20th/21st. All courses are now online for booking at www.accordni.com. Please note that all these courses are in person and not virtual.

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.watchmcnmedia 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 regarding the Safeguarding of children or adults in need of protection within the Church please contact Marie Gormley, the Diocesan Designated Liaison Person (DLP) at 07596500793 or at mariegormley@derrydiocese.org or contact the Safeguarding Office, Diocesan Pastoral Centre, 164 Bishop Street, Derry, BT48 6UJ or PSNI (Police Service of Northern) 101 or Social Services: Gateway Services, Western HSC Trust, 71314090 and ask for the Duty Social Worker.

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Third Sunday
of Advent
15th December 2024*

Priests: Fr Paul Farren, Fr Shaun Doherty