



THE MESSENGER

The weekly review of the Parish of

St Michael and All Angels

Watford

BAPTISM OF CHRIST
10 January 2021

WORSHIPPING DURING LOCKDOWN

Our 9.30am service today is accessible on our YouTube channel “St Michaels Church Watford” but the Church building is not open for public worship until further notice.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Vicar if you need any kind of help or reassurance, or just want to talk to another human being.

Our Thursday morning 10.00am Eucharist is also available as a livestream or recording on the channel as above.

Please remember that we meet every Saturday morning for online conversation on Zoom (link available on request).

There is a Homily from Fr Geoff on the back page.

For your prayers this week:

The Church: The Parish of Campton in our Diocese.
The Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand, and Polynesia.
The Church in India fighting inequalities among the poorest.

The World: The progress of the COVID-19 vaccination programme.
All those in hospital with Coronavirus.
All those whose livelihoods are at risk.

The Community and Parish: Watford General Hospital and its staff.
Staff in our local doctors’ surgeries.
All those waiting for vaccination.

The Ill and the Housebound: Especially Christopher Bilson, Janet Chandler, Audrey Dixon, Cynthia Dixon, Claire Dunning, Fr Robert Featherstone, Jemima Hill, Blossom Hutchinson, Mary Kearns, Keith Levinson, Craig McKay, Lisa Mills, Sylvia Obeng, Dorcas Ochola, Brian Rees, Christina Simon, Catherine Stone, Adelaide Tonkin, Peter White; and all who care for them.

The Departed:

BAPTISM OF CHRIST

Collect

Eternal Father, who at the baptism of Jesus revealed him to be your Son, anointing him with the Holy Spirit:
grant to us, who are born again by water and the Spirit, that we may be faithful to our calling as your adopted children;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

FIRST READING Genesis 1.1–5

A reading from the book of Genesis.

- ¹ In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth,
- ² the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters.
- ³ Then God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light.
- ⁴ And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness.
- ⁵ God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

SECOND READING Acts 19.1–7

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

- ¹ While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul passed through the inland regions and came to Ephesus, where he found some disciples.
- ² He said to them, ‘Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?’ They replied, ‘No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.’
- ³ Then he said, ‘Into what then were you baptized?’ They answered, ‘Into John’s baptism.’
- ⁴ Paul said, ‘John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus.’
- ⁵ On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

6 When Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon
them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied –
7 altogether there were about twelve of them.

GOSPEL Mark 1.4–11

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.

4 John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism
of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.
5 And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of
Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the
6 river Jordan, confessing their sins.
Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around
his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.
7 He proclaimed, 'The one who is more powerful than I is coming after
me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his
sandals.
8 I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy
Spirit.'
9 In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized
by John in the Jordan.
10 And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens
torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him.
11 And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with
you I am well pleased.'

HOMILY

This is a difficult time for all of us. So many of the things which seemed solid and reliable in our lives suddenly seem to have wavered and become indistinct. Perhaps also, though, some of the things which we used to use to distract ourselves from the task of being authentic human beings have fallen away. Nowadays, if we want people to know we love them, we don't have all the plethora of subtleties we used to use – we might actually have to tell them! Equally, we have to work harder at telling God about our love for him and our fellow human beings. The subtleties we used to have available are often not now accessible. We may even have to tell people we care!

Love and prayers

Fr Geoff

St Michael's Church is now open for private prayer on Wednesdays, 10.00am – 12.00 noon, and Sundays 10.45am – 12 noon. Hygiene and social distancing procedures are in operation for your protection. All very welcome.

If you would like to donate to St Michael's during the pandemic, there is also a JustGiving page at:

<https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/stmichaelandallangels>