

Weekly Message from Fr William for the Baptism of the Lord

Dear People of St Mary's, the final week of Christmas included our parish celebration of the Epiphany on Thursday, and on Friday our annual Christmas school Mass, dedicated this year to Dee Oultram in thanksgiving for her life and for her many years of service to the school and to the parish. Her funeral will be 17th January at 12 noon.

This Sunday is the celebration of the Baptism of the Lord, the end of the Christmas Season, and the first week of Ordinary Time, as we leave Christmas behind and set out to follow Jesus as he emerges from the years of his 'hidden life', and embarks on his public ministry of teaching, miracles, and the proclamation of the Kingdom of God.

Here's giving you a heads up for later this month, our annual elections to the Parish Pastoral Council ... which were not so annual last year. The plan this year is to give the vote not to everybody in church on a particular Sunday, as I've done in previous years, but to everybody on the parish database. A (GDPR compliant) mechanism for this is under development. This is a good opportunity to get yourself on the database if you're not already. How do you know if you're on the parish database? Answer: If you received an email from me on 22nd December 2021 titled 'Christmas Masses' then you're on! If not, you're probably not. Contact me, eg by email, if you'd like me to get you onto the parish database in time for the PPC elections on Sunday 30th January.

I had a positive lateral flow test result on Thursday, so all three masses this Sunday will be livestream only. Church closed till further notice, hopefully only seven days.

When we first installed our AV system (projectors etc) some five or six years ago we saved money by using a redundant computer that was to hand. It was already old, and in recent times has become unreliable, often needing restarting, and slow to restart. Two weeks ago we bought a new one and things are working more smoothly. However, the remote control that I sometimes use is not compatible. It will only advance through the schedule items. It won't scroll through item verses (of hymns, of Gloria, of Creed). So this Sunday, on my own in church, don't be surprised if I have to disappear to go to the keyboard to scroll through hymn verses etc. Gloria and Creed I might just entrust to our collective memories.

Eucharistic ministers were introduced earlier in the pandemic to ministering Holy Communion to you outside in case I should ever need to isolate. This Sunday it will be brought out to you by a Eucharistic Minister straight from the ciborium in the tabernacle, following all the sanitisation procedures. I've been nowhere near it since mass on Friday morning.

I'm okay thanks, symptoms very mild, thanks to AstraZeneca and Moderna.



Baptism of the Lord Sunday 9th January 2022