

Readings omitted for "pastoral reasons"

THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST MARIE
with the Churches of Holy Family
and Our Lady Queen of Heaven & St Oswald

Cathedral House, Norfolk Street, Sheffield, S1 2JB

Office Hours: Monday–Friday, 9.30am–12.30pm, 1.30–4.30pm

Tel: 0114 272 2522 E-mail: office@stmariecathedral.org Website: www.stmariecathedral.org



Parish Priest: Rev Fr Christopher Posluszny
Assistant Priests: Rev Fr Henry Woodhouse, Rev Fr Christian Nwakamma

THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD (C) 12th to 19th January 2025

Readings: **Isa 40:1-5, 9-11** Ps 104(103):1b-2, 3-4, 24-25, 27-28, 29-30. R¹ 1 **Tit 2:11-14; 3:1-7** G **Lk 3:15-16, 21-22**

Next Sunday: **1** Isa 62:1-5 Ps 96(95):1-2a, 2b-3, 7-8a, 9-10ac. R² 3 **1** Cor 12:4-11 G Jn 2:1-11

Readings can also be found at <http://universalis.com/Europe.England.Hallam/mass.htm> or on the Universalis app

Cathedral

Sunday 12: THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD (C)

8.00am People of the Parishes
10.30am Hugh & Maureen Finnigan (intentions)
12.30pm For the Parish Groups
6.30pm Emrys Watkins (anniversary)

Next Weekend – Cathedral

Sunday 19: 2nd Sunday *per annum* (C)

8.00am Pope Benedict XVI (R.I.P.)
10.30am Prince James (intentions)
12.30pm Martin & Ann McDermott
6.30pm Ina & family (intentions)

Isa 40: 1-5, 9-11

- 1 Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.
- 2 Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.
- 3 A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
- 4 Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.
- 5 And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

6 A voice says, "Cry!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" **All flesh is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field.**

7 The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people is grass.

8 The grass withers, the flower fades; but **the word of our God will stand for ever.**

9 Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!"

10 Behold, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.

11 He will feed his flock like a shepherd, he will gather the lambs in his arms, he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.

Tit 2: 11-14; 3:1-7

- 11 For the grace of God has appeared for the salvation of all men,
- 12 training us to renounce irreligion and worldly passions, and to live sober, upright, and godly lives in this world,
- 13 awaiting our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,
- 14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all iniquity and to purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

15 **Declare these things; exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you.**

- 1 Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for any honest work,
- 2 to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all men.
- 3 For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by men and hating one another;
- 4 but when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared,
- 5 he saved us, not because of deeds done by us in righteousness, but in virtue of his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit,
- 6 which he poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,
- 7 so that we might be justified by his grace and become heirs in hope of eternal life.

Lk 3:15-16, 21-22

- 15 As the people were in expectation, and all men questioned in their hearts concerning John, whether perhaps he were the Christ,
- 16 John answered them all, "I baptize you with water; but he who is mightier than I is coming, the thong of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie; he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

17 **His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor, and to gather the wheat into his granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."**

18 **So, with many other exhortations, he preached good news to the people.**

19 **But Herod the tetrarch, who had been reproved by him for Herodias, his brother's wife, and for all the evil things that Herod had done,**

20 **added this to them all, that he shut up John in prison.**

21 **Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form, as a dove, and a voice came from heaven, "Thou art my beloved Son; with thee I am well pleased."**

Lectionary General Introduction paragraphs 76 and 77 say:

Difficult texts

76. In readings for Sundays and solemnities, **texts that present real difficulties are avoided for pastoral reasons**. The *difficulties* may be objective, in that the texts themselves raise complex literary, critical, or exegetical problems; or, at least to a certain extent, the *difficulties* may lie in the faithful's ability to understand the texts. But there could be no justification for depriving the faithful of the spiritual riches of certain texts on the grounds of *difficulty* if its source is the inadequacy either of the religious education that every Christian should have or of the biblical formation that every pastor should have. Often a *difficult* reading is clarified by its correlation with another in the same Mass.

Omission of texts

77. The omission of verses in readings from Scripture has at times been the practice in many liturgical traditions, including the Roman. Admittedly such omissions may not be made lightly, for fear of distorting the meaning of the text or the intent and style of Scripture. Yet on pastoral grounds it was decided to continue the tradition in the present Order of Readings, but at the same time to ensure that the essential meaning of the text remained intact. One reason for the decision is that otherwise some texts would have been unduly long. It would also have been **necessary to omit** completely certain readings of high spiritual value for the faithful **because those readings include some verse that is unsuitable pastorally or that involves truly difficult problems**.

* * *

The Word of God says:

Our God is a God of mercy and compassion, yes, but he is also a fair judge who will one day judge every one of us according to his actions. This is why, out of care for our eternal salvation our Lord preached: "Unless you **repent** you will all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3), this is why he said to the adulteress woman: "Go, and **do not sin** again" (John 8:11), and why he exhorted tirelessly: "**Repent!** For the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand" (Matthew 3:2).

Shall we be more compassionate and "*pastoral*" than our Lord? That would be a Satanic lie! Why then do we "shy" from the Gospel? Who are we trying to please? God? Or men?

"Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God." (Romans 12:2)

"Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God." (James 4:4)

"Am I now seeking the favour of men, or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ." (Galatians 1:10)

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel" (Romans 1:16)