

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Cf. Mt 3:16-17

After the Lord was baptized, the heavens were opened, and the Spirit descended upon him like a dove, and the voice of the Father thundered: This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.

THE COLLECT

Almighty ever-living God, who, when Christ had been baptized in the River Jordan and as the Holy Spirit descended upon him, solemnly declared him your beloved Son, grant that your children by adoption, reborn of water and the Holy Spirit, may also be well pleasing to you. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

FIRST READING

A reading from the prophet Isaiah 40:1-5. 9-11

'Console my people, console them' says your God. 'Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and call to her that her time of service is ended, that her sin is atoned for, that she has received from the hand of the Lord double punishment for all her crimes.'

A voice cries, 'Prepare in the wilderness a way for the Lord. Make a straight highway for our God across the desert. Let every valley be filled in, every mountain and hill be laid low, let every cliff become a plain, and the ridges a valley; and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all mankind shall see it; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.'

Go up on a high mountain, joyful messenger to Zion. Shout with a loud voice, joyful messenger to Jerusalem. Shout without fear, say to the towns of Judah, 'Here is your God.'

Here is the Lord coming with power, his arm subduing all things to him. The prize of his victory is with him, his trophies all go before him. He is like a shepherd feeding his flock, gathering lambs in his arms, holding them against his breast and leading to their rest the mother ewes.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Ps. 103:1-2,3-4,24-25,27-30.R.v1

**R) Bless the Lord, my soul!
Lord God, how great you are.**

Lord God, how great you are, clothed in majesty and glory, wrapped in light as in a robe! You stretch out the heavens like a tent. (R) Above the rains you build your dwelling. You make the clouds your chariot, you walk on the wings of the wind, you make the winds your messengers and flashing fire your servants. (R)

How many are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you have made them all. The earth is full of your riches. There is the sea, vast and wide, with its moving swarms past counting, living things great and small. (R)

All of these look to you to give them their food in due season. You give it, they gather it up: you open your hand, they have their fill. (R) You take back your spirit, they die, returning to the dust from which they came. You send forth your spirit, they are created; and you renew the face of the earth. (R)

SECOND READING

A reading from the letter of St Paul to Titus 2:11-14. 3:4-7

God's grace has been revealed, and it has made salvation possible for the whole human race and taught us that what we have to do is to give up everything that does not lead to God, and all our worldly ambitions; we must be self-restrained and live good and religious lives here in this present world, while we are waiting in hope for the blessing which will come with the Appearing of the glory of our great God and saviour Christ Jesus. He sacrificed himself for us in order to set us free from all wickedness and to purify a people so that it could be his very own and would have no ambition except to do good.

When the kindness and love of God our saviour for mankind were revealed, it was not because he was concerned with any righteous actions we might have done ourselves; it was for no reason except his own compassion that he saved us, by means of the cleansing water of rebirth and by renewing us with the Holy Spirit which he has so generously poured over us through Jesus Christ our saviour. He did this so that we should be justified by his grace, to become heirs looking forward to inheriting eternal life.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia! Cf. Lk 3:13
Someone is coming, said John, someone greater than I. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Luke 3:15-16. 21-22

The Lord be with you.
And with your spirit.
A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.
Glory to you, O Lord.

A feeling of expectancy had grown among the people, who were beginning to think that John might be the Christ, so John declared before them all, 'I baptise you with water, but someone is coming, someone who is more powerful than I am and I am not fit to undo the strap of his sandals; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire.'

Now when all the people had been baptised and while Jesus after his own baptism was at prayer, heaven opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily shape, like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on you'.
The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Accept, O Lord, the offerings we have brought to honour the revealing of your beloved Son, so that the oblation of your faithful may be transformed into the sacrifice of him who willed in his compassion to wash away the sins of the world. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Jn 1:32,34

Behold the One of whom John said: I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Nourished with these sacred gifts, we humbly entreat your mercy, O Lord, that, faithfully listening to your Only Begotten Son, we may be your children in name and in truth. Through Christ our Lord.

Our Faith on Sunday

GOSPEL REFLECTION



On one occasion, during their journey from Egypt into the desert, God called Moses and the leaders of the people to the Tent of Meeting: "When the Spirit came on them they prophesied – but only once."

Two men did not attend the meeting, but even on them the Spirit came down and they prophesied. Joshua, hearing of this, called on Moses to stop them: they had not attended the meeting. Moses, however, exclaimed, "If only all Yaweh's people were prophets and Yaweh had given them his Spirit!" That prayer, that desire of Moses, is more than fulfilled in Jesus. John the Baptist cried out about Jesus, "He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire!" and at baptism, as we know, every Christian receives

through Jesus, the Holy Spirit; not temporarily like the elders of old, but permanently. If Christians are faithful to the Divine life they have been given, they become people of the Spirit. The Spirit is Love, represented by "fire". He is guide and friend and sanctifier. The saints and martyrs give us a glimpse of the power of Jesus' Gift.



EVANGELII GAUDIUM (JOY OF THE GOSPEL)



A STRANGER ON THE ROAD

59. In earlier Jewish traditions, the imperative to love and care for others appears to have been limited to relationships between members of the same nation. The ancient commandment to "love your neighbour as yourself" (Lev 19:18) was usually understood as referring to one's fellow citizens, yet the boundaries gradually expanded, especially in the Judaism that developed outside of the land of Israel. We encounter the command not to do to others what you would not want them to do to you (cf. Tob 4:15). In the first century before Christ, Rabbi Hillel stated: "This is the entire Torah. Everything else is commentary."⁵⁵ The desire to imitate God's own way of acting gradually replaced the tendency to think only of those nearest us: "The compassion of man is for his neighbour, but the compassion of the Lord is for all living beings" (Sir 18:13).

55. Talmud Bavli (Babylonian Talmud), Shabbat, 31a.

How to acquire perfect love

In a truly loving mind, there is always a song of glory and an inner flame of love. It springs from a clear conscience and real spiritual joy. It delights in Jesus day and night. The world, the flesh and the devil have no power when the mind and heart are turned wholly to Christ. Doing great things is not what counts. What counts is love – loving and being loved by Christ. I ask you, Lord Jesus, to develop your love in me. Give me an immeasurable urge towards you, an unbounded affection, an unrestrained longing, a fervour that throws discretion to the winds. The more we love you, the more pressing love becomes. Reason cannot hold this kind of love in check. Fear does not make it tremble; wise judgement does not temper it. While doing good things to excess can turn to evil, this does not happen when we love God, because God cannot be loved too much. If we love, we long to have the one we love near us; as Scripture says: 'Tell my beloved that I languish for love' (Song 5: 8). When we begin to turn to Christ, we are first moved with a real sorrow for sin. This makes us give up all that leads to self-glorification. Everything else is forgotten in order to gain Christ and have him set as a seal upon our heart (cf Song 8: 6).



PARISH COMMUNITIES OF

ST GEORGE

Eastbourne Road
Polegate



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ST WILFRID

South Road
Hailsham



The Arundel & Brighton Diocesan Trust is a Registered Charity No. 252878

WEEKLY SERVICES

Sat	8th		St Wilfrid's	Wladiswava Zylewicz RIP
			The Baptism of the Lord	
			(Collection for Pax Christi next Sunday)	
Sun	9th	9.00am	St George's -	Marylou Cockshoot Intention
		10.30am	St Wilfrid's -	Bridie Cleary 1st Anniversary RIP
Mon	10th	2.30pm	St George's -	Rosary Group
Tue	11th	10.00am	St George's -	Angela Hosang Intention
Wed	12th	10.00am	St Wilfrid's -	Philip Edmends RIP
Thurs	13th	10.00am	St George's -	Edna Andrews RIP
Fri	14th	10.00am	St Wilfrid's -	Special Intention
Sat	15th		St Wilfrid's -	
			Second Sunday in Ordinary Time	
			(Collection for Pax Christi Today)	
Sun	16th	9.00am	St George's -	Parish Communities' Intention
		10.30am	St Wilfrid's -	Bill O'Rourke RIP

Confessions on request at anytime or before and after Masses at St Wilfrid's and St George's Church

IMPORTANT: Going into hospital? Would like a visit from the Catholic Chaplaincy? Ring 417400, ext. 4145 and leave a message for the Catholic Chaplain. Please also let Fr Rory know.

St Thomas a Becket Nursery School: Tel 01323 725977 **St Thomas a Becket Primary School:** Tel 01323 737221
St Richard's Catholic College, Bexhill: Tel 01424 731070

New to the Parish or would like to get back in touch but not sure how? Please complete the welcome form available in the porch and/or make yourself known to Fr. Rory. *It would be great to get to know you and offer any help.*

USEFUL PARISH INFORMATION

St Wilfrid's Planned Giving Contact (01323) 832577
St George's Planned Giving Contact (01323) 487212
St George's & St Wilfrid's Finance Committee Treasurers Charles Piegrome & Monika Beaver
Chairperson of the Finance Committee Gerry Palmer
ALL CORRESPONDENCE FOR THE ABOVE VIA THE PRIEST'S HOUSE PLEASE
Polegate Hall Hire.....Tel: (01323) 504753
Hailsham Hall Hire Tel: (01323) 841504 - Mon, Wed, Fri Morning or email at above address
Prayer LineJean Barham-Wyatt Tel: (01323) 842824

CROSSLINK CHURCHES TOGETHER, HAILSHAM

POLEGATE CHURCHES TOGETHER

Contact: Anne Bowe Tel: 07808 175455
Contact Care: 07900 823138

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS those who are unwell: Lily May, Edna Andrews, Julliette Lusted, Jennifer Piskac, Joshua Hardy, Peter & Teresa Zurenkas, Anne Holt, Margaret, Rosie Tuson, Dee Challis, Lilian Summers, Tom Woodrow-Spencer, Colleen, Chris Neyenhuizen, Letty Booth, Dulcina Noya, Michael Copper, Peter Standen and Richard Stimpson.

PLEASE ALSO REMEMBER THOSE NAMED IN THE BOOKS IN OUR CHURCHES

Newsletter items: Please send to Jackie at ssgeorge.wilfrid@btinternet.com, tel.841504 or by hand marked NEWSLETTER, to Fr. Rory's House by **9am Wednesday.**
Office Hours Monday 9am-1pm, Wednesday 9am-1pm & Friday 9am-12.30pm

Fr Rory Writes:

"The Lord is our Rock and our Salvation". A good place to begin a new year.

Better still, Renaldo, our very helpful resident has come into the office and he adds his bit.

"He is always present at our side. He may not be visible but He is to be experienced in others. In Gaelic "tús maith is ea leath na hoibre". A good start is half the work.

So please God, for the coming year. Reality is that the virus continues to play a big part in our lives at the present. At the beginning of last Advent as we lit the first candle I was in a bad place, but the light of "Hope" became very important to me. Now that we have celebrated to the best of our ability the light of Christ coming into our world, it is a time to refocus, to trust where Christ finds us at this time which is a real test; and to start reaching out with a sense of great hope as we begin our journey into the New Year.

For me the best point of reference is the synod that Pope Francis highlights and has his confidence and trust. Having begun my journey with great confidence in the 2nd Vatican Council, and during my years in the Seminary, was a great challenge and real hope. I have some great events to recall from this time, in fact my first mass and celebrating my brother John and his wife Helen's Wedding, was part of a great occasion. Early experiences left a sense of adventure. More and more I came to realize the forces that are against it, that's life.

Leading and organising remains one of my many weaknesses. Conviction that a body made up of many parts working together has always been a strength. The new church is an expression of this, but the church as a community of the faithful has always been my great hope. Leaven Groups promised to play a great part in this. So it is time to begin again and to heed the promptings of our very helpful resident, Renaldo.

The diocese has provided us with material to facilitate this (For a Synodal Church - Communion, Participation, Mission), this can be downloaded at <https://www.abdiocese.org.uk/synod>. As stated earlier there are two additional items that are crucial. A) Why do we need it? and B) like our new church - what would be the best outcome?

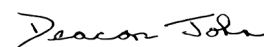
**Deacon John Writes:**

Happy New Year with many blessings to you all. This prayer is from the Redemptorists and I thought it would be good to share it with you: A New Year Prayer:

Lord, You make all things new and bring hope alive in our hearts and cause our Spirits to be born again.

Thank you for this new year for all the potential it holds. Come and kindle in us a mighty flame so that in our time, many will see the wonders of God and live forever to praise Your glorious name.

Amen.



St George's Church: During the Christmas period, Ros Burke, a parishioner at St George's, and her lovely neighbours, constructed a life size nativity scene on the tiny roundabout at the end of her road set in a cul-de-sac in Willingdon. They lit up the tree and it was truly stunning. The purpose was to raise money for local charity, Children With Cancer. They organised a small Christmas fair in their road and the local brass band played carols on Christmas Eve. Over £760 was collected. Well done Ros.

St George's Church: Tea and coffee is now being served in our hall at St George's after Sunday Mass. Covid rules are being fully observed but it is wonderful to have a chance to meet again socially. Thank you to those serving and preparing the teas for us. Very much appreciated.

Masses: The Diocese has asked us to continue to sign in when we attend Mass and other events. Please use the NHS App and our QR code, the pre-booking system on the church website, or fully complete the form at the church entrance. Please give a contact phone number and ensure that your name is legible. You should continue to use the hand sanitiser and wear a face covering. The Parish will continue to open all doors and windows to ensure good ventilation, so do wear warm clothes especially in the coming cold weather.

A message from Ann Fielder, to all my friends at St Wilfrid's. Thank you all for the Christmas cards and best wishes from all at St Wilfrid's. I wish every one of you a Happy New Year and I will remember you all in my prayers. With love to you all. Ann

John Winter: It is with deep sadness that we learnt of the death of John Winter in December. John was primarily the organist for St George's but had played also at St Wilfrid's. John's funeral will take place on 25th January at 12 noon in Tunbridge. The family have left an open invitation to join them at the Mass and afterwards at the wake. Please contact Tim Winter on 07547 948067 if you are planning to attend. May he rest in peace.

Thank You: for all my cards and gifts, they are very much appreciated. Wishing everyone a Happy New Year, Jackie.

Hello, my name is Kelly Richards, and I am the Safeguarding Rep for St George's

Christmas is fast approaching and it is a joyful time, but can also be a lonely time for those that may not have family or friends that they can spend this Holy time with. Safeguarding is not only there to help and support families, or children that may be of concern regarding any issues, but also for older people in our community in need of help. If you feel that anyone is in a situation of concern please do contact me Merry Christmas Kelly (07967562110).

The Parishioners at St Wilfrid's would like to express sincere THANKS to everyone who helped in any way towards our beautiful Christmas Services. Under strict COVID rules, we enjoyed the Penitential Services with Fr Kieran helping Fr Rory. It was very much in the modern idiom, so we could all connect old and young, especially the 1st Communion children. We have to move with the times, but in our own simple way!

Without the help of; Altar Servers and David Hoad training them, Jean our Flower Arranger, Bob Waters our Health & Safety Officer, Gary arranging the Streaming of Masses, so we can see them on line. Our Readers, especially the Young Ones, the Welcomers and Alan for their input, the team of tea/coffee makers after Masses on Sundays and Wednesdays. The wonderful people who without fuss, just get on with the job of cleaning before and after Mass in accordance with Covid Rules, in order that we can attend Mass in a safe environment. Annette & Sophie training our children for the liturgy etc. They are the Future Members of Our Church and without them there will not be a Catholic Community. When we are called to our Higher Place they, please God, will step up and take our places. What a brilliant contribution they made to our Christmas Services under the guidance of Annette, Sophie, Angela and Teresa, who is now undergoing treatment after her operation. We all wish her well and with God's help she will regain her health and strength. She made a difference and special input with our children and we miss her. Sophie is working and living in London now, so it just leaves Annette who is a full time Night Sister in Hastings among many other duties. Please God, Teresa will be up and running again and Angela will also be available. Help is very much appreciated. Do you feel you could help her? Training will be given of course and much help all the way. A very rewarding job indeed and very worthwhile for our return to church.

Jackie our secretary and general help and guidance on all sorts of problems. She is a gem because she is so sincere and helpful with anything that crops up, always has a smile and cheery nature to put us at our eases. A very big 'Thank You' Jackie from all of us, please continue to help and guide us throughout 2022, Fr Rory would be lost without you. The diary and telephone etc. are all kept up-to-date by you. We do appreciate you.

Then we come to our lovely Ordained Priest, Fr Rory. Who does the job he was ordained to do and more. He is such a humble, yet sincere man. We all know your faults and lack of practical skills, but they fade into insignificance when carrying out your duties for us. Many of us have come to you for help and religious guidance, especially our sick and suffering parishioners. You have been given a wonderful gift Father, don't put yourself down, we all love you and appreciate you. When saying Mass you have the ability to say it as if it was for each one of us individually, we are completely immersed and it's a wonderful experience. Please don't ever change, God has given you to us and we thank you for it. We are truly sorry if anyone who has helped us through this most difficult time or contributed to our lovely Christmas Services, have been left out, you know who you are and we do appreciate you.

Over 50's Activities:

This is a very difficult time for us oldies. Many of us have 'Good Reason' to be anxious and worried. We do not attend Mass, but thanks to Gary we can view it online. We had to cancel our 'Christmas Party' but please God, we will be able to celebrate on Thursday 27th January at 2pm in our hall, £5 per person. Please pass the information on to our friends, all are welcome, especially our friends from St George's and our Non-Catholic friends. To make it a great success, I need numbers for catering etc. Please ring me on 07873390944. Thank you, Joan.

Unfortunately we have had to cancel our monthly lunch at the Kings Head on Thursday 13th January. Although they carry out the necessary Covid Rules, not many of us are prepared to risk dining out just yet. So we have decided to try for Thursday 10th February, 12noon. Details nearer the time. Please inform anyone who normally joins us, but does not receive our newsletter. Thank you. On a lighter note our Christmas Lunch went ahead very successfully, 25 of us sat at three large round tables in the function room. The food, service and atmosphere were great. Fr Kieran and Fr Rory joined us with several of our friends from St George's, what fun and laughter we had. We really want to keep up this happy meal out once a month. If you would like to join us or have a friend to come with us, you only have to be over 50 and enjoy good food and company and a good laugh. Transport is not a problem, just let me know on 07873390944. I do hope we can start going out for a meal again. If you pray hard enough, I am sure the 'Good Lord' will help us. Thank you, Joan.

Christmas Day/Boxing Day	St George's Attendances: 100	St Wilfrid's Attendances: Christmas Eve 97, Boxing Day 55
Sunday 2nd January 2022	St George's Attendances: 33	St Wilfrid's Attendances: 72