

## 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

42:1-4. 6-7

Thus says the Lord:

Here is my servant whom I uphold,  
my chosen one in whom my soul delights.  
I have endowed him with my spirit  
that he may bring true justice to the nations.

He does not cry out or shout aloud,  
or make his voice heard in the streets.  
He does not break the crushed reed,  
nor quench the wavering flame.

Faithfully he brings true justice;  
he will neither waver, nor be crushed  
until true justice is established on earth,  
for the islands are awaiting his law.

I, the Lord, have called you to serve the cause of right;  
I have taken you by the hand and formed you;  
I have appointed you as covenant of the people and light of  
the nations,

to open the eyes of the blind,  
to free captives from prison,  
and those who live in darkness from the dungeon.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM

Ps 28:1-4.9-10. R.v11

**R) The Lord will bless his people with peace.**

O give the Lord you sons of God,  
give the Lord glory and power;  
give the Lord the glory of his name.  
Adore the Lord in his holy court. **(R)**

The Lord's voice resounding on the waters,  
the Lord on the immensity of waters;  
the voice of the Lord, full of power,  
the voice of the Lord, full of splendour. **(R)**

The God of glory thunders.  
In his temple they all cry: 'Glory!'  
The Lord sat enthroned over the flood;  
the Lord sits as king for ever. **(R)**

## SECOND READING

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

10:34-38

Peter addressed Cornelius and his household: 'The truth I have now come to realise' he said 'is that God does not have favourites, but that anybody of any nationality who fears God and does what is right is acceptable to him.

'It is true, God sent his word to the people of Israel, and it was to them that the good news of peace was brought by Jesus Christ – but Jesus Christ is Lord of all men. You must have heard about the recent happenings in Judaea; about Jesus of Nazareth and how he began in Galilee, after John had been preaching baptism. God had anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and because God was with him, Jesus went about doing good and curing all who had fallen into the power of the devil.'

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

Cf. Mk 9:8

**The heavens opened and the Father's voice resounded: 'This is my Son, the Beloved. Listen to him.'**  
**Alleluia!**

## GOSPEL

Matthew 3:13-17

The Lord be with you.

**And with your spirit.**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptised by John. John tried to dissuade him. 'It is I who need baptism from you,' he said 'and yet you come to me!' But Jesus replied, 'Leave it like this for the time being; it is fitting that we should, in this way, do all that righteousness demands.' At this, John gave in to him.

As soon as Jesus was baptised he came up from the water, and suddenly the heavens opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming down on him. And a voice spoke from heaven, 'This is my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on him.'

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.

## GOSPEL REFLECTION



John the Baptist's baptism was not, of course, the baptism we receive. To be baptized by John was to make a symbolic act of

faith: faith in God's mercy over sin. The fact that it was the waters of the Jordan made it an act of faith in and in obedience to, the God who had done such great things for his people, typified by the crossing of the Jordan into the promised land led by Joshua. Now the true Joshua comes and goes down into the waters: not as an act of faith, but of obedience, to bring the fullness of God's mercy and forgiveness of sin, sanctifying the waters for the true Baptism, opening the way to the true Promised Land, Heaven. So John sees "the heavens opened ...and the Spirit of God

descending." For this is the Father's beloved Son, the One on whom the Holy Spirit rests with all his gifts, as Isaiah proclaimed. The Father himself shows him forth to John and through John, to us. It is as the "Holy One", the beloved Son of the Father, that Jesus reconciles the human race to God; that his obedience and sacrifice are pleasing to the Father.



POPE FRANCIS' ENCYCLICAL  
**FRATELLI TUTTI**  
BROTHERS AND SISTERS ALL



## A UNIVERSAL LOVE THAT PROMOTES PERSONS

110. Indeed, "to claim economic freedom while real conditions bar many people from actual access to it, and while possibilities for employment continue to shrink, is to practise doublespeak".<sup>83</sup> Words like freedom, democracy or fraternity prove meaningless, for the fact is that "only when our economic and social system no longer produces even a single victim, a single person cast aside, will we be able to celebrate the feast of universal fraternity".<sup>84</sup> A truly human and fraternal society will be capable of ensuring in an efficient and stable way that each of its members is accompanied at every stage of life. Not only by providing for their basic needs, but by enabling them to give the best of themselves, even though their performance may be less than optimum, their pace slow or their efficiency limited.

<sup>83</sup>. Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'* (24 May 2015), 129; AAS 107 (2015), 899.

<sup>84</sup>. Message for the "Economy of Francesco" Event (1 May 2019): *L'Osservatore Romano*, 12 May 2019, 8.

## Our Father St Benedict\* A BLESSING

And now may God, who sees all things, who is Master of spirits and Lord of all flesh, and who chose the Lord Jesus Christ and us through him to be his very own people, grant to every soul which has received the invocation of his sublime and holy name, the gifts of faith, fear, peace, patient endurance, self-control, purity and moderation. May we thus be pleasing to his name through our high-priest, the champion of our race, Jesus Christ. For it is through this same Christ that all will receive glory and majesty, might and honour, both now and for all ages to come.

*Clement's First Letter to the Corinthians*

\*This set of mini-reflections is taken from *Our Father St Benedict*, published by New City



# PARISH COMMUNITIES OF

## ST GEORGE

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Polegate



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

## ST WILFRID

South Road  
Hailsham



### WEEKLY SERVICES

#### The Baptism of the Lord

Sat	7th	10am	St Wilfrid's—	Church Open for Prayers and Confessions
Sun	8th	9am	St George's —	Parish Communities' Intention
		10.30am	St Wilfrid's —	Ann Fielder's Intention
Mon	9th	2.30pm	St George's —	Rosary Group —All welcome
Tues	10th	10am	St George's—	Encinas Family Intention
Wed	11th	10am	St Wilfrid's —	Rita Harpers Intention
Thur	12th	10am	St George's —	Steel Family Deceased Members
Fri	13th	10am	St Wilfrid's —	Holy Souls' Intention

#### Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sat	14th	10am	St Wilfrid's—	Church Open for Prayers and Confessions
Sun	15th	9am	St George's —	Parish Communities' Intention
		10.30am	St Wilfrid's —	Special Intention

Confession on request before and after Mass or at other times by arrangement with Father Rory.  
Unable to attend mass? The 10.30am St Wilfrid's mass is livestreamed when possible and can be accessed via the Parish Website or via the following: <https://saintsgeorgeandwilfrid.co.uk/online-masses-and-recordings/>  
Facebook: [https://m.facebook.com/gary.westcar#\\_=\\_](https://m.facebook.com/gary.westcar#_=_)

**Newsletter items:** Please send to Jackie at [ssgeorge.wilfrid@btinternet.com](mailto:ssgeorge.wilfrid@btinternet.com), tel.841504  
or by hand marked NEWSLETTER, to Fr. Rory's House by 9am Wednesday.

Local Catholic Education Contacts: 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

### 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 Monika Beaver  
Chairperson of the Finance Committee Gerry Palmer  
**ALL CORRESPONDENCE VIA THE PRIEST'S HOUSE PLEASE**  
Polegate Hall Hire (01323) 504753  
Hailsham Hall Hire: (01323) 841504 or email at above address  
Prayer Line Jean Barham-Wyatt (01323) 842824

#### IMPORTANT GIFT AID:

If any parishioner wishes to join the scheme please contact - Gerry on 01323 832577. By signing up the parish can benefit by claiming back from HMRC a further 25% on all your donations at no additional cost to you.

**CROSSLINK CHURCHES TOGETHER, HAILSHAM:** Volunteer needed contact Father Rory  
**POLEGATE CHURCHES TOGETHER Contact:** Anne Bowe Tel: 07808 175455

#### PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS those who are unwell

Lily May, Juliette Lusted, Jennifer Piskac, Joshua Hardy, Peter & Teresa Zurenkas, Anne Holt, Margaret, Rosie Tuson, Lilian Summers, Tom Woodrow-Spencer, Colleen, Chris Neyenhuizen, Letty Booth, Michael Copper, Laurey & Richard Stimpson, Nicole McCutchan, Jean Barham-Wyatt & Nellie Oakshott.

#### PLEASE ALSO REMEMBER THOSE NAMED IN THE BOOKS IN OUR CHURCHES

**A WARM WELCOME:** to all who join us for Mass, especially to any visitors.

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

While sitting in the church at St George's to say my prayers, I could not help but admire this years Advent and Christmas decorations. They were really great. Sincere thanks to those who work so hard to get this done. This is also so true for St Wilfrid's. Then suddenly the churches are stripped bare; and all their work is gone. As this is a reality in the life of the church, so it is in life. We are always in need of renewal, and be a fresh work in progress.

With the help of God we begin a new year in our life of faith. We join others who continue to develop and grow the work that has begun. This week we have received a very good report from St George's and last week from St Wilfrid's. The work that is done for the children's liturgies, and the work in progress in response to the Synod provide a good framework. As in nature; the seasons of the year, Spring will follow winter, so for us Lent will follow the Christmas season. So please God, we will develop and grow.

For many the institution of the church receives most attention, with the death of Pope Benedict there is a focus upon the politics of power, and who will be the next one to replace Pope Francis. While this is understandable, it is often very far from the life of Christ, and the reality of the cross. The words of Christ to His disciples is to encourage them to take up their cross every day in order to follow him. In following him there are key moments; like on the night he was betrayed, he took bread, blessed and broke it and said, "do this in remembrance of me".



**This week we have many to thank for their time and effort throughout the past year at St George's:** It is the beginning of a new year and we are grateful to those over the past twelve months who have helped our parish grow. Let us pray this parish continues to build on the good work throughout 2023. We say a big 'Thankyou' to our **Altar Server** Alan and welcome our new server, Austin. Our **Sacristans:** Cathy, Angela and Martin. **Eucharistic Ministers,** Kelly, Sandra, Angela, Martin, Marie, Anne and Mary. **Readers:** Anne, Joanne, Liz, Alona, Cathy S, Shirley, Jean, Margaret, Bridie, Kelly, Angela, Gill, Judy and Martin. **Children's Liturgy and Sacramental Preparation:** Sandra, Mary B, Mary, Merce, Cathy, Bernadette, Maria and Anne. **Counters,** Anne and those who assist. **Welcomers:** Philomena, Stella, Lou, Christian, Jane, Phyllis, Sandra, Mary and Anne. **Flowers:** Cathy, Mary B, Mary, Marie and Anne. **Synod Core Group Reps:** Martin, Anne and Sandra. **Bidding Prayers:** Dominic, Kelly, Lesley, Judy, Deacon John, Anne and Martin. **Music during mass and singing:** Shirley, our organists and singers. **Rosary Group:** Frances, Martin, Jean, Margaret, Bett, Mary and Letty. **Fire Wardens:** Shirley and Anne. **Church maintenance:** Shirley, Anne and Kelly. **Cleaners:** Shirley, Kelly, Sandra, Thomas, Mary and Anne. **Tea's and Coffee's:** Sandra, Maria, Jean, Jeannie, Letty, Marie, Mary B and Mary. **Social Events:** Sandra, Shirley, Kelly, Anne, Mary B, Merce and Mary. **Foodbanks:** Mary. **Churches Together:** Anne. **Cards:** Andrea. **CAFOD:** Kelly. **Order of Knights of St Columba:** Gerhard. **Health and Safety:** Dominic. **Safeguarding:** Kelly. **Finance:** Gerhard, Shirley, Kelly, Anne and Dominic. **And of course, Fr Rory and Deacon John.** A Big Thank You to everyone and anyone who has not been included with apologies if this is you.

#### Dates for your Diary:

Sun 8th Jan, 11.30am, Parish Meeting, St W's  
 Sun 8th Jan, 4pm - Confirmation Classes, St G's.  
 Thur 26th Jan, 2-4pm, Parish Over 50's Club, St W's Hall.  
 Fri 27th Jan, 11-12pm, Parish Bereavement Group, St W's Hall.  
 Sun 29th Jan, 10am - Charity Breakfast, St G's Hall.

**Parish Meeting:** at St Wilfrid's, 11.30am on the 8th January.

**Parish Over 50's Club: Next Afternoon Tea is Thurs 26th Jan at 2pm till 4pm.** As "Burns Night" falls on the day before, we are going to make the theme "Scottish", so party time again! This time you may wear anything Tartan if you wish, men don't forget your sporran! Price is £5 each please. All welcome.

**St Wilfrid's Last Sunday in January 29th:** In our hall after Mass we will have 2 tables full of prizes for a raffle, men, women and children are catered for, so do please come along and join in the fun. Also, tea/coffee/biscuits and cakes.

A box is in the church porch for your unwanted gifts etc. please. The money will go towards future activities in our hall which will benefit us all. If you would like to reserve tickets early they are £1 per strip from Joan on 07873390944. Thank you.

**Parish Party - 30th December:** The hall was decorated beautifully, music for all, pass the parcel for grown ups as well as children was hilarious. The buffet was laden with so many goodies, we had enough to have another party after Sunday Mass! A BIG THANK YOU to all who helped in anyway to make this a great parish get-together. We must have one perhaps at Easter with our friends from St Georges who are always welcome.

**St Wilfrid's:** Tea/Coffee mornings after Mass on Sundays and Wednesdays are being well attended. It is now a good place to meet new friends and old ones. There is much conversation and laughter, a "Good Tonic" in these hard times. Please do join us.

#### Sunday 25th Dec - Mass Attendance:

St Wilfrid's 153                      St George's 70

#### Sunday 1st Jan - Mass Attendance:

St Wilfrid's 79                      St George's 46