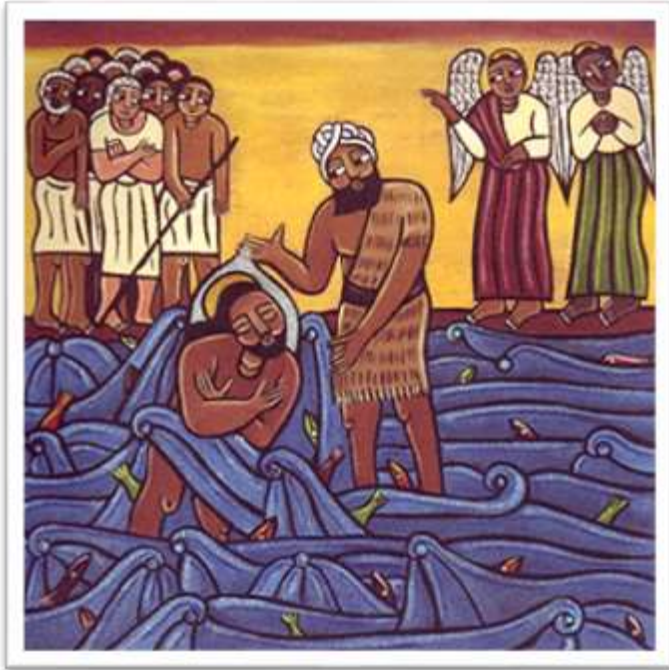




BLESSED SACRAMENT

PARISH NEWS

9 January 2022. The Baptism of the Lord. Year C



While Jesus after his own baptism was at prayer, heaven opened.

It may seem strange, but The Baptism of the Lord is a Christmas Feast.

Not if we think of Christmas only in terms of the Baby in Bethlehem, but if we have followed the ideas of the Feasts of Holy Family and especially Epiphany, and have seen the Season in terms of the growing manifestation or appearing of the Son of God: first to the shepherds and then to the wise men from the East. Now in the River Jordan, Jesus, Son of Mary, is revealed to all as the fullness of all God's promises: 'This is my Son, the Beloved'. On this day we stand before the revelation of God's love for us, such that he would send his only Son into the world.

Christmas without the Baptism of the Lord, and the words that are spoken from heaven, would be incomplete, since it is only in them that we fully see the wonder of what happened in Bethlehem. As we come to the end of Christmas today, and look forward to hearing the Gospels in Ordinary Time, we do so having been shown who it is we listen to: the only Son of God, the Beloved.

Happy New Year

In case you are wondering about the origins of New Year (some people do!), you may like to know: at the time of the earliest Christians, the 1st January was celebrated as New Year's Day across the Roman Empire. After the fall of Rome, depending on location and time, two other dates were widely celebrated in the Christian world as New Year's Day: the 25th March (the Feast of the Annunciation, commemorating the visit of Gabriel to the Virgin Mary) and the 25th December (nine months after the Annunciation: Christmas). But by 1582 it had become apparent that miscalculations concerning leap years over several centuries had led to various events taking place in the wrong seasons, so Pope Gregory XIII introduced a revised calendar, known as the Gregorian calendar, which also restored 1st January as the start of the New Year. So, it spread from then.

CAFOD Afghanistan Crisis Appeal

CAFOD is combining efforts with the DEC to launch the Afghanistan Crisis Appeal. In Afghanistan, 8 million people are on the brink of famine because of drought, collapsing economy, food shortages, conflict, and COVID. CAFOD is supporting sister Caritas agencies to reach communities most in need with food, clean water, and fuel. During Advent, when we open ourselves to the needs of others, let's do all that we can to save lives. You can donate on the CAFOD website: cafod.org.uk/AfghanistanAppeal Please pray for the people of Afghanistan.

Wednesday Word Scripture Reflection

Wednesday word started meeting again on 5 January. We will continue to meet online via zoom from 2.00-3.00pm. If you would like to join us then, please get in touch with Maria: exeter-pastoral-assistant@prcdtr.org.uk. Please note that you do not need to make a weekly commitment and a warm welcome will await you whenever you can come.

St Nick's News

Happy New Year to all parishioners from all at St Nicholas School.

This week we have welcomed our new Executive Head Teacher, Cathy Lowry who has joined the school. We look forward to getting to know her and working with her. We are also delighted to have welcomed a number of new families in many classes throughout the school this week.

Any families wishing to have a tour of the school or to find out more about places from Nursery to Year 6 please contact Mrs Brocksom (abrocksom@stncls.uk).

Youth Events

Happy New Year. Follow the link to find the latest copy of the Youth Events Newsletter: [here](#) You will be excited to see that I am starting to plan the 2023 trip to World Youth Day. Rise Theatre are starting their travels around the diocese. Unfortunately, we had to postpone the event in Weymouth but our next event will be in Plymouth. Anyone from across the diocese may attend any of the Rise Theatre events. The plan is to reach, Newquay in February and Exeter and Torquay in March. Don't forget to encourage any young adults (18+) to join the young adults group. In December the Torquay group met for Christmas dinner. There are online groups encouraging all across the diocese to join in prayer meetings including a weekly rosary group. Youth Events are not only aimed at the young people active in the church, it aims to reach out to those linked to our parish communities. This newsletter will not be sent out to all parishes routinely. If you would like to receive a copy, or know someone in the parish that would appreciate receiving a copy then please email me and I will add you/ them to the mailing list. Lastly, there are still places at the Heatree residential if you know of any young people that would like to sign up. The deadline for the deposit is at the end of this week but I am happy to accept late bookings. Bless Youth Ministry. Saskia

Parent & Toddler Group

The group will be meeting again on Monday 10 January 2022. If you or someone you know is interested in coming along please register using this [link](#). Booking is essential as numbers are limited.

The Night Journey

There are still some copies of the book Night Journey written by Fr Robbie Lowe, a priest of the diocese. It is a beautiful reflection on the Mass which leads us to the manger and the child in the arms of Mary. It is beautifully illustrated by Jan Burrell and begins and ends in the parish church and family home. It would make a great Christmas gift for children, grandchildren or Godchildren, maybe keep it for a present for next year. Books cost £7.50 and are available from the Parish Office.

Pope's January prayer intention

For true human fraternity: We pray for all those suffering from religious discrimination and persecution; may their own rights and dignity be recognized, which originate from being brothers and sisters in the human family.

See also the Popes' video [here](#) The Pope's Christmas message can also be found by following [this link](#)

Caritas Plymouth

A Happy New Year from Caritas Plymouth who have two upcoming online events:

Tuesday 18 January 6.00-7.00pm Homelessness

Caritas Plymouth is running an online event on homelessness the 18 January in partnership with St Petrocs, Cornwall. Everyone is warmly welcome to attend. The event will reflect on homelessness in our Diocese and what practical actions we can take to reach out to those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Please use the following link to register <https://forms.office.com/r/NkUZyhwcKf> or email caritas@prcdtr.org.uk

Tuesday 8 February Refugees and Migrants

On the Feast of St Bakhita, all are invited to join Caritas Plymouth from 5.00 till 6.00pm for an hour of prayer, reflection and discussion on the challenges facing migrants and refugees and the opportunity to take action, including through community sponsorship. This is a free online event. You can register via this link <https://forms.office.com/r/K3uz5LLY2X> or by emailing caritas@prcdtr.org.uk.

To see the January Caritas newsletter click [here](#)

Diocesan Yearbook

Please remember that if you ordered a copy of the diocesan Year Book it is now waiting for you to collect from the Parish Office. We do have a few spare copies so if you didn't order one but would like one you can still get one from the Parish Office. They cost £4.00 each.

Celebrate - Parenting for Faith

Do you want to help the children you love find God in everyday life? Celebrate is running the Parenting for Faith course on Zoom. Whether you are a parent, guardian, grandparent, family member, friend or catechist you can help the young people in your life develop a vibrant and connected relationship with God – whatever their age! Join us on the following dates: 11, 18, 25 January & 1 February 2022. During the sessions there will be opportunity to discuss the content in small groups online. These will be organised in regions so that you can get to know other families in your area. To book your free place on the course register [here](#). We look forward to seeing you all there!

Homelessness Sunday

CTAX annual Homelessness Sunday service, with a chance to meet the new Director of St Petrock's, Peter Stephenson, is being held on Sunday 30 January at 4.00pm at St Petrock's Church

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2022

18 - 25 January. The theme of this year's WPCU is "We Saw His Star in the East". Resources have been prepared by churches in the Middle East and can be found [here](#). From Monday 17 – Sunday 30 January Exeter Prays: Collective city-wide prayer, around the week of prayer for Christian Unity. There will be 14 leaders guiding a daily devotional video prayer being distributed online and through social media, such as Exeter Prays on YouTube and Facebook.

Sunday 23 January Week of Prayer for Christian Unity United Service 7.00pm at Wonford Methodist Church. A prayer evening to mark the global Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Gather with Christians from across the city to pray for the work of the Church in our communities.

20 years of Refugee Support Devon

This is a BBC Radio Devon Special - Welcoming The World - 20 Years Of Refugee Support Devon broadcast on 3 January - BBC Sounds. The story of the support Devon has offered Afghan refugees since 2001. You can listen or download it using the link [Here](#) This is an insight into the work of Catholic Exeter together who as Exeter WAYmakers are a group actively trying to help obtain a house, welcome and resettle a family. If you would like to know more or help us please contact Chris Lee: 07702 435890 or email: cml_lee@hotmail.com. Thank you

Pope Francis tweets...

The Magi return "by another way" (Mt 2:12). They challenge us to take new paths. This is the creativity of the Holy Spirit who always does new things.

Turning Concern into Action

The St Vincent de Paul Society would, once again like to thank you, our friends, for your willing support throughout the year. With the help of your prayers and with your generous donations we have been able to continue to deliver help and support to local families and to a Community Shelter for young people. We maintain contact with those who are lonely and vulnerable, and this Christmas again offered supermarket vouchers to families who are struggling. Working in partnership with St Petrocks enabling the distribution of essential packs to homeless people. If you would like to know more about SVP contact either our President, Mike Eden 07760 493940 / mike.eden52@btinternet.com or our Secretary Maureen Speller 07702 269561 / maureenspeller@hotmail.com or if you would like to donate please contact Kevin Leeper, 2 Mount Howe, Topsham, Exeter EX3 0BG, email kevinleeper@aol.com

Walking Together – Synodal Update

Welcome to the second of our Walking Together Updates. It has been great to see so many people participating in this journey of discernment and reflection. We have already received over 60 different contributions, which is wonderful. We would like to thank all those who have participated in or facilitated meetings and to wish you all a very peaceful and happy New Year. If you have any questions, please contact synodfeedback@prcdtr.org.uk.

Canon John Deeny and Deborah Fisher, Diocesan Co-Contacts

We have received quite a few queries about the Synodal journey and wanted to share some answers:

The term 'Synodal' is very confusing – what does it mean? Synodal comes from a Greek word meaning the 'walking together' (syn-) on a particular way (-hodos). This Synodal journey is a listening exercise to take place in every church across the world in preparation for the Synod of bishops in 2023. Pope Francis invites all of us, the People of God, to make a journey together. It is a journey of prayer and discernment. There are 3 phases to the journey: diocesan, continental and universal, culminating in the Synod in Rome. We are currently in the diocesan listening phase.

How are we reaching out to the Young? We are reaching out to young people in a variety of ways. We have sent resources for our parish liturgy groups to use; materials have been provided to our schools for use during Advent; we have created some questions accessible to those who are not part of parishes or schools and which can be filled in through conversation, personal reflection, on paper or online. But we need your help. The most important place for reaching out to young people is in our homes, parishes and communities. We hope you will share our questions to encourage conversation with young people about what they think and their dreams for the future. They can be accessed online [here](#).

How is our journey going? It is wonderful to see groups meeting across the Diocese as well as lovely contributions from children in our parishes (like the picture below). The map shows where you can find some of our over 100 facilitators. So far we have received nearly 60 contributions from individuals, parishes and groups.

What are we hearing and what will happen next? It is too early to say what the key themes might be which emerge from this journey, but it has been encouraging to see the wide range of reflections from people of all ages coming through. There is still lots of time to share your thoughts and you can do so online at:

<https://www.plymouthdiocese.org.uk/walking-together-reflections/>

The synodal working group will be meeting on 22 January to review all the feedback sent through so far and to explore how that material can be presented to our pre-synodal meetings in February and March 2022 for prayer, reflection and

discernment. The pre-synodal events will include a cross representation of clergy and lay people from across the Diocese to reflect on what the Holy Spirit is saying to us about our Diocesan journey through the feedback gathered. Any feedback sent through after the 22 January will also be part of our reflections. We want to take time to ensure all feedback is considered and included. Everything sent through will be collated into a report for our Diocese to reflect on what this journey says to us about how we are to grow and develop our 'walking together', and what steps we feel called to take. A Diocesan synthesis will be submitted to the Catholic Bishops' Conference in early April.

Holy Spirit, make Yourself at home in our hearts

Holy Spirit, we are gathered in the name of Jesus.

*As his gift to us, guide us; make Yourself at home in our hearts,
our homes and churches.*

You who fill the world, Holy Spirit, fill our minds and hearts.

Show us the way you desire to renew the Church and give us courage to walk it.

Let us find our way to harmony and unity, truth and self knowledge

*May we run the way together to a renewed and relevant church in the world
and to eternal life. Amen.*

Exeter Street Pastors Training

Training of this year's intake of Exeter Street Pastors begins Monday 7 March – sign up now for your place, or share widely to help this great ministry recruit it's team for this year. Contact admin.exeter@streetpastors.org.uk for details.

CTAX News

More CTAX news can be found at <https://ctax.chessck.co.uk/Comingup>



Love Christmas

With the help and generosity of parishioners we delivered lots of bags of love just before Christmas. Those who received them were surprised and most happy to receive an unexpected small gift. Those of us involved found great pleasure in being able to be a part of this and we hope to make it even bigger next year.

Catholic Exeter Forming in Faith

The next sessions are on Monday 17 January 2022, 10.30am–12.30pm at Sacred Heart Tuesday 18 January 2022, 7.00–9.00pm at Blessed Sacrament. The sessions will be the same, it's the day, time and venue that are different. We're watching and discussing films from Bishop Robert Barron's 'CATHOLICISM' series. Our next session is Lesson 6: A body both suffering and glorious – the Mystical Union of Christ and the Church. To join us on this journey of discovery or simply to find out more, register by clicking the link here or come along.

Please note the change of dates.

Catholic Children's Society (Plymouth)

If you would like to donate to CCSP there are a number of alternatives:

- 1) The **Crowdfunding page** [here](#). CCSP receive 100% of every donation, as Crowdfunder have waived all their fees to help charities.
- 2) By post by sending a cheque made payable to 'Catholic Children's Society (Plymouth)' to St Boniface House, Ashburton, Devon TQ13 7JL.
- 3) By BACS direct into their account – Catholic Children's Society (Plymouth) sort code – 52-41-60 account number – 06024335.
- 4) By text – to donate £5 text 5CCSP to 70085, to donate £10 text 10CCSP to 70085 or to donate £20 text 20CCSP to 70085. Thank you for your support.

Foodbank Christmas Tree

A big Thank You to those of who took a tag from our Christmas Tree and bought some goodies for the Exeter Foodbank. As you will have seen there has been a tremendous response. The items you have donated will be delivered to the Foodbank this week and we know they will be extremely grateful.

Exeter Foodbank January

The January priority items are: Sponge puddings, Fray Bentos Pies, Tinned Meat, Sugar, Custard, Coffee (small jars), Long Life Milk and Fruit Juice.

Please ONLY donate items from the list. Thank you for your understanding. Collection Points - Co-Op (Heavitree/St Thomas); Tesco (Exe Vale); Sainsbury's Alphington/Pinhoe/Guildhall); Waitrose (Gladstone Rd). Or you can donate money online [here](#)

The Food Bank is feeding approximately 333 people a week at present.

Baptism Preparation Course

We are taking bookings for the January course now.

Are you expecting a baby and/or wanting to have your child baptised? Before this happens we ask parents to participate in a Baptism preparation course. We look forward to spiritually supporting you in preparation for this important sacrament and welcoming you and your family into our parish family.

Courses are over two consecutive Saturday mornings from 10:15-12.00. Both sessions will be delivered via Zoom. The course dates for 2022 are: **15/22 January, 14/21 May, 16/23 July and 15/22 October**. Godparents are especially welcome to attend the second Saturday session as the role of Godparents is explored. Click [here](#) to go to the parish website and click on Baptism enquiry form to register. If you have any problems accessing this you can contact Lesley in the parish office on 01392 274724 or at exeter-heavitree@prcdtr.org.uk

GIFT Growing In Faith Together

Update

On 15 December, we met with GIFT parents online. Fr Jonathan led us through an exploration of Advent based on art work. Parents were given an opportunity to consider how the Annunciation offers us an opportunity to consider the themes of humility, anxiety and surprise.

What is GIFT?

GIFT is for all families of faith: for families who have already made their Holy Communion or for families with children who are looking forward to receiving this sacrament; for families with older children who want to be confirmed in their faith; for families with younger children who want to experience and grow in faith in a simple and enjoyable way

Next Meetings

Saturday 8 January: Family Epiphany session.

Wednesday 19 January: Parent Zoom call.

Bedtime Chats

All of the Bedtime Chats can be found on the Blessed Sacrament Website GIFT page: <https://www.blessedsacrament.org.uk/parish-life/gift/>

Get in Touch If you would like to find out more about GIFT, please get in touch with Maria exeter-pastoral-assistant@prcdtr.org.uk.

If you would like to register for GIFT, please click on the link: [Here](#)



Peace Sunday 16 January

Next Sunday is Peace Sunday and this year Pope Francis asks us to think about 'Education, work and dialogue between generations: tools for building lasting peace'.

The need for peace in the world is obvious. People are struggling against violence and conflict, growing inequalities, the effects of climate change and the covid pandemic.

How can we harness the gifts and energy of all generations in the work of peacemaking? Which 'tools for building lasting peace' do you think Pope Francis might be talking about? In this country we have an active

Catholic peace movement in Pax Christi, which does a great deal of good work to promote peace and nonviolence through parishes, schools and social media. Their website suggests many ways we can all become better peacemakers. There are activities for families to do at home, including a peace liturgy for young children. Pax Christi needs our support to keep going.

If you'd like to make a donation, small or large, Here is the link. If you'd like your personal donation to be counted towards the parish contribution please give our parish name and town in the 'Additional Information – Order Notes' box on the checkout page. Or send a cheque made payable to 'Pax Christi' to: Pax Christi, St Joseph's, Watford Way, London NW4 4TY Tel: 0208 203 4884

Society for the Protection of Unborn Children

SPUC Youth Conference 2022 – Always be on the Right Side of Life!

Calling all young people - after many months of cancelled events and a general lack of human contact, here's something you can all look forward to. It is the event to be at if you are looking to hear moving, inspirational testimonies and meet other like-minded young people from across the UK. Put the dates for the 2022 SPUC Youth Conference in your diary now! 25 – 27 February 2022 Yarnfield Park Training and Conference Centre, Stone, Staffs. The Conference fee is £135 but SPUC Plymouth Branch are willing to sponsor students on a first come, first served basis, if money is an issue that will prevent interested students from attending. For further information contact Christine Hudson: email chrishud78@talktalk.net Tel: 07742320717

Mass Times

Sunday 9 January

The Baptism of the Lord

8.45am *People of the Parish*

10.45am

6.00pm

Tuesday 11 January NO Mass

Wednesday 12 January 9.30am

Thursday 13 January 9.30am

Friday 14 January 6.30pm

Saturday 15 January 9.30am

Sunday 16 January

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Peace Sunday

8.45am

10.45am *People of the Parish*

6.00pm

Tuesday 18 January 6.30pm

Wednesday 19 January 9.30am

Thursday 20 January 9.30am

Friday 21 January 6.30pm

St Agnes Virgin & Martyr

Saturday 22 January 9.30am

Emma Louise Bullous RIP

The Word

Sunday 9 January

First Reading Isaiah 42:1-4.6-7

Here is my servant in whom my soul delights.

Psalm Response

The Lord will bless his people with peace.

Second Reading Acts 10:34-38

Here I am! I am coming to obey your will.

Gospel Luke 3:15-16.21-22

While Jesus after his own baptism was at prayer, heaven opened.

Sunday 16 January

First Reading Isaiah 62:1-5

The bridegroom rejoices in his bride.

Psalm Response

Proclaim the wonders of the Lord among all the peoples.

Second Reading Corinthians 12:4-11

One and the same spirit, who distributes gifts to different people just as he chooses.

Gospel John 2:1-11

This was the first of the signs given by Jesus: it was given at Cana in Galilee



Blessed Sacrament Parish is
part of the Roman Catholic
Diocese of Plymouth

Parish Information

Parish Priest

Fr Jonathan Stewart

Priest in retirement

Fr John Watkins

Parish Office

*The Presbytery, 29 Fore Street,
Heavitree, Exeter EX1 2QJ
01392 274724*

exeter-heavitree@prcdtr.org.uk

Open Tuesday, Wednesday and

Thursday 10.00am–4.00pm

Parish Secretary

Lesley Hooper

Parish Pastoral Assistant

Maria Quinn

exeter-pastoral-assistant@prcdtr.org.uk

Safeguarding Reps

Lesley Hooper & Maria Edwards

Please contact the Parish office if you have any concerns about the welfare of a child or a vulnerable adult.

St Nicholas School

Ringswell Avenue, Exeter EX1 3EG

01392 445403 admin@stncs.uk

www.st-nicholas-exeter.devon.sch.uk

Executive Head Teacher

Cathy Lowry

Blessed Sacrament Live

10.45am Mass on Sunday and most weekday Masses will be streamed live on the Parish YouTube channel.

Deadline for newsletter items 10.00am Thursday.

Your Offering

We are grateful for your continued generosity to the parish. **Please remember that the most efficient way for you to give is by standing order.** Forms are available by emailing or calling the parish office. Arrangements are made directly with your bank. And if you can, please GiftAid your contribution.

Parish News by post & email

To receive the Parish News, by email or post, please phone or email the Parish Office and we will arrange to get a copy sent to you or someone you know who might like to receive it (with their permission).

Dial-a-Mass

For those without the internet or a computer the Mass is recorded and put on the telephone at 12 midday on Sundays and will stay until 11.59am the following Sunday. For the cost of a local call they can listen to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass by dialing 01642 130120

Getting married?

Congratulations! Please give us six months' notice if you are hoping to marry in the Church.

The Bishops' Conference

Regular updates can be found at [here](#)

Churches Together

Devon News [here](#)

Exeter news [here](#)

England News [here](#).