

The Catholic Churches of Saint John the Baptist, Trowbridge Saint Bernadette, Westbury & Saint Thomas More, Bradford-on-Avon



St John the Baptist
2 Wingfield Rd
Trowbridge
BA14 9EA



St Bernadette
100 West End
Westbury
BA13 3JQ



St Thomas More
Market Street
Bradford-on-Avon
BA15 1LH

Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph – 29th December 2024

Parish Priest: Father Richard Elson richard.elson@cliftondiocese.com 01225 752152

Parish websites: www.stjohnthebaptisttrowbridge.co.uk
www.together.ourchurchweb.org.uk/bradfordonavon/churches/stthomasmore/

This Week's Mass Times

Sat 28 th Dec	4pm	St Thomas More's	The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph	<i>Thomas Lannon (RIP)</i>
	6pm	St John's		<i>Thanksgiving</i>
Sun 29 th Dec	9am	St Bernadette's		<i>People of the Parish</i>
	10.30am	St John's		<i>Bill Ferguson (RIP)</i>
Mon 30 th Dec	No Mass		Sixth Day within the Octave of Christmas	
Tues 31 st Dec	6pm	St John's	Seventh Day within the Octave of Christmas	<i>Thanksgiving</i>
Wed 1 st Jan	12noon	St Thomas More's	Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God	<i>Andrew Barry</i>
Thurs 2 nd Jan	10am	St Bernadette's	Memorial of Saints Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen	<i>Holy Souls</i>
Fri 3 rd Jan	9am	St John's	Memorial of The Most Holy Name of Jesus	<i>Michal & Anna Pieczko (RIP)</i>
Sat 4 th Jan	4pm	St Thomas More's	Vigil of the Epiphany of the Lord	<i>Mary Nagappa</i>
	6pm	St John's		<i>Agnes & Joe Schambri (RIP)</i>

Confessions

Sat	3.30-3.50pm	St Thomas More's
Sat	5.30-5.50pm	St John's
Thurs	9.30-9.50am	St Bernadette's
Sat 4 th Jan	10.00-10.30am	St John's

Today's Readings



Adoration

Thurs 9.30-10.30am St John's

THE WORD THIS WEEK

As an example for us to follow, the Holy Family can seem a little too perfect: when we consider the more “dramatic” events of the Christmas and Easter story, it can seem so far removed from us. And yet, as today's Gospel reminds us there were also the so-called “hidden years” - the many years of family life in Nazareth, spent in ordinary things. During that time, we hear how Jesus grew and matured, and in the glimpse of that family life we see our example. Our celebration of this feast announces that there is a lasting value in the ideals of family life, and the relationship between husband, wife, parents and children. Whatever the changing details of each age, honour, understanding and love always remain the recipe for the perfect, and holy, human family. It is love that we put on over all the other clothes of changing cultures and places, to guarantee the life of the family in imitation of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

THANK YOU!

Many thanks for all the Christmas wishes, cards, gifts and offerings. I am touched by people's thoughtfulness and generosity. Fr Richard.

PASTORAL LETTER FROM BISHOP BOSCO

Bishop Bosco has written a Pastoral Letter for the Feast of the Holy Family, which will be read at all Masses this weekend. Copies of Bishop Bosco's letter are available in all of the churches.

SAINT BERNADETTE'S DROP-IN

As the first Wednesday of the month will be on New Year's Day it has been decided to cancel St Bernadette's Drop-In for January and next meet on the first Wednesday of February (5th). The committee wish everyone a happy and healthy New Year and look forward to seeing you at the Drop-In in February.

CRIB OFFERINGS

Crib Offerings this year will be for the Friends of the Holy Land. Though Christmas celebrations may be cancelled in Bethlehem, our brothers and sisters there share our hope in Christ, which is very much alive. With your help, we can ensure that hope shines brightly through the remarkable Christians who continue to serve so bravely. Right now, our brothers and sisters are suffering, and they are scared. But we are not powerless, despite the enormity of the devastation we see in our TV news. By supporting this Christmas appeal, you can help our local team to respond quickly and effectively to the unfolding catastrophe.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION PROGRAMME 2025

Application forms are now available for the First Holy Communion Programme for 2025. Sessions will take place at St John's Parish Centre on Thursday evenings beginning with the first meeting on 16th January at 6pm. Parents are asked to attend the first meeting with the children. Full details of the programme will be provided at this meeting. The programme is open to anyone in Year 3 or above. Please return completed application forms to Fr Richard by 6th January.

MASS INTENTIONS

The diary for Mass Intentions in 2025 is now open. If you would like a Mass said on a particular date (e.g. a birthday or anniversary), please book this as early as possible. When completing the envelopes for Mass Intentions, please indicate which church, Mass time, and/or date that you would prefer. If these details are not specified, the Mass may be celebrated at another time or in one of the other churches. If a particular date is especially required, please check availability with me. Many thanks. Fr Richard

OFFERTORY ENVELOPES FOR 2025 – ST JOHN'S & ST BERNADETTE'S

These are now available in the church porch for collection. Any parishioner not on the current envelope list, but would like a box of envelopes to donate on a regular basis, please ask Mike Heather 01225 762966 or email mike284305@btinternet.com - your local Gift Aid Secretary!

300 CLUB WINNERS FOR DECEMBER

Prize	Number	Name
£200	79	Roger Barnes
£150	188	Sadie Harrington
£100	247	Maria Mellon
£70	152	Anne Burton
£50	60	Martin Micenic
£40	84	Marysia Garbutt
£30	234	Alex Marra
£20	148	George Pieczko

TROWBRIDGE FOOD BANK

Thank you to all who contribute to the Trowbridge Foodbank Collection each month. The next collection will take place this weekend, 28th/29th December. Please leave you donated goods in the Church Porch at St. John's and St. Bernadette's.

CELEBRATING THE JUBILEE YEAR 2025

Following two years of preparation, which have focused on Vatican II and Prayer we are now invited to embark on a Jubilee Year as Pilgrims of Hope. This Jubilee Year reminds us of the 'jubilee' of Israel when the land was rested, and debts were to be cancelled, and God called people to be reconciled with one another and importantly with God's self. We, too, are called to be reconciled with one another, to proclaim God's abundant mercy and the Good News of Jesus Christ. Bishop Bosco will formally open the Jubilee Year in the diocese at the 11.15am Mass at Clifton Cathedral on 29th December. The Cathedral will be open every day for Pilgrims to come and experience the 'Pilgrims' Way, within the Cathedral itself. This prayerful journey around the Cathedral will invite us to pray for hope in our lives and in our world. On 5th April, 'Embracing the Mercy of God' will be an opportunity for the diocese to come together to celebrate the great Sacrament of Hope which we have been given in the form of Reconciliation. Our diocesan day on 19th July will be a further opportunity for us to gather as a community to consider how we take this message of Hope to the world with activities for children and young people, we hope that many people will make the pilgrimage to Bristol for this joyful gathering.

EPIPHANY BLESSING OF HOMES

It is traditional for parish priests to bless chalk on the Feast of the Epiphany for parish families, so that they may mark the names of the three Magi over their doors, in blessing the home as a witness of their faith and protection against evil. With chalk, you write an inscription on the inside lintel above the front door. The series of numbers, letters, and crosses changes only slightly from year to year. For example, at the start of the year 2025, the line read as follows: 20+C+M+B+25. The four digits designating the New Year appear at the beginning and end of the line. Because Epiphany comes so near the beginning of the New Year, the numbers represent an annual renewal of God's blessing. The letters have two meanings. They are the initials of the traditional names of the Magi: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar. They also abbreviate the Latin words *Christus mansionem benedicat*, "May Christ bless the house." The letters recall the day on which the inscription is made, as well as the purpose of blessing. The crosses represent Christ, whom we invoke, and the saintliness of the Magi. The inscription is made above the front door, so that all who enter and depart this year may enjoy God's blessing. The month of January still bears the name of the Roman god Janus, the doorkeeper of heaven and patron of the beginning and end of things. This blessing adds a Christian dimension to the traditional observance of the first month. The inscription is made of chalk, a product of clay, which recalls the human nature taken by God's eternal Word in this holy season. If you want to bless your home this Epiphany, there will be a copy of a prayer of blessing available, along with blessed chalk, in all churches.

PARISH GIVING

There are many ways you can give a donation to Parish Funds: with a monthly standing order (Ask Father Richard for a form), by using the Dona Card Reader in the Church Porch at St. John's, by a cash donation during the collections, or by using this QR Code. Thank you for your generosity.

