

OUR LADY OF PROVIDENCE CHAPEL
SAINT VINCENT HOSPITAL
WORCESTER MEDICAL CENTER
Feast of the Baptism of the Lord
January 12, 2025



CHAPEL SCHEDULE

Weekday Mass: (Monday-Friday at 12 noon)

Weekend Masses: Saturday: 4:00pm - Sunday: 7:30am & 4:00pm

Holyday Mass Schedule: afternoon prior at 4:00pm

Holy day proper at 12 noon and 4:00pm

Confessions: First Saturday of every month at 3:30pm

Department Telephone: 508.363.6246

Chapel Website: www.ourladyofprovidence.net

MASS INTENTIONS — LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

Saturday January 11 *Vigil of the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord*

4:00pm +Earl McGrath recalling the day of his birth - 78th birthday

Sunday, January 12 *Feast of the Baptism of the Lord*

7:30am For the intentions of the celebrant

4:00pm In gratitude to God for a special intention granted

Monday, January 13 *First Week in Ordinary Time—Saint Hilary of Poitiers, bishop & doctor*²

12:00nn +William Walsh

Tuesday, January 14

12:00nn For the well-being and safety of Patty and for the requestor's family

Wednesday, January 15

12:00nn +Joan Mockel

Thursday, January 16

12:00nn +Robert Jolie

Friday, January 17 *Saint Anthony, abbot*¹

12:00nn +Bill McGinley

Saturday, January 18 *Vigil of the 2nd Sunday of the Liturgical Year*

4:00pm In gratitude for angels & archangels

Sunday, January 19 *Second Sunday in Ordinary Time*

7:30am For the intentions of the celebrant

4:00pm Asking God for a special intention to be granted

The Key to Understanding the Day's Liturgical Significance: *Sunday is the day that the Church celebrates the Paschal mystery—the Lord's Day—which, according to apostolic tradition, is the day of Christ's Resurrection. The Sundays of Advent, Lent, and during the Easter Season take precedence over other celebrations. Solemnities honor significant religious events, beliefs or saints of the greatest importance and universal in their observance that begin at Vespers (or Evening Prayer) the day before. Feasts must be observed, though, less important than solemnities, hence, feasts are only observed on the natural day. Memorials are of two types: Either the observance is an obligatory memorial¹ or an optional memorial².*

Toward a Better Understanding of the Gospel of the Baptism of the Lord

Each of the four Gospels recount what happened at the Jordan River when Jesus underwent the baptismal rite practiced by John the Baptist. The Fourth Gospel, though, only states that John saw the Spirit descend upon Jesus (Jn 1:32). The reason John baptized was not "for the forgiveness of sins," but so that Jesus would be made known to Israel. In the three other Gospels (viz. the Synoptic Gospels), Saint Matthew (Mt 3:13-17) recounts what happened in great detail, while Mark (Mk 1:9-11) and Luke (Lk 3:21-22) simply mention what took place. All three of those Gospels, though, note that the Spirit came upon Jesus and that the Father's voice was heard. The Lord's Baptism, due to the presence of the Trinity, is considered a theophany (Gk. θεοφάνεια). In both Testaments, various theophanies constitute discreet moments wherein God manifests Himself to the world by a sensible sign that reveals His divine presence, such as on Mount Sinai or at the Jordan River. When properly understood as a manifestation or epiphany (Gk. ἐπιφάνεια), the Baptism of Jesus reveals the Lord's divinity and proclaims the salvific value of baptism that raises mortal creatures to the status of sons and daughters of God. As a salvation event or mystery, this last event in the Christmas season is not an anniversary, but a mysterion (Gk. μυστήριον) whose implications can never be totally mastered, only gradually revealed through continued meditation upon the saving impact of this event in Christ's life and in the sacramental life of the Church.

Saint Luke's Account of the Baptism of the Lord

The sacred evangelists, while recounting various events in the life of Jesus, do not contradict one another, though each of the four sacred authors have nuances that give a particular character to the saving incidents in the Lord's life. Saint Luke speaks at great length about John the Baptist, particularly in the Baptist's birth announcement and his youth. Prior to today's Gospel, that Third Evangelist described the advent or coming of John into the region of the Jordan and the Baptist's preaching. After excoriating the Pharisees and scribes, the Baptist told the crowd that they had to make visible his demand for true repentance and to do so by generosity and self-sacrifice. The ever-burgeoning crowds, fueled with messianic fever and the imminent coming of Israel's Messiah, were wondering if John might be the Messiah or not. In reply to those unasked questions, John declares, "I am baptizing you with water, but one mightier than I is coming. I am not worthy to loosen the thongs of his sandals. He will baptize you

Saint Chromatius of Aquileia - Sermo 34

On this day, our Lord and Savior was baptized by John in the Jordan; hence, this is not a small feast but a great and even very great one. For when our Lord condescended to receive baptism, the Holy Spirit came upon him in the form of a dove, and the Father's voice was heard saying, "This is my beloved Son. My favor rests on him." What a great mystery lies in this celestial baptism! From heaven, the Father speaks out, the Son appears on earth, and the Holy Spirit manifests himself in the form of a dove.

Indeed, there is neither true baptism nor real remission of sins where the truth of the Trinity is absent, and the remission of sins cannot be given where belief in the perfect Trinity is lacking. The baptism imparted by the Church is the sole true baptism and it is given just once. Let a man immerse himself in it a single time and he will emerge pure and renewed; pure because he has washed away the stain of sins, and renewed because he rises to a new life after having put off the oldness of sin. For this bath of baptism renders man whiter than snow, not in his bodily skin but in the splendor of his spirit and the purity of his soul.

with the Holy Spirit and fire." These references to the Spirit and fire can only be understood in light of the fire symbolism of the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 2:1–4). Yet, also as part of John's preaching, in mentioning the Spirit and fire they also should be related to their purifying and refining characteristics. Then, John acknowledges that the coming Messiah is "mightier than" he and that Jesus manifests Himself amid a crowd eagerly searching for the Messiah's epiphany to take place. Another nuance is that in the Lucan version of the Lord's Baptism, the divine manifestation enshrined in every theophany is not focused on John baptizing Jesus as much as it is tied to the prayer of Jesus. On multiple occasions, primarily before crucial moments in His public life, Luke notes Jesus was praying. Jesus is at the rear of the line of those waiting to be baptized and He only approaches John "after all the people had been baptized." Traditionally, prayer precedes any act of divine revelation and, in Saint Luke's writings, formal or informal prayer is linked with the Spirit's presence and praying is pre-eminent attribute of the earthly life of Jesus. Luke is often considered to be the Gospel of Prayer, the sacred action which warrants the Father's divine intervention in the life of Jesus is not John's baptism, but the prayer He offered after undergoing John's ritual. The divine affirmation of who Jesus is and why He submitted to baptism is made visible in the descent of the Spirit "upon him in bodily form like a dove." Then, as a heavenly voice, God the Father declares, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased (Gk. εὐδόκησα = to think well of)." Following the declaration in verse 22, Saint Luke inserts his genealogy of Jesus which concludes with Jesus being identified as "the son of Adam, the son of God" (Lk 3:38). Then, on the day of Pentecost, Peter declares to the crowd not only that Jesus had been raised from the dead but the messianic significance of that ultimate act, "...let the whole house of Israel know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified" (Acts 2:36).

Ritual Cleansing & the Baptism of Jesus

In the Gospel of Matthew, you see the initial act of public witness in the life of Christ, "Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him" (Mt 3:13). Ritual washing was and still is a part of Jewish practice and it takes place in various settings: cisterns of standing water, pools refreshed by rainwater, the custom-built mikveh or ritual bath, fountains, and rivers or lakes. "Living waters" were considered the best option: the Jewish Mishnah, which is the first major written collection of the Jewish oral traditions known as the "Oral Torah". It specifies a preference for a larger, fresher body of water "For in it persons may immerse themselves and immerse others." Immersion for the multiple forms of ritual uncleanness was therefore quite common. With mikveh as the word for the place of ritual washing, it was a Hebrew word associated with the words for hope, alignment, binding together and waiting for God (*Strong's Lexicon*, s.v., Mikveh). This association of 'binding together' is the same word as the Psalmist uses when he says things like "I waited patiently for the Lord" (Ps 40:1 KJV). The word is used in Jeremiah to refer to God Himself 'Lord you are the 'mikveh' of Israel' (Jer.17.5). This is normally translated as 'hope' but has the same root as the word for the place of being washed clean. "A Mikveh" of living water represents the bounty and resources of the new life that we can enjoy in God. With reference to Ezek. 36: 25, "I will sprinkle clean water over you, to make you clean," A Jewish Rabbi, R. Akiva, in the second century, said "Blessed art thou, O Israel! Before whom dost thou cleanse thyself? and who cleanses thee? Thy Father in heaven!" (Yoma viii. 9). So when Jesus comes to John, to the Jordan River place of baptism, why was He baptized? Saint Thomas Aquinas says, *inter alia*, that it is "so that by his touch Jesus might consecrate all the water." The ritual baptisms of the Old Law only serve to cause a ritual cleansing for ritual impurity, and have no power to remit sin: but after the baptism by John, through the power of the Body of Christ, all water in every part of the world is enabled to wash away actual sin. As it says in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, "Sacraments are 'powers that comes forth' from the Body of Christ, which is ever-living and life-giving (CCC, n. 1116). Jesus is, as it were, our "Mikveh." He Who 'willed in his compassion to wash away the sins of the world' opens the way of hope. He aligns us with God, and He Himself is the 'Water of Life' which purifies us, restores our hope and gives us new life. Excerpted from www.stonedominicans.org. Sr. Tamsin Mary Geach, OP. "Hope, Alignment, Waiting for the Lord: The Place of Baptism."

Understanding the Mass—Both Memorial & Sacrifice

The central act of worship in the life of the Catholic Church is the Mass or the Eucharist. When taken as a whole, the Mass is composed of two rites—the *Introductory* and the *Concluding rites*—and two liturgies: the *Liturgy of the Word* and the *Liturgy of the Eucharist*. According to the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (GIRM), the Introductory Rites “precede the Liturgy of the Word, namely, the Entrance, the Greeting, the Penitential Act, the Kyrie,

the *Gloria in excelsis* (Glory to God in the highest), and Collect, have the character of a beginning, an introduction, and a preparation. Their purpose is to ensure that the faithful, who come together as one, establish communion and dispose themselves properly to listen to the Word of God and to celebrate the Eucharist worthily” (GIRM, n. 46). In regard to the Concluding Rites, those ending parts of the Mass include: “a) brief announcements, should they be necessary; the Priest’s greeting and Blessing, which on certain days and occasions is expanded and expressed by the Prayer over the People or another more solemn formula; c) the Dismissal of the people by the Deacon or Priest, so that each may go back to doing good works, praising and blessing God; d) the kissing of the altar by the Priest and the Deacon, followed by a profound bow to the altar by the Priest, the Deacon, and the other ministers” (GIRM, n. 90). The two liturgies, Liturgy of the Word

and Liturgy of the Eucharist while “in some sense... two parts... being so closely interconnected that they form but one single act of worship. For in the Mass is spread the table both of God’s Word and of the Body of Christ, and from it the faithful are to be instructed and refreshed” (GIRM, n. 28). The true meaning and scope of the word liturgy is important. It combines two Greek words *leitōs* + *ergos* that yield the word *leitourgia* (Gk. *λειτουργία*). However, in the Greco-Roman world, a liturgy was done for

the sake of the public, so it is better understood as public service or public duty. Thus, *leitourgia* was “work done *for* the people” rather than “work done *by* the people.” Civic liturgies took place for the protection and prosperity of the polis or city. Generally understood, then, “the Liturgy of the Word is made up of the readings from Sacred Scripture together with the chants occurring between them. As for the Homily, the Profession of Faith and the Universal Prayer, they develop and conclude it” (GIRM, n. 55). The Liturgy of the Eucharist recalls that “Christ instituted the Paschal Sacrifice and banquet, by which the Sacrifice of the Cross is continuously made present in the Church whenever the Priest, representing Christ the Lord, carries out what the Lord himself did and handed over to his disciples to be done in his memory. For Christ took the bread and the chalice, gave thanks, broke the bread and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take, eat and drink: this is my Body; this is the chalice of my Blood. Do this in memory of me. Hence the Church has arranged the entire celebration of the Liturgy of the Eucharist in parts corresponding to precisely these words and actions of Christ, namely: a) At the preparation of the Gifts, bread and wine with water are brought to the altar; the same elements, that is to say, which Christ took into his hands; b) In the Eucharistic Prayer, thanks is given to God for the whole work of salvation, and the offerings become the Body and Blood of Christ; c) Through the fraction and through Communion, the faithful, though many, receive from the one bread the Lord’s Body and from the one chalice the Lord’s Blood in the same way that the Apostles received them from the hands of Christ himself” (GIRM, n. 72). Going to Mass, then, is about spending time with God, but also receiving the inner strength or grace to live the life of faith. The Mass is both a memorial and a sacrifice. In the Eucharistic Prayer, Christ and His redeeming work is commemorated, especially the sacrifice of the Cross for the sake of all humanity through His crucifixion. The celebration also recalls the origin of the Eucharist in the Last Supper, when Jesus, anticipating His imminent death, offered His disciples bread and wine, saying, “Take this, all of you, and eat of it, for this is my body, which will be given up for you,” and, “Take this, all of you, and drink from it, for this is the chalice of my blood,... which will be poured out for you.” Jesus instructed the disciples to perpetuate this banquet in His memory, telling them, “Do this in memory of me!”

THE MASS

I. Introductory Rites

Entrance

Veneration of the Altar

Greeting

Penitential Rite

Kyrie Eleison

Gloria in excelsis Deo

Collect

II. Liturgy of the Word

Scripture Readings

Homily

Nicene/Apostles Creed

Prayers of the Faithful

III. Liturgy of the Eucharist

Preparation of the Gifts

Eucharistic Prayer

1. Preface

2. Sanctus

3. Epiclesis

4. Consecration

5. Mysterium fidei

6. Anamnesis

7. Offering

8. Intercessions

9. Doxology and Amen

Communion Rite

Lord’s Prayer

Rite of Peace

Breaking of the Bread

Communion

Prayer after Communion

IV. Concluding Rites

Blessing

Dismissal

Veneration of the Altar

Personal Thanksgiving