

**THE RIBBLE VALLEY PARISHES OF
ST WILFRID, LONGRIDGE: ST MARY, CHIPPING:
ST PETER AND ST PAUL, RIBCHESTER.**

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The Baptism of the Lord

Year A

Sunday 11th January 2026



As soon as Jesus was baptised, he saw the Spirit of
God descending like a dove.

<u>Day</u>	<u>St Wilfrid</u>	<u>St Mary</u>	<u>Ss. Peter & Paul</u>
Monday 12th January	Priest's Day Off	Priest's Day Off	Priest's Day Off
Tuesday 13th January			
Wednesday 14th January			
Thursday 15th January			
Friday 16th January	Morning Prayer St Paul's 7.45am		
Saturday 17th January	Confessions 4.15pm – 4.45pm Mass 5.30pm		
Sunday 18th January		Mass 9.30am	Mass 11.00am

White Flower Appeal

There will be a second collection after all Masses on 24th/25th January 2026 for the White Flower Appeal on behalf of SPUC (Society for the Protection of Unborn Children).

Ecumenical Service for The Epiphany

This Service will take place this weekend on Sunday 8th January 2026 at St Paul's Church off Berry Lane at 6.30pm. All are most welcome.

World Day of Prayer 2026

On Friday 6th March, we join with churches from around the globe for a worldwide Day of Prayer. This will be held at Christ Church at 11.00am.

Frances Corrigan R.I.P.

Please keep the late Frances Corrigan in your prayers who departed this life on 18th December 2025 at the age of 86. A funeral service will take place at St Wilfrid's on Tuesday 20th January at 11.00am followed by a committal at Preston Crematorium. May the Lord welcome her to the table of God's children in heaven and bring comfort and peace to the family she leaves behind.
May she rest in peace.

St Mary Chipping**Parish Notices****Sunday Missal Page 65****The Faithful Departed**

We pray for those who have fallen asleep in the hope of rising again and for those whose anniversaries we commemorate at this time:

We remember especially: Anne Patricia Mercer and John Proctor.

May the Lord grant them a share in his Resurrection.

Recent Offertory Donations:

Sunday 4th January: £193.50 + £78.00 Coffee Morning Thank you

Parish of St Wilfrid Longridge**Parish Notices****Sunday Missal – Page 65****Pies, Peas, Pickles and Pudding - £10 per person**

Thursday 29th January 12.30pm – 2.00pm in St Wilfrid's Parish Room. This will consist of Father Tony's Meat and Potato Pie with Mushy Peas and Pickles, followed by a selection of puddings and Tea or Coffee.

Vegetarian and Gluten Free options are available – please request on booking.

To book a place, please contact Denise Atkinson at church or by calling on 07746295974. All are most welcome.

The Faithful Departed

We pray for the faithful departed and for those who have fallen asleep in the hope of rising again. We remember especially:

Mona Gardner, Edward Barnes, Andrew Graham Walker, Mary Teresa Holden, Mary Teresa Forrest, Gerard Dewhurst, Peter Cowburn, Andrew Martin Key, and Elizabeth Traynor. May they rest in peace.

Parish of St Peter and St Paul Ribchester**Parish Notices****The Faithful Departed**

We pray for the faithful departed and for those who have fallen asleep in the hope of rising again.

We remember especially:

Vincent Comber, Anne Lofthouse, Robert Phelan, Doris Pearson, William Byrne, Francis Ball, Annie Sutcliffe, William Ashton, Harold Entwistle, and Richard Whittle.

May the Lord grant them a share in his resurrection.

Recent Offertory Donations:

Sunday 4th January:

£215.00

Thank you

The Baptism of the Lord

Saint Matthew describes a remarkable scene in which all three persons of the Holy Trinity act explicitly in concert: the voice of God the Father from heaven; Jesus, God the Son, in the water; and the Holy Spirit descending as a dove. John's baptism in the River Jordan is nothing short of another epiphany but one that may prompt various questions.

One such question was asked of me recently by someone whom I was instructing for baptism. They asked why, since Jesus was God, he needed to be baptised. It's a reasonable and fairly common question, and with which early Christians wrestled, in fact. After all, why would the Immaculate Lamb, the holy one, need to submit to an act of ritual purification?

Of course, Jesus didn't *need* to be baptised since he's not a sinner in need of purification, like you and I. Rather, as St. Ambrose put it, 'Our Lord was baptised because He wished, not to be cleansed, but to cleanse the waters'. Ambrose is not here referring to some sort of clean river campaign. Jesus wants to cleanse the waters so as to cleanse us, to sanctify the water which can then purify us. This comes as welcome icing on the theological cake because Jesus had already taken on the sin of the human race at his incarnation, when he became a man 'for our salvation,' as we say in the Creed. And we have just celebrated all of that at Christmas over the past couple of weeks. So, Christ was baptised not because *he* needed to be, but because *we* need to be.

The word 'symbol' comes from the Greek *syμβάlein* meaning 'to bring together'. Rituals such as baptism are symbolic practices in the sense that they bring people together and create an alliance, a wholeness, a community. And there is a great deal of symbolism at work at the Baptism of the Lord, the start of his public ministry.

Our need for baptism also exists on a spiritual level. Baptism is not just a symbol but a sacrament. At baptism, through water and words, we are incorporated into the life of the Holy Trinity and become adopted sons and daughters. Sacraments are not mere signs, but rather are signs which, in the classic formula, effect what they signify and signify what they effect. Thus the water of baptism not only expresses an inner cleansing but brings it about. Baptism is then a rite of passage in the truest sense. By it we pass from darkness into light; from sin to freedom; from isolation to a relationship with Christ.