



St. John's Parish
Roman Catholic Church

office@stjohnskitchener.ca

519 745 7855

85 Strange St., Kitchener

JESUS MINGLING WITH THE SINNERS

THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD - JANUARY 11, 2026

Today we celebrate the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, and the Gospel presents us with an astonishing scene: it is the first time that Jesus appears in public after his hidden life in Nazareth. He arrives on the bank of the River Jordan to be baptized by John (cf. Mt 3:13-17). It is a rite by which the people repented and committed to converting; a liturgical hymn says that the people went to be baptized "with a bare soul and bare feet" — an open, naked soul, without covering anything — that is, with humility and with a transparent heart. But, seeing Jesus mingling with the sinners, we are surprised and we wonder: why did Jesus make that choice? He, the Saint of God, the Son of God without sin, why did he make that choice? We find the answer in Jesus' words to John: "Let it be so now; for thus it is fitting for us to fulfil all righteousness" (v. 15). Fulfil all righteousness: what does it mean?

By having himself baptized, Jesus reveals God's justice, that justice he came to bring into the world. Very often we have a limited idea of justice, and think that it means: those who do wrong pay, and in this way compensate for the wrong they have done. But God's justice, as the Scripture teaches, is much greater. It does not have the condemnation of the guilty as its end, but their salvation, rebirth and their being made righteous: from unjust to just. It is a justice that comes from love, from the depths of compassion and mercy that are the very heart of God, the Father who is moved when we are oppressed by evil and fall under the weight of sins and fragility. God's justice, then, is not intended to distribute penalties and punishments but rather, as the Apostle Paul affirms, it consists of making us, his children, righteous (cf. Rm 3:22-31), freeing us from the snares of evil, healing us, raising us up again. The Lord is never ready to punish us. His hand is outstretched to help us rise up. And so, we understand that, on the banks of the Jordan, Jesus reveals to us the meaning of his mission: He came to fulfil divine justice, which is that of saving sinners; he came to take on his own shoulders the sin of the world and to descend into the waters of the abyss, of death, so as to rescue us and prevent us from drowning. He shows us today that God's true justice is the mercy that saves. We are afraid to think that God is mercy, but God is mercy because his justice is indeed the mercy that saves. It is the love that shares our human condition, that makes itself close, in solidarity with our suffering, entering into our darkness to restore light.

Benedict XVI affirmed that "God desired to save us by going to the bottom of this abyss himself so that every person, even those who have fallen so low that they can no longer perceive Heaven, may find God's hand to cling to and rise from the darkness to see once again the light for which he or she was made" (Homily, 13 January 2008).

Brothers and sisters, we are afraid to think of such a merciful justice. Let us move forward: God is mercy. His justice is merciful. Let us allow him to take us by the hand. We too, disciples of Jesus, are required to exercise justice in this way, in relationships with others, in the Church, in society: not with the harshness of those who judge and condemn, dividing people into good and bad, but with the mercy of those who welcome by sharing the wounds and frailties of their sisters and brothers, so as to lift them up again. I would like to put it like this: not dividing, but sharing. Not dividing, but sharing. Let us do as Jesus did: let us share, let us carry each other's burdens instead of gossiping and destroying, let us look at each other with compassion, let us help each other. Let us ask ourselves: am I a person who divides or shares? Think a little: am I a disciple of Jesus' love or a disciple of gossip that divides. Gossip is a lethal weapon: it kills, it kills love, it kills society, it kills fraternity. Let us ask ourselves: am I a person who divides or a person who shares? And now let us pray to Our Lady, who gave life to Jesus, immersing him in our frailty so that we might receive life again.

POPE FRANCIS — January 8, 2023



Highlights from the Closing Mass of the Jubilee of Hope: On Sunday, December 28, 2025, the faithful of the Diocese gathered at the **Cathedral Basilica of Christ the King** to celebrate the Closing Mass of the Jubilee of Hope. Held on the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, the liturgy marked a prayerful and joyful conclusion to the Jubilee year.

The Mass was an opportunity to give thanks for the many years of devoted service of **Most Reverend Douglas Crosby, OMI**, whose pastoral leadership has shaped the Diocese with humility, faith, and care.

After the recessional hymn, parishioners and guests were invited to offer personal thanks to Bishop Crosby. A long line formed down the main aisle of the Cathedral Basilica as many took the opportunity to greet him, express their appreciation, and share a final word of gratitude.

ENGLISH MASS SCHEDULE

The Baptism of the Lord

Saturday, January 10 **5:00 PM**
+Edward Yutronkie

Sunday, January 11 **9:00 AM**
For All Parishioners Living & Deceased

Tuesday, January 13 **11:00 AM**
+Peter Bleskie

Wednesday, January 14 **11:00 AM**

Thursday, January 15 **11:00 AM**

Friday, January 16 **11:00 AM**

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Saturday, January 17 **5:00 PM**
+Ivan Holder

Sunday, January 18 **9:00 AM**
For All Parishioners Living & Deceased

MISAS EN ESPAÑOL

Fiesta del Bautismo del Señor

Sabado 10 de Enero **7:00 PM**

Domingo 11 de Enero **11:00 AM & 1:00 PM**
Por la Comunidad Parroquial

Martes 13 de Enero **12:00 PM**

Miercoles 14 de Enero **12:00 PM**

Jueves 15 de Enero **12:00 PM**

Viernes 16 de Enero **12:00 PM**

II Domingo Ordinario

Sabado 17 de Enero **7:00 PM**

Domingo 18 de Enero **11:00 AM & 1:00 PM**
Por la Comunidad Parroquial

Taller Bíblico para jóvenes y jóvenes adultos de 17 años en adelante. Comenzará el viernes 23 enero a las 6pm en el salón parroquial. Para más información: 519 240 7700 o escribir a oficina@parroquiaguadalupe.ca.

CHRISTIAN LIFE PROGRAM

Sponsored by Couples for Christ and it's Family Ministries.

Please join us at St. Francis Church Hall, 49 Blueridge Ave. The program runs on Thursdays from January 29th to March 26th. Dinner at 6 pm—Program 7 pm to 9 pm.

Opened to Christian married couples, Singles, Widows, Widowers and those separated or divorced. Be enriched by talks as God's Love, Who is Jesus Christ, Transformation in Christ.

Child care provided for children 12 years and under. THERE IS NO FEE.