



St. Augustine's Church Limerick

11th January 2026 Baptism of the Lord

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Hearing Voices: Seeing Things

Mass Times

Monday-Friday

7.30am, 8.30am,
10.15am, & 4pm

SATURDAY

8.30am, 10.15am
3pm Mass of the Sick

SUNDAY

9.00am, 11.15am
& 7.30pm

CONFESIONS

MONDAY & FRIDAY

10.45am-12 Noon
3.00pm-4.00pm

SATURDAY

10.45am-12noon
2.30pm-4pm
All Masses are
'live streamed'
at St. Augustine's

Though he had claims to be a god the old emperor Caligula was, according to early reports, at best a bit shifty. And at worst he was far worse. Granted, his attitude to the Roman Senate differed little from that of one of our recent Taoisigh, Enda, to Seanad Eireann, i.e. we'd be better off without it. That's what he thought and said and hoped to bring about. Caligula was reported by some as thinking his horse fit for the top political job of Consul. (This will not seem so bad to those who believe that in many places donkeys have risen to high office). In fairness, small mitigation, it must be mentioned that Caligula is accused of atrocities so many and varied that he couldn't possibly be guilty of them all, but he did as much as he could. At any rate, the Romans of the time didn't want to be ruled by horses or asses or emperors who'd lost the run of themselves. A group of them armed with knives made rashers of poor Cal in a corridor of his palace.

It seems that before he became rashers, Caligula was crackers. He was "hearing voices" and it had a bad affect on him. At the sound of thunder he'd jump out of bed and slide in under it in terror. It was, he believed, the voice of the god Jupiter threatening revenge for an insult uttered in a divine demarcation dispute someplace the gods met one another.

The gospels giving us a picture of the coming of Jesus Christ have their share of voices quite unlike those heard by Caligula. Zechariah, Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, the Magi all had some communication from beyond their customary environment. And today it's the turn of John the Baptist's congregation to hear and see things. An important feature, spoken or implied, of such gospel messages is the theme "Do not be afraid." No need for them to hide under the bad. The God communicating with them willed peace and not disaster.

Today's gospel reports God vouching for Jesus of Nazareth immediately he joined the mixed bunch who were baptized by John. Maybe we're being told the way to God is to travel with others.

The community of the baptised is sometimes called the barque or ship of Peter: The crew is motley, patchy, mixed, human, capable of high good and the low bad. In this crew along with the officers in their flashy uniforms who meet the dignitaries at every port there are also the unseen coal-shovellers who enable "full steam ahead" when the captain says so. There are also those not-yet-able to shovel coal and others way past their coal-shovelling best: these have to be looked after too, and not counted out. Furthermore, the fellow who tried to steal the coal has to be carried to harbour even when most might wish he summarily be sent to the deeps.

Every crew is motley and none more so than that which sails in the barque of Peter.

As some Smart Alec said "I know you'd like to join the perfect church, but immediately you joined it it wouldn't be perfect anymore."

Jesus with the Spirit of God in him sailed and sails with some shifty shipmates. That's why forgiveness and mercy are marks of his power. J.L.



St. Augustine's Church Child Safeguarding Representatives.

Fr. Flor O'Callaghan O.S.A.

Fr. John Lyng O.S.A.

Ms Geraldine van Dam

Mr. Robert Ryan

Ms Charlotte Gleeson



Baptism

Located on the edge of the desert, the Bible lands were dominated by the search for water, prayer for rain, long periods of drought. The desert loomed large in the history of God's people. For them water was life and survival. We are not surprised that this precious universal gift was used by John the Baptist to launch Jesus into his ministry of healing and preaching. That event is being celebrated in today's Feast. He instructed the first missionaries to baptise and preach the Good News. The Sacrament of Baptism is the first act of initiation into the church as his community of love.

In his Baptism Jesus entered his public ministry, in our Baptism we are called into active involvement in the life of the Christian community. Our responsibility begins with the warmth of a smile, the willingness of a helping hand. In an age when promises, vows and commitments are becoming more difficult, we need constant renewal of our baptism.

Dip your hands in a bowl of water to make contact with your roots in faith. Hear the voice of the Father speaking to you as his Beloved. Invite the dove of peace to rest gently upon you.



PRAYER Help us to create cradles of love and faith where the seeds of Baptism can flower into love and service. Amen

WINTER GOD

God of Hope

**In the darkness of these Winter days
keep the promise of Spring
alive in my heart.**
**In the wilderness, hold me open
to the hope of new life.**
**Give me an awareness of bulbs
awakening from their Winter sleep,
life stirring in the darkness of the earth.**
**In the dark places of my own spirit
help me to notice the seeds of
'resurrection'.**
**Give me time and space to reach down
into the soil of my own existence.**
**Show me how to nurture
the roots of faith and love
in the desert places of my life.**
Amen

REFLECTION

O Lord, Support Us All the Day Long.

O Lord, support us all the day long,
until the shadows lengthen and the
evening comes, and the busy world is hushed,
and the fever of life is over and our work is done.

Then, Lord, in your mercy grant
us a safe lodging, a holy rest,
and peace at the last;
Amen.

John Henry Newman

CHRISTIAN UNITY WEEK

The annual week
of prayer for Christian Unity runs from next
Sunday 18th January to the following
Sunday 25th.

The theme this year is:
One Body, One Spirit
(Eph 4: 4)

Feast of St. Ita January 15th

St. Ita was born in Co. Waterford of noble and Christian parents. Early on she set her mind on serving Christ in religious life. She founded a monastery in Killeedy, Co. Limerick, which attracted a great variety of young people. She was given the title 'foster-Mother' of the saints of Ireland. She died in 570. (Source: Liturgical Calendar 2026 Pg 181)

The annual St. Ita's Mass will be celebrated in St. Ita's Church, Ashford, Co. Limerick on Thursday 15th Jan at 11.00am. In preparation for this feast day there will be Adoration in St. Ita church Ashford on Wed 14th Jan from 11.00am – 4pm. All are welcome!

Prayer: St Ita our dearest patron Saint, thy loving children pray. Grant that we by thy protection may grow in virtue day by day.

