

Mass times and intentions: 10th – 18th January 2026

Saturday	10	THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD 18.00 – The People of the Parish
Sunday	11	11.30 – Teresa Hudson RIP
Monday	12	No Mass
Tuesday	13	Feria 10.00 – Matteo and Family
Wednesday	14	Feria 10.00 – Daniel Mekako - birthday
Thursday	15	Feria 10.00 – Marian Melnnes
Friday	16	Feria 10.00 – Gilda Pednekar RIP
Saturday	17	St Anthony, Ab 10.00 – Peter Philips – intentions
		SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME 18.00 – The People of the Parish
Sunday	18	11.30 – Ayomide Ishmael and Emmanuel Ayanru RIP

Tuesday to Saturday, after the Holy Mass,
Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament & Holy Rosary

Mass Intentions / Offerings: Special envelopes are available at the back of Church. If you would like Mass offered on a particular date or anniversary, please let the Parish Priest know well in advance – the sooner the better. Thank you for your co-operation.

Mass Attendance last weekend: 257

Offertory Collection last weekend: £ 611.20

Standing order details:	Online via QR Code:
Account Name: Catholic Church Hainault The Assumption Sort Code: 40-13-22 Account Number: 31019244	

CATHOLIC PARISH OF THE DIOCESE OF BRENTWOOD

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THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD – 11th January 2026

Hymn Book numbers for Sunday Mass
755 – Unto us is born a Son

Responsorial Psalm: *The Lord will bless his people with peace.*

S3 – Gifts of bread and wine

98 – Breathe on me, Breath of God

401 – Water of life

388 – Shine, Jesus, shine

Dear brothers and sisters,

Today, on the feast of the Baptism of the Lord, we stand on the banks of the Jordan with open hearts and quiet souls. This is not a noisy feast, but one of gentle revelation. Heaven opens without thunder, the Spirit descends like a dove, and the voice of the Father does not command but tenderly affirms: “This is my beloved Son.” Everything unfolds in softness, as if God Himself wished to teach us that true power does not crush, but lifts up.

Jesus comes to the Jordan as a simple man, standing in line with sinners. He does not need baptism, yet He chooses to step into our waters. Where we enter carrying shame, burdens, and fear, He enters with us. The waters that have known tears and failures are touched by His holiness. From that moment on, no one is alone in their struggle. God does not save us from a distance; He saves us by entering our lives exactly as they are.

Today, in the light of the Lord’s Baptism, we have blessed water and chalk. Simple gestures, humble signs, yet filled with deep meaning. We will take them

home not as magical objects, but as reminders of God's living presence in our everyday lives. With holy water we will bless our homes and our families, asking that every room may become a place of peace, forgiveness, and love. With chalk we will mark our doors, not only the doors of our houses, but symbolically the doors of our hearts, saying: here there is room for God; here we want Him to enter and remain in the new year.

The prophet Isaiah presents the servant of the Lord as one who does not cry out, who does not break the bruised reed or extinguish the smouldering wick. This is the image of a God who approaches our fragility with infinite care. Each of us may feel at times like a bent reed: tired, wounded, discouraged. Today we are told that God does not break us, does not abandon us, but gently supports us, even in the most ordinary spaces of our lives: in our homes, in our families, in our daily routines.

Think of a small child learning to walk. He falls again and again. A loving parent does not scold him for falling or tell him he is incapable. The parent lifts him up, encourages him, offers a hand, and invites him to try once more. This is how God is with us. The holy water we use in our homes reminds us of the Father's hand, extended every day, lifting us and whispering: "You are my son, you are my daughter, and I love you."

In the Acts of the Apostles, we are reminded that God shows no partiality, and that Jesus went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed. His baptism is not an isolated moment; it is the beginning of a life given for others. He emerges from the water to walk towards people, towards the sick, the lonely, the lost. When we bless our homes, we are invited to make them places of goodness: spaces where relationships are healed, where listening happens, where forgiveness is practiced. A blessed home is not a home without problems, but one where God is invited to dwell.

Today we are invited to remember our own baptism and to let it continue in our daily lives. The water and the chalk help us not to leave our faith only in the church, but to carry it home, into the places where we live, rejoice, and sometimes suffer. The heaven opened above Jesus remains open for us as well. The Spirit continues to descend, perhaps not in spectacular ways, but quietly and faithfully: in a family prayer, in a sign of the cross made with trust, in a simple blessing spoken with love.

Let us leave here today with hearts made gentler towards ourselves and toward one another. Let the waters of the Lord's Baptism wash away our fear and bless our homes, and let the chalk be a sign of hope for the new year. And like Him, may we enter the world not with noise, but with light; not with judgment, but with love. **Amen.**

• **Mark your front door with blessed chalk – 20+C+M+B+26**

Marking the front door with blessed chalk is a simple but deeply meaningful Christian tradition, often practiced around the feast of the Baptism of the Lord and the Epiphany. It is a visible act of faith, a quiet prayer written on the threshold of our daily lives. The front door represents more than an entrance to a house. It symbolises the boundary between the world and the home, between what we carry inside and what we offer to others. By marking it with blessed chalk, we are entrusting our home and our family to God's care and protection for the new year.

The numbers represent the year – 2026. The letters represent both the names of the Magi – Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar – as well as the phrase "Christus Mansionem Benedicat" which is Latin for "May Christ Bless the House".

This marking is not meant as a superstition or a magical protection, but as a proclamation of faith. It expresses our desire that Christ may dwell in our home, guide all who live there, and bless all who enter and leave.

When people write the blessing, they are reminded that their home is meant to be a place of peace, love, forgiveness, and hospitality. It is also a commitment: just as we ask God to be present in our house, we promise to live in a way that reflects His love within our family and towards others.

In this way, marking the door with blessed chalk becomes a prayer without words, a sign that faith is not confined to the church building but carried into everyday life. Each time we pass through that door, we are reminded that we are God's children, sent to bring His light, peace, and kindness into the world.

• **Prayer for the Blessing of Homes and Families**

Lord God, loving Father, we come before You in this home with grateful hearts. We thank You for the gift of life, for our family, and for Your constant presence among us.

On the feast of the Baptism of Your Son, You revealed Yourself as a Father who loves, a Son who walks with us, and a Spirit who fills us with peace. We invite You now to enter this home and remain with us.

With this blessed water, we remember our own Baptism and renew our trust in You. May this water be for us a sign of Your protection, a reminder that we belong to You, and a source of peace for all who live here and all who enter.

With this blessed chalk, we mark the doors of our home as a sign of our faith and hope. May this sign proclaim that this house belongs to You, that love may dwell here, that forgiveness may be practiced here, and that Your light may guide us throughout this new year.

Bless our family, O Lord. Protect us in our comings and goings. Give us patience in times of tension, strength in moments of trial, and joy in the simple moments we share.

May this home be a place of welcome, a refuge in times of weariness, and a school of love and faith. Keep us united in peace, guard us from all harm, and lead us always closer to You.

We place this home and this family under Your loving care, through Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. Amen.