



## BISHOP RICHARD'S

### Weekly Reflection

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

I remember this time last year, reflecting on the continuing circumstances of the pandemic as we entered 2021. With students in our schools wearing masks and the impact of the Omicron variant felt in so many parts of the world and with talk, even, of further strains of the virus emerging, we might be forgiven for feeling a certain sense of déjà vu as we come into 2022. Let us remember in prayer, very specially, those whose lives continue to be affected as a result of these present circumstances, especially those in the healthcare sector who continue to go the extra mile for those in their care. I also ask you to pray for those in parts of the world where circumstances make the pandemic particularly difficult, and to continue to seek ways to support them.

The Lord – the Word made Flesh – was born in this world riddled with difficulty, conflict and disease. We have celebrated His birth and, at the Epiphany, his manifestation to the world that He came to save. This Sunday, the Gospel takes us thirty years on – to His baptism in the Jordan by John. The Holy Spirit is seen and the voice of the Father proclaims Jesus as "the Beloved" on whom "favor rests". This event marks the beginning of the Lord's public ministry. After the hidden life of Nazareth, the time has come for the Lord to embark upon the three years of preaching, healing and teaching that would lead him to Passion, Death and Resurrection – all for our salvation; all out of love for us. All was done so that, in the words of St Paul in his Letter to Titus, "We should be justified by His grace, to become heirs looking forward to eternal life."

Despite the circumstances in which we find ourselves – no matter how difficult they may be – we can be confident in the power of the Saviour Who has come. There must be something of John the Baptist about us, as we point the

way for others towards the person of Jesus. Now is the time for us to listen to the Prophet Isaiah and to say, as John the Baptist said: "Here is your God."

With every Blessing,

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