

Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time, 17th November 2024

“Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.”

The young Roman soldier stands in an archway in Pompeii as Vesuvius erupts. Protected only by his armour, a short sword and a spear, he is terrified but has no permission to desert his station and escape. He will stay on guard duty although his obedience will cost him his life. Faithful unto Death, a painting by Sir Edward John Poynter, hangs in Liverpool's Walker Art Gallery. We don't know if the Roman soldier really existed because, almost two thousand years later, archaeologists have only excavated about one-third of Pompeii. They are still discovering what happened on that October day in AD 79. They know much about the ordinary daily lives of the city's inhabitants, but tangible evidence also reveals the unexpected terror and, sometimes, the heroism of a parent who died protecting a child.

Today, we remember the poor people of this world, conscious that poverty is often unrelated to finance. A student car park attendant commented that some of his clients receive cars from parents who otherwise remain uninvolved in their children's lives. Busy drop-in cafes and libraries support customers who long for company and recognition. Some torn-apart families struggle to heal the wounds of division. Tragically, we've witnessed families who, through war, lose everything they possess — but discover the riches of love, hope and courage. Sometimes affluence and destitution walk together. Today we pray for all those who experience poverty in whatever form, that they will find the security and hope for which they yearn.

The earth-shattering events which killed the dinosaurs failed to destroy crocodiles and cockroaches. Although the eruption of Vesuvius killed many inhabitants of Pompeii, some survived. Throughout history, false prophets have foretold the date and time of the end of the world. To their surprise and embarrassment, it hasn't happened, and life has continued, seemingly unchanged. At this time of year, the Gospel often carries tales of doom and gloom. Today appears to be no different as we hear about stars falling from the sky — and yet we are offered hope. Jesus foretells the end of the known world and presents something beyond anything we can imagine— everlasting life. False prophets can only indicate a vantage point for their followers to watch the world's destruction before they die. Jesus declares that, yes, the world will end, but life will continue, and he can guarantee it. He uses a tree and time-limited human words to teach his listeners that, as the eternal Word he will accompany them forever and always. In the same way, Jesus' words will go beyond heaven and earth, into eternity. Our beautiful Planet Earth is only a foretaste of the good things to come.

Ever practical, Pope Francis has supplied the homeless people of Rome with showers, a change of clothing, haircuts, food and somewhere to sleep. He also organised for many to enjoy a day out at the seaside and a pizza meal on the way home. “Why not?” he asked. “We all like a day beside the sea.” Simple things can touch the hearts and lives of the poorest people and situations. Of course, in situations of war, there is often very little that we can do, and yet there is also a contribution to world peace which all of us can make, enriching the lives of those around us. There is nothing to stop us closing a door quietly or finding something good to say about even the most irritating person. Even when we are busy, we can become an island of peace which can radiate to other people. We don't need to become messengers of doom and gloom. The Roman soldier who stayed on duty as Vesuvius erupted gave us an example which echoes today even if his obedience might have been misplaced in the circumstances. Some of the most materially poor people in our world are also the most generous because, having suffered themselves, they learn empathy and strive to lessen the sufferings of others. Today, as we celebrate the World Day

of the Poor, we pray for those who are in need and don't know where to look for support. They don't need to feel that they stand on the edge of disaster.

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Noise and food in the church: Dear Parents/Elders: Please note **NO FOOD** in the Church, this a Sacred House of God. Use **SOFT TOYS** to keep children happy and calm. This is always utterly important to remember that: **we are in the presence of a living King and God among us.**

Bridget Cuffe RIP. The Funeral of Bridget Cuffe will take place **on Wednesday 20th November** at 11.00 am.

Holy Hour of Adoration for the Solemnity of Christ the King. In preparation for the Solemnity of Christ the King, we, the parish of St Michael's, are having a HOLY HOUR of ADORATION **next Friday 22nd November, 7.00pm – 8.00pm**, followed by Mass. *Priests will be available for Confession during Adoration.*

Sick & Retired Priests' collection. We take up the annual collection **this weekend (16/17 November)** to help support our Sick and Retired Priests. **This is our chance to say thank you to our sick and retired priests who have given so much.** Please continue to pray for the well-being of all of our clergy: active, retired and ill. **Git Aid donation envelopes are in the narthex.** You can donate online at www.rcdow.org.uk/donations or use the 'QR Code' on the envelopes and posters that you can scan with a phone camera to give online.

There will be a retiring collection at the end of all Masses this weekend.

The Joy of Christmas – our Parish Family Music Evening in the parish hall on **Saturday 7th December**, from 7.00 pm. A night of music and dancing. Buffet food. Tickets: £8.00 per adult; £5 for children (cash or card payment) will be on sale after weekend Masses and from Shenda in the parish office. *One drink and food are included in the price of the ticket. There will be a bar on the night selling drinks and snacks.*

Confirmation 2025. Application Forms are now available on the parish website for children in the parish in Year 9. *Applications are to be made ONLINE only and close on 17th November 2024 (this Sunday).* You can also access the Application Form using the QR code in **Narthex.** **No late applications will be accepted.**

November List. Envelopes for names of your departed loved ones are now available in the narthex. Please place the completed envelopes in the wooden box at the back of the church. Two Masses per week in November will be offered for the souls of your departed families and friends on the November list.

Bingo and Biryani Night. Thank you to all who supported the event last Saturday and to the organisers. We raised £860.00.

Mass Intentions. If you wish to book a Mass, please drop your intention envelope in the box at the back of the church in the offertory collection or through the presbytery letterbox. *Please use the blue donation envelopes if you can make your Mass offering under Gift Aid.*

Bucket Collection. The Bucket Collection is for COSMIC, *a charity that supports the children's and neonatal intensive care units at St Mary's & Queen Charlotte's Hospital by helping patients and their families, and by enabling our dedicated team of nurses and doctors to treat hundreds of babies and children in intensive care.* You will find the donations box in the wall at the back of the church.

Repository Sale. There will be a sale of Repository items, including Christmas cards and gifts, in the narthex after all Masses next **weekend 23rd /24th November.**

Antiques Fair. The next Antiques Fair is on **Saturday 23rd November**, 10.00 to 3.00pm in the parish hall. **Please note** that we will not be running a Jumble Sale for DePaul Trust this November, but will run a Bargain Stall and a Tombla Stall at the November Antiques Fair, to raise money for the DePaul Trust. If you have any small items (NOT CLOTHES) that you would like to donate for these stalls, please call Ann Hogan on 01784 254462.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Fri 22nd Nov	Holy Hour of Adoration for the end of Jubilee Year 2024
Fri 29th Nov	Children's Treasure Hunt
Sun 1st Dec	Children's Treasure Hunt
Sat 7th Dec	Christmas Family Music evening + raffle (<i>tickets now on sale</i>)
Sun 8th Dec	Christmas Bake-off

Feast of St Francis Xavier. We will celebrate the Feast of St Francis Xavier **at St David's Church, Stanwell**, on Saturday, November 30th, with Mass at 4.30pm (please note the change of time) followed by a get-together in St David's parish hall. Please bring a plate of food. There will be a cash bar for drink sales on the day. Any donations for prizes for the raffle will be appreciated. All are welcome. More details from Perpetua on 07448 103186 or Savio on 07459 331213.

Primary School Applications – Signing of Certificates of Catholic Practice (CCP) in St Michael's Presbytery on Tuesday 19th November, 6.45 – 7.30 pm. Please do record this date on your personal calendar - no CCPs will be issued after this date or by an individual appointment.

This Sunday's readings, 17th November Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Daniel 12: 1-13; Hebrews 10:13-14, 18; Mark 13: 24-32

Next Sunday's readings, 24th November, Our Lord Jesus Christ, Universal King

Daniel 7: 13-14; Apocalypse 1: 5-8; John 18: 33-37

Offertory Collection. Thank you for your offertories last week:

Loose Plate £613.76; Envelopes £241.00; Standing Orders £900.00

Contactless £ 152.00 (*The Dona contactless PayPoint is in the narthex*)

MANNA Foodbank. *This week's shortages: Tinned Soup; Tinned **Vegetarian** Meals - Bolognese, Curry, Chilli etc; Cereal/Breakfast Bars; Tinned Green Beans; Single Sachets of Mashed Potato - Smash/Idahoan type; Boxes of Biscuits; Selection Boxes for Children; Sugar Toilet Paper; Laundry Powder/Liquid/Capsules/Tablets; **For our Homeless Clients:-** Basic Tin Openers; Small Torches; Warm Gloves for Men (New pairs only).*

Please leave your donations on the Presbytery doorstep or in the Narthex.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

During Adoration after Saturday morning Mass (and by appointment)

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

To arrange a baptism please refer to the parish website:

(see: Parish Life → Sacramental Preparation → Baptism

For the parish Mass timetable, please refer to the parish website:

<http://parish.rcdow.org.uk/ashford>

Safeguarding If you've any concerns or require advice regarding the safety or well-being of a child or vulnerable adult, please contact our parish safeguarding rep, Tiziana Demurtas on 07778 533932 or ashfordsg@safeguardrcdow.org.uk

You can also contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Team on 020 7798 9356 or

safeguarding@rcdow.org.uk

PLEASE PRAY

for all the sick and housebound in our parish.

for anniversaries in November since 2017: Margaret Curran, Evelyn Gallagher, Eunice Hatch, Neil Hogan, Dennis Holland, Philomena Kenna, Angela King, Catherine Lewis, Georgette Long, Elizabeth McGearthy, Melissa Morgan, Carmen Nunes, Bethany Payne, Domenico Stillitano, Dennis Syberg, Norman Taylor.

for Fr Ulick Loring and the parishioners of Twickenham in the Upper Thames Deanery; and for staff and students of St Mary's College, Twickenham.

for the Holy Father's Prayer Intention that all parents who mourn the loss of a son or daughter find support in their community, and may receive peace of heart from the spirit of consolation.

Mass Intentions 17th -24th November

Sun 17th Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time

(Saturday Vigil Mass)	06.00 pm	Pauline Ng & family's intentions
	09.15 am	The people of the parish
	11.30 am	Deodita Fernandes RIP
	06.00 pm	Victims of childhood trauma

Mon 18th

Tues 19th

Wed 20th

Fri 22nd St Cecilia Virgin and Martyr

	09.15 am	Holy Souls on the November List
	08.00pm	

Sat 23rd 09.15am Silvana Da Cruz RIP

Sun 24th Our Lord Jesus Christ, Universal King

(Saturday Vigil Mass)	06.00 pm	Holy Souls on the November List
	09.15 am	The people of the parish
	11.30 am	Bernie and David Driscoll RIP
	06.00 pm	Victims of childhood trauma

St Michael's Catholic Church

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Email: ashford@rcdow.org.uk

Website: <http://parish.rcdow.org.uk/ashford>

This parish is part of the Westminster Catholic Diocese Trustee Charity no. 233699

Fr Sidon Sagar FDP: Parish Priest, Fr Carlo Mazzotta FDP: Assistant Priest

Parish Secretary: Mrs Shenda Holmes

Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 9.00 am – 1.00 pm