

# Our Lord Jesus Christ, Universal King, 24<sup>th</sup> November 2024

**“Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.”**

If we were to play a game of word association, and we chose the word “king”, it’s likely we’d come up with related words such as “privilege”, “wealth”, “palaces”, “status”, “monarch sovereign”, “power”, and so on. Kings, queens, and members of royal families enjoy lifestyles we can only imagine, and they’re shown a deference few other members of society are afforded. Kings and queens, then, aren’t thought to be like most human beings — if they were, they’d appear “ordinary” and would lose that certain mystery and “otherness” required to maintain their position. It’d seem very odd to bump into a king buying his morning newspaper in the local newsagents, or to find yourself having your hair done in the same hairdresser’s as a queen! Royalty, its trappings and status mean “not being like everyone else” in order to enjoy the privilege and prestige that goes with being a monarch.

This image of what it is to be a king, to be “royal”, couldn’t be in stark contrast to the man mockingly called “the King of the Jews” in today’s Gospel: Jesus Christ. How could it be that a king spent his life wandering from town to town, with nowhere to lay his head, never mind owning a palace; who wasn’t respected by political and religious leaders, but was despised by them; who, instead of being a pillar of the establishment, upset the establishment so much they had him crucified between two thieves?

When we read about how Jesus lived and died it’s as far removed as we can get from our idea of monarchy and yet the Church today celebrates the solemnity of “Christ the King”. Christ is King, not because he’s been invested as such by human beings, but by God. Christ is sovereign of the universe because he’s the image, or manifestation, of God, and he created all things; he holds all things together: without him, the Universe wouldn’t function. He’s supreme over all things; the first to rise from the dead; who reconciled the world and us to God; the head of his Body, the Church. Jesus’ reign isn’t over a country or even a continent, but over the whole Universe, because he created it. This has implications for how we treat the world, and in the future, how we treat space. The world, indeed, the Universe, belongs to God. It isn’t ours to do what we like with it. We must, instead, treat it with the respect it deserves as God’s creation, not exploiting it for commercial gain, but sharing its resources for the benefit of all.

In today’s Gospel, Jesus is mercilessly mocked as “King of the Jews”, a title given to Jesus by Pontius Pilate as a way of poking fun at the Jewish leaders. The irony is that not only is he king of the Jews, but king, or Lord, of all creation. Jesus’ idea of kingship and kingdoms subverts our conventional understanding of these terms: his understanding of them has nothing to do with power — he spent his life avoiding that. It’s not about being superior or having immense wealth but, rather, about being of service to our neighbour, putting him or her first whenever necessary. Jesus’ kingdom doesn’t consist of vast swathes of countryside whilst being a kingdom where justice and peace reign. It’s a kingdom for the oppressed, the underprivileged, those without power.

**So, Jesus is our king, but we’re more than subjects. We’re his brothers and sisters, members of a Royal Family: God’s family. To see others who are less wealthy, or less privileged, or have a different accent or skin colour from us as being royal, with all the dignity that term implies, means we can’t look down on them, because in God’s kingdom we all have equal value and worth. Whether we’re poor or rich, able-bodied or have disability, old or young, black or white, God loves us equally.** Over the centuries, history has seen many monarchies, many kings and queens, come and go: their reigns came to an

end. Today we celebrate Christ as Universal King, a king whose reign won't end. Above all, Christ wants to reign in our hearts, and if we let him do so, the world can indeed be transformed into a kingdom of justice, peace and harmony. Today we acknowledge that our God, in Christ, does indeed reign supreme!

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**November List.** Envelopes for the 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.

**Monthly Coffees after Sunday 9.15 am Mass.** The next date for coffee is **Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> December.** From January 2025, coffees will be on the first Sunday of the month, rather than on the second Sunday.

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**The Joy of Christmas** – our Parish Family Music Evening in the parish hall on **Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December**, from 7.00 pm. A night of music - singing 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.*

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## **CRIB and CLEANING.**

Dear Parishioners, We are reaching out to our wonderful community with a heartfelt request for volunteers. **On Friday, 6<sup>th</sup> December, and Saturday, 7<sup>th</sup> December, we will be gathering to put up and decorate the Crib and clean the church in preparation for the festive season.**

Your help would be greatly appreciated in making our church a warm and welcoming place for all who visit during this special time of year. If you can assist, please speak to Shenda in the parish office or send an email to [ashford@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:ashford@rcdow.org.uk). Thank you for your continued support and dedication to our parish community.

*In Christ Jesus, Fr Sidon Sagar, Parish Priest.*

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**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 new blue donation envelopes if you can make your Mass offering under Gift Aid.*

**Bucket Collection.** The Bucket Collection is for COSMIC. You will find the donation box in the wall at the back of the church.

**Assisted Suicide Bill.** If you would like to vote against the upcoming Assisted Suicide Bill on 29<sup>th</sup> November, you will find some postcards in the narthex.

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

**Parish Pastoral Council.** You will find the minutes from our last meeting on the parish website (*under the Parish Life tab*).

**Ladies Circle.** We meet on Thursday **28<sup>th</sup> November** at 8.00 pm in the parish hall. **Christmas Meal money must be paid at this meeting.** Also please give in your menu choices.

**First Holy Communion 2024.** We still have in the parish office a number of Baptism Certificates that were handed in at Registration **for last year's programme.** Please collect from Shenda in the parish office at your earliest convenience.

**Feast of St Francis Xavier.** We will celebrate the Feast of St Francis Xavier **at St David's Church, Stanwell, on Saturday, 30<sup>th</sup> November,** 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.

**Feltham Choral Society (Ashford).** Our annual Christmas Concert is on **Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December** at 7.30 pm **at our new venue – St Matthew's Church, Ashford.** Works by Bach and popular Christmas Carols, Tickets are £10.00 each, cash only. All welcome!

**This Sunday's readings, 24<sup>th</sup> November, Our Lord Jesus Christ, Universal King**

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

**Next Sunday's readings, 1 December, First Sunday of Advent**

*Jeremiah 33: 14-16; 1 Thessalonians 3:12 – 4: 2; Luke 21: 25-28, 34-36*

**Offertory Collection.** *Thank you for your offertories last week:*

Loose Plate **£595.96**; Envelopes **£282.30**; Standing Orders £900.00

Contactless £ 178.00 (*The Dona contactless PayPoint is in the narthex*)

**MANNA Foodbank.** This week's shortages: *Long-Life Full Fat Milk (Blue); Tinned Soup; inned Vegetarian Meals - Bolognese, Curry, Chilli etc; 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; Shaving Foam/Gel; Liquid Handwash; Toothpaste and Toothbrushes for 0-2 years; Toothpaste and Toothbrushes for 6+ years. For our Homeless Clients:- Basic Tin Openers and Small Torches.*

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

**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](mailto:safeguarding@rcdow.org.uk)

## **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>**

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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 McGearty, 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.

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## Mass Intentions 24<sup>th</sup> November – 1<sup>st</sup> December

Sun 24 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Our Lord Jesus Christ, Universal King</b>		
(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
Mon 25 <sup>th</sup>	09.15 am		Ranjith Amarasekera RIP
Tues 26 <sup>th</sup>	09.15 am		Holy Souls on the November List
Wed 27 <sup>th</sup>	06.00 pm		Joseph Ng Mau Teck RIP
Fri 29 <sup>th</sup>	09.15 am		Susan Amarasekera RIP
Sat 30 <sup>th</sup>	<b>St Andrew, Apostle</b>		
	09.15 am		Holy Souls on the November List
Sun 1 <sup>st</sup>	<b>First Sunday of Advent – Happy New Year</b>		
(Saturday Vigil Mass)	06.00 pm		The people of the parish
	09.15 am		Anna Maria Corgiolu Demurtas RIP
	11.30 am		Neil Loony intentions (sick)
	06.00 pm		Bernard Wick RIP

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## St Michael's Catholic Church

112 Clarendon Road, Ashford, Middlesex TW15 2QD

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Email: [ashford@rcdow.org.uk](mailto: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