

Thirty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time, 3rd November 2024

"You are not far from the kingdom of God."



Modern life gives us access to lives and communities we might once have known only through the memoirs of intrepid travellers. Now we just switch on the television or the internet and anything, anyone or anywhere is laid out before us. It is a pity if we treat remote, Indigenous societies superficially and unthinkingly, as passing examples of how other people's live, for they often teach and challenge us. This is particularly true when we are introduced to groups of people whose lives might appear exotic and less complicated than ours; what we might miss is how coherent and caring they are. They cultivate a symbiotic relationship with the nature that surrounds them. Their

hierarchies exclude nobody from their care and concern unless someone commits infractions which breach the unwritten laws and practices of the community. Everyone has a role to play in the life of the group. That is how they survive. Strangers in their midst receive particular care because people recognise that they will be vulnerable in a world that can be dangerous. Perhaps these patterns of mutual support are easier to maintain in small communities, but their success challenges our assumptions that our more sophisticated approach to living is thereby more civilised. One suspects the opposite is often true.

As Jesus comes to the end of his public career, he rounds up his teaching by having final exchanges with his old adversaries, the scribes, the Pharisees and the Sadducees. In St Matthew's Gospel, this discussion takes place with a Pharisee. Here, it is with a scribe. His message is the same. When you examine the Law, the Torah, and the first five books of the Old Testament, the instructions that stand out are these two great commandments: the love of God and the love of our neighbour as ourselves. Jesus has attempted to illustrate, through his life and teaching, how these two commandments may be lived out in practice. His criticism of his adversaries is that they say one thing and do another. They don't necessarily carry out these commands themselves, but they load up their listeners with a variety of rules that bear little relationship to these more fundamental principles of life. His critics are judgmental rather than compassionate, imposing burdens rather than healing or heartening. Jesus offers a life of service which lifts burdens, restores and nourishes in both word and deed. To see and practise this is to be close to the kingdom of God, that is, to be a channel of God's loving presence in the world. Sometimes people feel uncertain about how to love themselves, but Jesus' life reveals the intimate link between the love of self and of our neighbour. We shouldn't exploit our neighbours or mistreat ourselves. Our concern and respect for our neighbour help give a true form to the concern and respect we have for ourselves.

In the Synod held last year in Rome the concluding synthesis document concentrated less on the subjects that had been discussed and more on how they had been considered by what they termed "the synodal path". What had been important was the careful listening and exchange of views between lay, religious, clerical and episcopal voices. Theologically, this approach was founded upon the trinitarian nature of God and the lived experience of these two great commandments. The Synod document reflected on the individual concerns that had been raised but did so, not as edicts, but as matters for further reflection, hoping that the synodal process might be adopted by individual episcopal conferences, dioceses, parochial and other groups and might become the way we tackle

all issues in our Christian lives. It is a bold challenge, but it is rooted in the great commandments. If we cannot practise them in the way we discuss, codify and guide our faith, how can we be sure we have remained on the right track? The trickling down of this approach to the local level will take time, and the pace will differ across countries and local communities. Some may find the synodal approach threatening and others will be impatient to move on faster. The synodal process aims to find ways in which all the diverse groups feel respected, heard and freed in their faith to practise more fully these two great commandments.

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All Souls Day, Saturday 2nd November. Mass for All Souls at 9.15 am.

November Blessing of Graves. On Saturday 9th November I will be blessing the graves of members of your family in Long Lane Cemetery at 11.00 am, Staines Cemetery at 2.00 pm and Stanwell Cemetery at 3.00 pm.

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.

John Patrick Murphy RIP. The Funeral of John Patrick Murphy will take place on **Friday 15th November** at 11.00 am.

Monthly Coffees after Sunday 9.15 am Mass. Please do go through to the hall after Mass this **Sunday 3rd November** (the first Sunday of the month to avoid Remembrance Sunday on the 10th).

From January 2025, monthly coffees will be on the **first Sunday of the month.**

First Holy Communion Applications are now closed. Those who have applied by the closing date will hear from the catechists shortly.

Confirmation 2025. Application Forms are now available on the parish website for children in the parish in Year 9. You can also access the Application Form using the QR code in **Narthex.** No late applications will be accepted.

Bingo & Biryani Night on Saturday 9th November 2024 from 7.00 pm in the Parish Hall, followed by Board Games (*bring your games to share*). Tickets (includes food & 1 Bingo ticket) will be on sale in the narthex after all weekend Masses or from Shenda in the Parish Office **until 3rd November-** Adults - £10.00; Children aged 8 to 10 - £5.00 (*under 8 free*). Bring your own drinks. All are welcome.

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

Advent My Day by Day booklets are now available in the narthex, £1.00. Please place the money in the Publications Box in the wall in the narthex.

Antiques Fair. The next Antiques Fair is on **Saturday 23rd November**, from 10.00 to 3.00 pm 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.

Tony and Ann are always looking for help with setting up (Friday evening) and clearing away (from about 3.00 pm). If you are able to help, please call Ann.

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.

St Michael's School Open Mornings. If your child is due to start Reception in September 2025, please come along to one of the Open Mornings at St Michael Catholic Primary School on Wednesday, **13th November, 9.30-11.30 am** or **Friday, 15th November, 9.30-11.30 am.** We encourage only parents to attend. More information from <https://www.st-michaels.surrey.sch.uk/reception/>

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 donation box in the wall at the back of the church.

Feast of St Francis Xavier. We will celebrate the Feast of St Francis Xavier **at St David's Church, Stanwell** on Saturday 30th November with Mass at 12 noon, 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 at 07459331213.

This Sunday's readings, 3rd November, Thirty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time

Deuteronomy 6: 2-6; Hebrews 7: 23-28; Mark 12: 28-34

Next Sunday's readings, 10th November Thirty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time

1 Kings 17: 10-16; Hebrews 9:24-28; Mark 12: 38-44

Offertory Collection.

Thank you for your offertories last week:

Loose Plate **£677.81**; Envelopes **£144.50**; Standing Orders £900.00

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

MANNA Foodbank. This week's shortages:

Sugar, Tinned Vegetarian Meals - Bolognese, Curry, Chilli etc., Cereal/Breakfast Bars, Tinned Mixed Vegetables, Tinned Green Beans, Wrapped Chocolate Biscuits - Penguins, Kit Kats etc., Instant Mashed Potato - Smash type, Crisps, Toilet Paper, Shaving Foam/Gel, For our Homeless Clients:- Basic Tin Openers, Small Torchos, Warm Gloves for Men (New pairs only). 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

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>

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 03rd – 10th November

Sat	2 nd	06.00pm	Munidasa Saparamadu RIP
Sun	3 rd	Thirty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time	
		09.15am	The people of the parish
		11.30am	Patricia Gillespie intentions
		06.00pm	Patrick Joseph Young RIP
Mon	4 th	St Charles Borromeo, Bishop	
		09.15am	Holy Souls
Tues	5 th	09.15am	Holy Souls
Wed	6 th	06.00pm	Bette and Robert Houlihan RIP
Fri	8 th	09.15am	Holy Souls on the November List
Sat	9 th	The Dedication of the Lateran Basilica	
		09.15am	In thanksgiving to St Jude Tadeo
Sun	10 th	Thirty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time	
(Saturday Vigil Mass)		06.00pm	Holy Souls on the November List
		09.15am	Epifania and Rosa Gonsalves RIP
		11.30am	Deannah Mootosamy intentions
		06.00pm	The people of the parish

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