



CATHOLIC CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY & ST. AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY



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Third Sunday of Easter 4th May 2025

The Conclave: Choosing Peter's Successor

The conclave is one of the most sacred and solemn events in the life of the Catholic Church. Rooted in centuries of tradition, it is the process by which a new pope is chosen—the successor of St. Peter, the one entrusted by Christ to “feed my sheep” (John 21:17). This moment holds deep historical, spiritual, and ecclesial significance for Catholics around the world.

The word *conclave* comes from the Latin *cum clave*, meaning “with a key,” referring to the cardinals being locked away in seclusion as they discern the will of the Holy Spirit. This tradition began in the 13th century, following delays and political interference in papal elections. Today, after the death or resignation of a pope, all cardinals under the age of 80 gather in the Sistine Chapel to elect his successor through a series of secret ballots. A two-thirds majority is required for a valid election, and each vote is offered in silence and prayer, seeking not personal interest but God's will.

As smoke rises from the chapel chimney—black for no decision, white for a new pope—the world waits. But behind this visible sign is a deeper reality: the belief that the Holy Spirit guides the Church, even through human weakness.

This brings us to the heart of the matter. The new pope, whoever he may be, is not chosen for perfection, charisma, or worldly power. Like Peter, he is a man called despite his imperfections. When Jesus asked Peter three times, “Do you love me?” it was not to test his worthiness, but to affirm his mission. Peter had denied Jesus, yet was still chosen to lead.

The same is true today. The new pope will be a man of faith, called not to rule as a king, but to serve as a shepherd. His election will set the tone for the Church's journey in a complex and changing world—how we proclaim the Gospel, defend human dignity, and care for the poor and marginalized.

As Catholics, we are invited to pray for the conclave, for the cardinals, and for the man who will emerge as our next Holy Father. May he, like

Peter, love Christ deeply and guide the Church with humility and courage.

Fire of Love

There are two places in Scripture where the curious detail of a “charcoal fire” is mentioned. One is in today's Gospel, where the Apostles return from fishing to find bread and fish warming on the fire. The other is in the scene in the High Priest's courtyard on Holy Thursday, where Peter and some guards and slaves warm themselves while Jesus is being interrogated inside. At the first fire, Peter denied knowing Jesus three times, as Jesus had predicted.

Today's charcoal fire becomes the scene of Peter's repentance, as three times Jesus asks him to make a profession of love. Jesus' thrice repeated command, “feed My sheep,” shows that Peter is being appointed as the shepherd of the Lord's entire flock, the head of His Church. Jesus' question, “Do you love me more than these?” is a pointed reminder of Peter's pledge to lay down his life for Jesus, even if the other Apostles might. Jesus then explains just what Peter's love and leadership will require, foretelling Peter's death by crucifixion (“you will stretch out your hands”).

Before His own death, Jesus had warned the Apostles that they would be hated as He was hated, that they would suffer as He. We see the beginnings of that persecution in today's First Reading. Flogged as Jesus was, the Apostles nonetheless leave “rejoicing that they have been found worthy to suffer.”

Their joy is based on their faith that God will change their “mourning into dancing,” as we sing in today's Psalm. By their sufferings, they know, they will be counted worthy to stand in heaven before “the Lamb that was slain,” a scene glimpsed in today's Second Reading.

Missio Red Box Scheme: Would like to thank members of the scheme for raising £799.44 in 2024 through the Red Boxes including individuals giving directly.

Sunday Readings: Parish Mass Book Page 259

St John's Catholic Primary School - Recent Catholic Schools Inspection

Congratulations to St John's who were recognised as a place of faith, learning and care. They have been graded **Good overall**, with **Good in Religious Education**, and **Outstanding in Catholic Life and Mission** and **Outstanding in Collective Worship**. Comments taken from the report:

A School Rooted in Christ: Inspectors described St John's as a 'joyful and welcoming community of faith', with Christ clearly at the heart of everything we do. Our mission statement, "*Let the light of Christ shine in us*," isn't just a motto—it's something your children live out every single day.

Pupil Leadership and Compassion: Our children were recognised not only as enthusiastic learners but also as compassionate leaders. From Hope Ambassadors to the school council, they actively shape a community of kindness and action.

Worship that Inspires: Collective Worship was judged as Outstanding, with a beautiful variety of prayer opportunities enriching school life. Inspectors were struck by our children's reverence, joy, and the strength of our partnership with the parish. The prayerful atmosphere at St John's was seen and felt.

Outstanding Leadership and Vision: Our governors and leadership team were recognised for their strong vision and deep commitment to the Church's mission.

2025 Parish Dates for your Diary

Saturday 10th May - First Holy Communion Mass: 11.00am.

Sunday 18th May - Confirmation Mass: Bishop Paul McAleenan will confirm the candidates at the 10.30am Mass.

Sunday 6th July - Open Air Mass: 10.30am in the church grounds. *This is the only Mass that weekend.*

Please speak to Fr. Denis if you have any questions regarding these events.



Your Prayers Are Asked For:



We pray for the sick and housebound in the parish, especially Peter Comiski, Ray Carter and for those who care for and support them. We remember those who have died recently, especially Robert Darling and all those whose anniversaries occur about this time:

Bridget Bolton, James Johnson, Teresa Hyams, Kenneth Woodruff, Francis Foy, Johan Kiausus, Eileen Simmons, Hugh Toal, John Albone, Edward Cybulski, Agnes Hughes, James Tracey, Mary Day.

Mass Times and Intentions

Sat 3 rd	8.30pm	Gerald Williams - Repose of the Soul
Sun 4 th	8.30am 10.30am	Frank Foy - RIP Gerald Murphy - RIP 1 st Anniversary
Mon 5 th	10.00am	
Tue 6 th	10.00am	
Wed 7 th	10.00am	
Thu 8 th	10.00am	Katherine Raven - RIP
Fri 9 th	No Mass	

Please note that mass intentions as set out above may not always be read out, but the intention is offered.

Holy Hour: Saturday 5.15 - 6.15 pm

Confessions: Saturday 5.45 - 6.15 pm

Or by appointment with Fr. Denis.

Children's Liturgy: Takes place during the 10.30am Mass except on the First Sunday of the Month (Family Mass) and during school holidays.

The Vigil Mass (6.30pm) and the Sunday Mass (10.30am) can be watched online via the Parish Facebook Page: **Catholic Church of the Holy Trinity and St Augustine of Canterbury.**

Contacts

Parish Safeguarding Officers have responsibility for promoting good and safe practices in all activities involving children, young people, and adults at risk within the Parish.

Patricia Cusack: Baldocksg2@safeguardrcdow.org.uk
Colette Murphy: Baldocksg3@safeguardrcdow.org.uk

Our Catholic Schools

St. John's Catholic Primary School, Baldock
T: 01462 892478 W: stjohns4.herts.sch.uk
The Saint John Henry Newman School, Stevenage, T: 01438 314643 W: jhn.herts.sch.uk

John O'Neil is the Lister Hospital RC Chaplain

Mob: 07876 526935 or T: 01438 285518

Baptisms, First Holy Communion, Confirmation, Weddings and Funerals for further details please speak to Fr. Denis, look at the website or contact the parish office.

Church Hall Bookings the church hall is available to be booked for groups or celebrations. Please contact the parish office for more details.

Baldock Catholic Scout Group for boys & girls aged 6-14. Contact: enquiries@2ndbaldockscouts.org.uk

To receive an email copy of the Newsletter, please visit our website:
parish.rcdow.org.uk/baldock and click on 'Subscribe to Alerts' at the bottom of the page.