



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



PP: Fr Denis Sarsfield. Parish Office: 01462 893127. Email: Baldock@rcdow.org.uk

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time 1st February 2026



This Sunday we stand at the beginning of one of the most beloved sections of the Gospel: **The Beatitudes**. In Matthew 5:1-12, Jesus ascends the mountain, sits down, and begins to teach—not with commands, but with blessings. The mountain evokes Sinai, yet instead of thunder and law, we receive a portrait of the Christian heart. Jesus reveals not what we must *do*, but who we are called to *be*.

The Beatitudes overturn the world's expectations. They bless the poor in spirit, the meek, the mourning, the merciful, the pure of heart, the peacemakers, and the persecuted. These are not the qualities our culture typically celebrates, yet Jesus tells us that these are the ones who truly see God, inherit the earth, and receive the Kingdom. The Beatitudes are less a checklist and more a mirror: they invite us to look honestly at our lives and ask where God's grace is trying to shape us.

To be "poor in spirit" is not to lack dignity or worth, but to recognise our dependence on God. To be "meek" is not weakness, but strength under God's guidance. To "hunger and thirst for righteousness" is to long for God's justice in a world that often settles for comfort. And to be "peacemakers" is to imitate Christ Himself, who reconciles heaven and earth.

This week the Church gives us two luminous feasts that echo the Beatitudes beautifully.

The Presentation of the Lord - 2 February

On Tuesday we celebrate the Presentation of the Lord, also known as Candlemas. Forty days after Christmas, Mary and Joseph bring Jesus to the Temple, offering Him to the Father. Simeon and Anna, two elderly prophets, recognise the child

as the Light of the Nations. Their long years of waiting, prayer, and humility reflect the very spirit of the Beatitudes. They show us that holiness often grows quietly, in patience and fidelity.

As candles are blessed this day, we remember that Christ is the Light who shines in our darkness—and that we are called to carry that light into the world. The Beatitudes describe what that light looks like when lived: mercy, purity, peace, and courage.

Saint Agatha - 5 February

Later in the week we honour **St Agatha**, a young woman of Sicily who gave her life for Christ in the 3rd century. Her steadfastness in the face of persecution embodies the final Beatitude: "*Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake.*" Agatha's purity of heart, her courage, and her unwavering trust in God continue to inspire Christians across the centuries. She reminds us that holiness is not abstract—it is lived in the body, in daily choices, and sometimes in heroic witness.

Saints of the Week

- **St Blaise (3 February)** - Bishop and martyr, patron of throats, reminding us of the healing power of blessing.
- **St Laurence, Dunstan and Theodore Archbishops of Westminster.**
- **St Paul Miki & Companions (6 February)** - Japanese martyrs whose fidelity to Christ even unto death reveals the depth of Christian hope.

Quotes of the Week

"Holiness consists simply in doing God's will, and being just what God wants us to be." - St Thérèse of Lisieux

"The Beatitudes are the identity card of the Christian." - Pope Francis

"Christ is the Morning Star who never sets." - St Bede

As we listen to the Beatitudes today, may we allow Christ to shape our hearts. May the Light revealed at the Presentation guide our steps, and may the courage of St Agatha strengthen us to live the Gospel with joy.

Parish Volunteers with a DBS Please check your emails as a message re updated safeguarding requirements has been sent out. Thank you to those who have already responded and informed us. Colette & Patricia.

Cake Sale in Aid of Marie Curie I'm running the London Marathon on the 26th April & Fr Denis has very kindly let me host a cake sale on weekend 14th & 15th Feb. It is to help me raise vital funds for Marie Curie. I am hoping the parishioners will help me in reaching my target of 2.5k (I'm half way there) If you would like to bake, buy or just donate I'd be more than grateful. Thank you Eilish. *Plates will be handed out next weekend.*

Pancake Day - Celebrate with other families within the parish come along for pancakes, fun and get ideas as to how you can celebrate Lent.



2026 Parish Dates for your Diary

Saturday 14th & Sunday 15th February - Cake Sale: Will take place after each weekend Mass.
Tuesday 17th February - Pancake Day: 3pm
Saturday 9th May - First Holy Communion Mass: 11.00am.
Sunday 31st May - Confirmation Mass: Bishop Paul McAleenan will confirm the candidates at the 10.30am Mass.

Your Prayers Are Asked For:

We pray for the sick and housebound in the parish, especially *Fr. Philip, Tony Galvin, Mairead Kirk, Liz McCaul* and for those who care for and support them. We remember those who have died recently, and all those whose anniversaries occur about this time:
Peter Francis, Isabella Brogden, Thomas Burke, Sr. Ailbe O'Callaghan, Annie Bartram, Nicholas D'Addario, Mary Anne Draper, Francis Ive, Helen Glennon, Catherine Stormont, Edith Smith, Norman Tuthill, Susan McKeand, John Johnson, Jean Harrington.

Mass Times and Intentions

Sat 31st	6.30pm	<i>Jonalyn Austin - RIP</i>
Sun 1st	8.30am 10.30am	<i>Francesca Corrigan's intentions James Huliganga - RIP</i>
Mon 2nd	10.00am	<i>Christina Pal - Intention</i>
Tue 3rd	10.00am	St Laurence, Dunstan and Theodore Archbishops of Westminster
Wed 4th	10.00am	<i>James Huliganga - RIP</i>
Thu 5th	10.00am	<i>St Agatha</i>
Fri 6th	No Mass	St Paul Miki

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.