

Sacred Heart Church, Berkhamsted





✠ **Twenty-Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time - Year A, 20th September 2026, Divine Office: Wk. 1**

"The Lord is close to all who call him, who call on him in truth."

The readings of last Sunday's liturgy focused on the need to practice forgiveness. We are called always to follow in the footsteps of God who forgives all our sins, and forgive those who hurt and offend us.

The readings this Sunday further reinforces this truth about God being forgiving, compassionate and gratuitous in his dealings with us.

In the text of the **First Reading**, given towards the end of the Babylonian captivity (587–537 BC), Isaiah seeks to offer hope to the exiled people of God and calls on them to be trustful and take the first steps back to Jerusalem where and when the Lord can be found. They, as well as us, are reminded that God treats in a gratuitous and merciful way the man who sincerely repents of their wrong doings and turns back to him.

The **Psalmist**, himself having had a taste of divine compassion and abounding mercy, sings in praise of God. In a sense, he invites us also to draw near so that we can taste and see the goodness of the Lord. That he is not our enemy, but our loving Father. As with the exiles in the **First Reading**, we need to take the first step back to God.

The life of St Paul is an example of the transformation the gift of God's forgiveness and love brings in the life of all who turn to him from their heart. Having tasted the unimaginable goodness of the Lord, St Paul longs as much to be with him in heaven as to continue the work given to him by the Lord to preach the Good News to all. – **Second Reading.** Thus, whether we live or die let it be for the Lord and one another.

In the **Gospel Passage**, Jesus uses the parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard to hone in more on how God's ways often differ from our ways of thinking and acting. Reading the passage, one's initial reaction may resonate with the first labourers in their feeling of being 'unjustly' remunerated. Whatever we may think, it is also worth asking what might have been the circumstances of those who were hired later and who received same wage as the first. Remember the parable is about God's generosity, and not economics and numbers. It is about how God seeks and meets each one where they are, to give them the opportunity to participate in the new life in Christ. *"The Lord is good to all, compassionate to all his creatures"!*

May the unconditional love and generosity of God continue to urge us on, and through us spread to all whom we meet in the coming week and beyond.

Order of Mass: Page 5. Readings, Page 131. **1st** Isa. 55:6-9.
Ps 145(144):2-3. 8-9. 17-18. ℟. 18a.
2nd Phi. 1:20c-24, 27a. **Gospel** Matt. 20:1-16. **EP: III** page 27

Sacred Heart RC Church, Park Street, Berkhamsted, HP4 1HX
Tel: 01442 863 845
Email: berkhamsted@rcdow.org.uk
Website: https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/berkhamsted/
(Office Hours: 10:00am-2.00pm, Mon, Tue and Thurs.)

Parish Priest - Fr Joseph Okoro: josephokoro@rcdow.org.uk
Administrator – Laura Etson: berkhamsted@rcdow.org.uk
Parish Safeguarding Representatives (PSRs):
Margaret Atwill – berkhamstedsg@safeguardrcdow.org.uk
Pauline McDonnell - berkhamstedsg1@safeguardrcdow.org.uk

Liturgies of Initiation for RCIA Candidates – This Sunday at the 10am Mass, we celebrate with joy the Rite of acceptance into the Order of Catechumens for two of our new catechumens and the Rite of Welcome our Confirmation candidate. Please keep them in your prayers.

Altar Servers Pilgrimage to Westminster Cathedral – On Saturday 3rd October at 2:30pm, our parish altar servers will be making a pilgrimage to our Mother Church, Westminster Cathedral, where they will join other altar servers across the country for the 2026 Guilds of St Stephen National Mass, which will be celebrated by Archbishop Richard Moth. Please keep them in your prayers.

Sacramental Preparation Registration 2026/2027 – We welcome expression of interest from parents whose children will be in school years 3 to 6, whose children would like to receive First Holy Communion. The same goes to those who will be in year 9 and above who would like to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. All, as a matter of fact, should be practising the faith and attending Mass regularly. For expression of interest, please email Fr. Joseph - josephokoro@rcdow.org.uk. Both sacramental programmes will be run here at Sacred Heart.

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) – We welcome all those who would like to become a Roman Catholic, or be received into full communion with the Catholic Church, or receive the Sacrament of Confirmation as an adult next year. Please email Fr Joseph to express your interest – josephokoro@rcdow.org.uk

Caritas Parish Representative - Caritas Westminster is looking for new Parish Representatives, they act as a link between the parish and Caritas, helping to share information, support existing initiatives, and encourage new ways for parishioners to put their faith into action. The role is flexible, requiring a few hours each month. Reps are also invited to gatherings, webinars and networking opportunities with others across the Diocese. If you are interested in finding out more about becoming a Caritas Parish Representative, please contact Fran Moore: francesmoore@rcdow.org.uk 07919 812735

Faith in Action – Frances Moore will be visiting Sacred Heart on the **Sat. 26th at 5pm, Sun. 27th at 8:30am & 10am** to speak about Faith in Action. They will be running the CYMFed Faith in Action Award for young people aged 14-16. The Faith in Action Award builds on what young people already experience in serving others, asking them to reflect upon it so that they may find new ways of living out and exploring their faith. If you are interested in participating, or know a young person who would be, please contact Fran Moore: francesmoore@rcdow.org.uk 07919 812735

Magnifica Humanitatis - Do you want to find out more about Pope Leo's recent letter to the church? If so, there is an opportunity to do so on Saturday 17th October when Sr MaryAnne Francalanza fcJ will lead a day of reflection, prayer and discussion centred on the themes raised in Magnifica Humanitatis. Time: 11am-4.45pm. Venue: St Alban & St Stephen, 14 Beaconsfield Road, AL1 3RB. Cost: Donations welcome. Refreshments available: tea, coffee, soup & roll. To register: Please email stalbans@rcdow.org.uk

Seniors' Light Lunch - the next lunch is on **Thursday 24th September** in the church hall, after 12.00 Mass (lunch12.30 - 14.00). Do come along and bring a friend. There is an attendance sheet at the back of the church, please sign if you are able to come; any transport issues, let us know on sheet. No charge and lovely!

Evangelii Gaudium Appeal – This weekend, we will have a second collection for the Evangelii Gaudium Appeal. The appeal supports the work of the Church in bringing the joy of the Gospel to those most in need, helping communities and initiatives that share Christ's love and hope. Please support the appeal if you are able. Every contribution, however large or small, makes a difference. Thank you for your generosity and continued support.

Requiem Mass – for the late Jeffery Cawley will be celebrated on Tuesday 29th September at 11:00am, here at Sacred Heart. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family. We encourage all Parishioners who can, to please attend the Requiem Mass. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family. May he rest in peace and rise in glory. Amen.

Offertory Collections – 13/09/2026
Weekly Loose Plate – £131.03
Weekly Contactless - £70.00
Thank you to every one for your support to our Parish.

August 2026 Offertory
Standing Orders: £6,059.00
Loose Plate/Contactless: £1,409.79
Total: £7,468.79

Contactless Donation Machine – Donations for Mass stipends, votive candles, building maintenance fund, flowers for the Church and offertory can also be made using the contactless machine or the QR code below. You can also gift-aid your donation if you are a UK taxpayer.

Online Giving – Should you wish to become a regular online donor please use the Parish bank details below.
WRCDT Berkhamsted
Sort Code 40-05-20
Ac. Number 31264354
Do use your name for reference. To gift-aid your donations, please ask Fr Joseph or Laura for a Gift-aid Form. Thank you for your continued generosity.

QR Code to enable donation via mobile

Mass Intentions – Please call, email or visit the parish office to book Masses for your intentions, or use the blue envelopes at the back of the church. The Diocesan suggested donation is £10.00. Thank you. If making a donation online, please use 'MASS STIPEND' and the date of the mass as your reference.

Blessed Sacrament Lamp – Recommended donation for one-week sponsorship for intentions is £5. Ring the office for availability. Intention cards are also available from the office.

Discover Reception at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School Berkhamsted! –
Upcoming reception tours:
Tuesday 10th November - doors open from 9 - 9:15 -10:15am
Monday 23rd November - doors open from 9 - 9:15 -10:15am
Monday 11th January - doors open from 1:45 - 2 -3pm
Please complete this form to book a place on one of our tours:
https://forms.gle/XHRAVXaagoCuDQNa8
If you are considering St Thomas More for your child, we warmly encourage you to come and see our school. There is no better way to get a feel for our community than to walk through our doors, meet our children and staff, and experience St Thomas More first-hand.

First Fundraiser of the Year: St Thomas More PTA Quiz Night! - Join us for a fun night out with great food and great company! Friday 9th October. Don't worry if you don't have a full team or are coming on your own—we'll mix and match to build fabulous teams on the night. Gather your best quizzers and book your spot today! Doors 7pm, Quiz 7.30pm. Quiz & Curry £20pp. Please email contactstmsa@gmail.com for tickets.

Mary's Meals - We hope you all had a lovely summer! We're gearing up for more fundraising for Mary's Meals, made possible only through your wonderful help and support – thank you. Our next stall will be on the High Street on Saturday 26th September. If you have any items you no longer need, or you're able to lend a hand, please do give us a ring or have a chat with us after Mass. Anne and Caroline (mobile 07773 900983)

Upcoming Roofing Works - We would like to advise parishioners that essential repair works to the Turret roof are due to commence shortly. Details to be published as soon as available. We expect the project to take approximately three weeks to complete and we apologise in advance for any inconvenience or disruption this may cause.

Please Pray for the Sick and the Housebound – Lucy Chapman, Anne & David Phillips, Eddie Bradley, Maureen Murphy, Alice McDonnell, Malcolm Hill, Nigel, Cameron, Sheila Sumner, Michael Di Napoli, Alice Gancke, Margaret Jarrett, Judith Poupart, Michael Holmes, Jeanne Bolton, Roberta Barbour, Paddy Hart, David Johnstone, Pat Whelan, Jack Nash, Eileen Clarke, Caroline Butler, Ron Harper, Joe Quinn, Rosemary Goacher, Dympna O'Connor, Christopher Chapman.

Mass Intentions

Sun 20 Sep	✠ **Twenty-Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time**	**8:30am**	Frank Smith RIP
	Holy Rosary Prayer	***9:30-9:55am***	
	By the Lady Chapel	**10:00am***	Lukas Pazdera RIP
Mon 21 Sep	**Saint Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist**	**10:00am**	Teresa Ayton, RIP Ann
Tue 22 Sep	**Feria**	**10:00am**	Marius and Family, Special Intention
Thu 24 Sep	**Our Lady of Walsingham**	**12:00pm**	Dawn Wellam, Special Intention
Fri 25 Sep	**Feria**	**10:00am**	Private Intention
Sat 26 Sep	**Blessed Virgin Mary**	**10:00am**	Rita Wellam, Special Intention
	Sunday Vigil	**5:00pm**	Winnie Cassidy RIP
Sun 27 Sep	✠ **Twenty-Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time**	**8:30am**	Jeffrey Cawley RIP
	Holy Rosary Prayer	***9:30-9:55am***	
	By the Lady Chapel	**10:00am***	Joan Gomes RIP

✠ Holy Day of Obligation * Livestream Mass

First Friday Devotions with Exposition and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament – 10am-3:30pm.

Saturdays - 9:00am – Exposition and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament (and confession alongside) with Benediction at 9:45am.

Confessions can also be arranged outside of these times, please contact Fr Joseph

Parishes Celebrations / Dates for your Diaries:

24th Sep	Seniors' Light Lunch, after 12pm Mass in Parish Hall
26th Sep	Mary's Meals Stall – High Street Berkhamsted
4th Oct	Sunday Lunch 12pm (Please note date change) – Sign-up sheet at the back of Church
12th Nov	Memorial Mass 6:30pm
15th Nov	Grave Blessings Kinghill 11:30am

Anima Christi

Soul of Christ, sanctify me
Body of Christ, save me
Blood of Christ, inebriate me
Water from the side of Christ, wash me
Passion of Christ, strengthen me
O good Jesus, hear me
Within Thy wounds hide me
Suffer me not to be separated from Thee
From the malignant enemy defend me
At the hour of my death call me
And bid me come unto Thee
That I may praise Thee with Thy Angels
And Thy Saints forever and ever. Amen.

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus,
Make our hearts like unto thine. X3

Recently Deceased and Anniversaries:

Jeffrey Cawley, Olive Cozens, Teresa Tipper, Doreen Smyth, Maxine Burdon, Bill Readman, Justina Nnadi, Jean Giffen, Roseleen Rice, Michael Roberts, Giovannina Mistretta, Chris Holmes, Kay James, Anne-Marie Clarke, John O'Neill (Potten End), Grace O'Reilly, Hugh Deane, Patricia Rice, Sue McQuinn, Bridie Morahan, Krys Evans.

May they rest in peace and rise in glory. Amen

The Blessed Sacrament Lamp
is lit this week for the people with dementia and their families