

Sacred Heart Church, Berkhamsted





✠ **Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time - Year A, 25th October 2026, Divine Office: Wk. 2**

"You shall love the Lord your God … and your neighbour as yourself."

Last Sunday, the readings focused on God as the Creator of the universe and all that is in it, including us, humans. That all belongs to him and to him be glory, honour and power.

Our ultimate purpose of existence and happiness is attained when we devote our life to knowing, loving and serving God, not just through intellectual cognition, but in a manner that permeates our whole life. (***CCC 1***). It is to this unique and purposeful knowledge, love and service to God that the readings draw our attention this Sunday.

Genuine love of God and service to him flourishes and yields its proper fruit in and through us when we allow God the centre stage in our thinking, decisions and choices in life. "You shall love the Lord your God with all your ***heart*** and with all your ***soul*** and with all your ***mind***," as Jesus tells us in the **Gospel** passage this Sunday is a call to total commitment to God.

The **First Reading**, though admonishing and severe in tone, is however a reminder that our love of God or otherwise rings through in what we do, even our inaction. Jesus puts it much better for us when he says, "Whatsoever you do to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you do it to me." (***Matthew 25:31-41***) Same as saying that we be aware that the things we do or say not only affect others, and they also bear consequences.

Besides showing in practical ways what genuine love and service to God looks like, another lesson to be drawn from the **Second Reading** is that it changes the way we see life and empowers us for a positive relationship with others. St Paul benefitted from this positive attitude from the Christians in Thessalonica and writing about their transformation, he says, "For not only has the word of the Lord sounded forth from you … you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven…" Thus, true love of God also means denouncing and renouncing a way of life that is at variance with Christ's teaching. In Paul and one another, the Thessalonians lived out their love for and commitment to God. Reading of their story, we cannot help but ask ourselves, "How has our faith transformed us, if our actions threaten or enhance the life and dignity of others, and therefore are at the service of God in whose image we were all created?

The readings are therefore a subtle call to review how we have been living and to see what measures we can deploy so that our love for God and neighbour may continue to grow. Imitating Christ in word and deed is one way, in fact, the only Way to stay on and progress on the right track.

Order of Mass: Page 5. Readings, Page 146. **1st** Ex. 22:21-27.
Resp. Ps 18(17):2-3a. 3b-4.47,51ab. ℟. 2.
2nd 1 Thess. 1:5c-10. **Gospel** Matt. 22:34-40. **EP: III** page 27

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Parish Priest - Fr Joseph Okoro: josephokoro@rcdow.org.uk
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Family Faith Worker – We are exploring the possibility of introducing this role to support families in their faith journey and strengthen family life within our parish community. This role would focus on helping parents and children grow in faith, build connections within the parish, and feel supported in living out their faith at home. We would be very grateful if you could take a few minutes to complete our short questionnaire **Helping Families Grow in Faith – Fill in form** Your feedback will be invaluable in helping us understand what supports families need in their faith journey and shape how this role could best support the parish. Please submit your response by **13th November 2026**. Thank you for taking the time to share your views to help plan for the future of family ministry in our parish.

Sacramental Preparation Registration 2026/2027 – We welcome expression of interest from young people in school year 9 and above who would like to receive the **Sacrament of Confirmation**. Candidates should be practising the faith and attending Mass regularly. For expression of interest, please email Fr. Joseph - josephokoro@rcdow.org.uk. The Confirmation programme will commence in January 2027 and will be run here at Sacred Heart.

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

Month of the Holy Rosary - The month of October is dedicated to the Holy Rosary - a powerful spiritual weapon and traditional Catholic prayer - and the celebration of the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary (October 7). We strongly encourage families to find time to gather frequently, if not every day, to ask for the intercession and protection of our Blessed Mother Mary, for our needs, for conversion of sinners and for peace in our world. Please join us to pray the Rosary after the **8:30am** Mass on Sundays, the **10am** Mass on Fridays and the Parish Rosary Group on Mondays in the Lady Chapel at **2:15pm**.

November – Month of Holy Souls – Holy Souls envelopes and list for the dead can be found at the back of the church. Your list of the dead and offering can be enclosed in the envelope. If you are a UK tax payer, please consider gift-aiding your offering by completing a gift-aid form, ensuring you tick the Holy Souls box in section 3 to enable us to claim gift-aid on your donation. A name from each returned list is picked, usually the first name on the list and Masses offered during the year for your deceased loved ones. We are still working through the list from November 2025. If you would like to find out when a Mass was or is due to be offered for your deceased relative, please contact Laura in the office.

Memorial Mass for Holy Souls – On 12th November at **6:30pm**, with an opportunity during the Mass to light a candle for your deceased relatives and friends in the last, as well as previous years. Parishioners whose relatives' funerals were held elsewhere are also welcome. Email us the name(s) of the deceased so we can ensure they are mentioned during the Mass and a candle lit for their happy repose. Light refreshment will follow afterwards in the meeting room. Please, let us know if you can help with this.

Living Faith Series – Exploring the Mass – Have you ever wondered why we pray, respond the ways we do and about the different liturgical gestures we use at Mass? This Advent, we'll explore the purpose, origins, and meaning of the Mass to discover the richness of its words, gestures, and sacred rituals—and deepen our faith and devotion to the Holy Eucharist. **Mondays, 7:30–9:00pm** for five weeks, **starting 16th November - Parish Meeting Room.** Come along and discover the Mass in a new way that enriches your participation. Please email or phone Laura in office to register your attendance.

Update on Planned Roof Repair Works – The delay has been due changes in CDM regulations. We are working through the new requirements, with a structural engineer to help assess the flat roofs either side of the turret and confirm that they can safely support the scaffolding required for the works. This is an important step in ensuring the safety of both the contractors and our parishioners. Further updates will be provided as soon as more information is available.

World Mission Sunday Collection - £449.95 was raised. Thank you for supporting the global mission of the Church. Charlie Gray will be collecting the MISSIO Boxes from the 18th of October to the 8th of November, or from you, if it helps. Boxes will be returned back to you after the money has been counted. To arrange for collection, please phone him on 07526 441 961. Thank you.

Offertory Collections – 18/10/2026
Weekly Loose Plate – £171.50
Weekly Contactless - £119.97
Thank you to every one for your support to our Parish.

September 2026 Offertory
Standing Orders: £6,566.00
Loose Plate/Contactless: £1,344.58
Total: £7,910.58

Parents Pre-Baptism Course – Scheduled on **Friday 6th November 5:00-6:30pm** in the parish centre meeting room. We invite all parents and expectant parents planning to baptise their children between now and Easter to please attend. Email Fr Joseph, josephokoro@rcdow.org.uk to register your attendance.

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

Discover Reception at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School Berkhamsted! Upcoming reception tours: **Tuesday 10th November & 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 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.

Upcoming Catholic Events - https://christianheritagecentre.com/events/
Retreat: Be still and know that I am God – **20th- 23rd November 2026**
Marriage Preparation Weekend - **8th- 10th January 2027**
Men's Retreat: Spiritual exercises of St Ignatius - **26th Feb – 3rd, Mar or 5th-10th March 2027**

Magnifica Humanitas – Sister MaryAnne of the FcJ led an insightful session into Pope Leo's ***Magnifica Humanitas*** on 17th October St Albans and St Stephen' Parish. The day was organised around discovering and discussing the 5 chapters of the encyclical on the future of humanity in an age of ***AI***. A couple of clips were played throughout the day which you may like to see if you didn't attend, one made by the Vatican about the *advancing technologies* over the lifetime of the recent popes, and the *Magnifica Humanitas prayer* written by CAFOD. If you haven't had a chance to read the Magnifica Humanitas, we recommend that you have a read as it reminds us about our responsibility to protect human dignity in the light of AI whilst embracing the new technology. Click *here* to download and *here* for hard copies from CTS at £6.95 each.

Café at St Francis Hospice - is now open. Please visit https://www.stfrancis.org.uk/the-orangery-cafe for more information. Enjoy a bite to eat and a cuppa, embrace the sense of community, and connect with the Hospice gardens, knowing that with every purchase, every tea, scone or sausage roll, you are helping to support the vital care of the Hospice of St Francis.

Seniors' Monthly Light Lunch – Thank you to the volunteers who organise this every month, giving our seniors opportunity to meet, chat and socialise, while enjoying a lovely lunch.

Tea and coffee after Sunday 10am Mass - All are invited to join us in the parish hall for teas, coffees and chats.

Please Pray for the Sick and the Housebound – Jerry and Denise Poole, Chris Hallett, Lucy and Christopher 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 and Rosemary Goacher

Mass Intentions

Sun 25 Oct	**✠ Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time**	**8:30am**	John Jackson, RIP
	Holy Rosary Prayer ***by the Lady Chapel***	***9:30-9:55am***	
		10:00am*	Baby Edward Leonardo Murray, RIP
Mon 26 Oct	**Feria**	**10:00am**	Carlos Julio Camacho and Holy Souls, RIP
Tue 27 Oct	**Feria**	**10:00am**	Dympna O'Connor, RIP
Thu 29 Oct	**Blessed Martyrs of Douai**	**12:00pm**	Mrs Ese Dieseru – Special Int.
Fri 30 Oct	**Feria**	**10:00am**	Cathal and Agnes Kelly and Holy Souls, RIP
Sat 31 Oct	**Blessed Virgin Mary**	**10:00am**	Mary Agnes Buckley and Holy Souls, RIP
	Sunday Vigil	**5:00pm**	Deceased of the Armstrong Family and Holy Souls
Sun 01 Nov	**✠ All Saints**	**8:30am**	For the People of the Parish
	Holy Rosary Prayer ***by the Lady Chapel***	***9:30-9:55am***	
		10:00am*	Dympna O'Connor, 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:

1st Nov	All Saints Mass 8:30am, 10:00am & Sunday Vigil (31/10/26) – ***Holy Day of Obligation***
2nd Nov	All Souls Mass 10:00am, 6:30pm
12th Nov	Memorial Mass 6:30pm
15th Nov	Grave Blessings Kinghill Cemetery 11:30am
21st Nov	Churches Together Prayer Breakfast
29th Nov	Sunday Lunch 12pm
6th Dec	Mary's Meals Event – After 10am Mass in the Parish Hall

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:

Dympna O'Connor, Jeffrey Cawley, Olive Cozens, Teresa Tipper, Doreen Smyth, Maxine Burdon, Bill Readman, Jean Giffen, Roseleen Rice, Michael Roberts, Giovannina Mistretta, Chris Holmes, Kay James, Anne-Marie Clarke, John O'Neill (Potten End), Grace O'Reilly, 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 Jean Louey' intentions