

The Parishes of Northwood and Carpenders Park & South Oxhey

TWENTY SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
(30th August 2026)



Dear Parishioners

September always feels like a month of new beginnings. The summer holidays draw to a close, children and young people return to school, people go back to work after their holidays, and gradually the familiar rhythm of parish and family life begins again. Meetings resume, parish groups get back together, and our normal timetable starts up once more. There is something reassuring about returning to the ordinary.

This Sunday's Gospel, however, reminds us that there is nothing "ordinary" about being a Christian. Jesus says to his disciples: "'If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." They are challenging words with which to begin a new season.

We can sometimes imagine that following Christ should make life easier. Yet Jesus never promises that. He calls us to a life of love, service and generosity, and sometimes that means making difficult choices, putting the needs of others before our own and remaining faithful when doing so is costly.

St Paul tells us in the second reading to "present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God". Our faith is not something which belongs only to Sundays. It is meant to shape the whole of our lives: our families, our workplaces, our schools, our friendships, our decisions and our priorities.

So, as our ordinary routines begin again, perhaps it is worth asking ourselves: where does my faith fit into my ordinary life? Is prayer simply something I do when I have time, or does it have a proper place in my daily routine? Is there something Christ is asking me to change? Is there a cross which I am being called to carry faithfully?

This September also brings an important moment for our country. The debate about assisted suicide will return to Parliament, with the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill continuing its parliamentary journey. The Bill seeks to permit assistance for terminally ill adults to end their own lives, subject to the safeguards contained in the proposed legislation.

As Christians, we should respond not simply with political argument but with prayer. At the heart of our faith is the conviction that every human life is precious because every person is created and loved by God. This is especially important when someone is elderly, seriously ill, disabled or approaching the end of life. We want to be a society in which nobody feels that their life has become a burden, and in which those who are dying are surrounded by love, friendship, excellent palliative care and the support they need. We should accompany people through suffering rather than suggest that death is the solution to suffering.

For this reason, I would like to invite the parish to join together in a novena of prayer from Wednesday 2 September until Thursday 10 September, in preparation for the parliamentary debate. During these nine days we will pray for our Members of Parliament and for all those involved in considering the legislation; for wisdom and courage for those who have the responsibility of making decisions; for those who are terminally ill and their families; for doctors, nurses, carers and all who accompany people at the end of life; and that our society will continue to recognise and protect the dignity of every human life.

It seems particularly appropriate that the novena should begin as our normal parish timetable resumes. Prayer is not something separate from ordinary life. It is precisely in the midst of our ordinary lives—in our homes, schools, workplaces and communities—that Christ calls us to follow him. The way of discipleship is the way of the cross. But the cross is never the final word. Jesus speaks of losing our life for his sake, yet promises that in doing so we will find it.

So, as September begins, let us return not only to our normal timetables but also to the things that matter most: to prayer, to the Eucharist, to one another, and to the call to follow Christ faithfully in every part of our lives.

With all my prayers and best wishes

Fr Tom

St Matthew's Church
32 Hallowell Road,
Northwood
HA6 1DW
Parish Office Hours
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday: 9.00am - 3.30pm

You can make a donation to either parish by using the appropriate QR code.

St Joseph's Church
111 Oxhey Drive,
Watford
WD19 7SW
Parish Office Hours
Tuesday, Thursday: 9.30am - 3.30pm

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

We will restart our usual pattern of Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament before each weekday Mass from Tuesday. Therefore the rosary will once again be recited after Mass/

Friday Morning Coffee Morning

This Friday will be the last Coffee Morning before a break for the Summer. It will restart in September.

St Matthew's 200 Club

It's time to renew subscriptions for the 200 Club. Renewal/Application forms are available at the back of church. This will be for the September draw.

RCIA

If you are an adult who is not a Catholic and would like to explore becoming one, it's not too late to sign up for our RCIA course which begins in September. If you are a baptised Catholic who has not been confirmed, then this is also for you. Please sign up using the QR code on the poster at the back of church.

Good Books

September marks the first anniversary of our book group! If you are interested in joining us – in person or in the WhatsApp group – or just want to hear about what we have been reading, do come along to the **café at Carpenders Park Garden Centre** on **Wednesday 2 September any time between 11 am and 2 pm** where we'll be treating ourselves to coffee, cake and book chat. The poster in the porch of both churches also has more information.

Our next meeting is at **7 pm on Wednesday 9 September** in the Fr Bebb Room at St Matthew's. We'll be talking about **Shy Creatures** by **Clare Chambers.** Don't be shy to come along!

March For Life

Join March for Life UK on Saturday 5th September in London for the annual march, the 'Pro-life Family Summit' and 'Youth Summit'. Unite with thousands of others at this family-friendly event, where we recognise the value of life from conception and help all people understand why abortion is a tragedy in itself and one that harms the family to its very core.

Find out more at: **https://www.marchforlife.co.u**k/ or Email: **info@marchforlife.co.uk**. The day will begin with a Mass in Westminster Cathedral at 10.30am. The main celebrant will be Archbishop Richard who will be joined by another 14 bishops.

Catholic Women's League

We are a small, happy group of friendly ladies, who meet at St Joseph's Church, on the second Monday of the month at 2pm. We are part of the Westminster branch of the CWL. We have tea, biscuits, a raffle and chat about events we are organising and participate in initiatives organised by the main CWL body. We would welcome any new members to our group ,especially those from St Matthew's Church. The next meeting is on **Monday 14th September**. (Entrance is using the side door of the church). For more details contact any of the following: Ann Farrell 07922 836030, Breda Griffin 07738 363932, Pauline James 07511 668812.

They will be collecting for MIND during the weekend of 12/13 September

Nicholas Birch

Nicholas has made the following appeal. I am running the 2026 Berlin Marathon to raise money for The Passage who help those experiencing homelessness. I have been very fortunate in my life to have always had somewhere to call home, however many people around the country don't. Organisations such as The Passage provide support to those without access to even the most basic things that we take for granted. Any donation towards my marathon effort and the work that they do is greatly appreciated! Thank you and God bless you!

The Passage's vision is of a society where homelessness no longer exists, and everyone has a place to call home. The Passage is based in the heart of Westminster, providing practical support and a wide range of services to help transform the lives of people who are, or are at risk of homelessness. Every gift, no matter how big or small, enables us to help people who are experiencing homelessness to regain their confidence and hope for the future.

You can make a donation at **https://www.justgiving.com/page/nicholas-birch-4**

Organ Recital

Our extremely talented organist Isabella Flynn will be giving an organ recital to mark St Matthew's tide. on Sunday 20th September at 3.00pm in St Matthew's Church and it will be followed by Refreshments. More details next week,

An evening with Lissa Evans

The talented children's author, novelist and BAFTA winning producer of Fr Ted will having a book evening at St Matthew's on Thursday 12th November. (Her book was the July Book of our parish book group) Tickets are £10. Mark the date in your diary.

Parish Pilgrimage to Rome & Palazzola (12th—19th April 2027)

We have finally received details of a proposed pilgrimage to Rome, staying at the Venerable English College's retreat and pilgrimage centre of Palazzola overlooking Lake Albano in the Alban Hills (or Castelli Romani) just south of Rome. We will fly British Airways from Heathrow. See the poster for details and contact the parish office to register your interest and to get a brochure. Cost is £1395 per person.

Pilgrimage to Walsingham

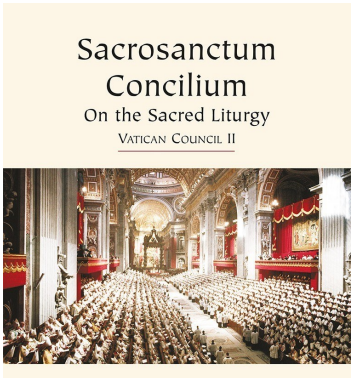
Due to the few in number who registered their interest to the diocesan pilgrimage in September, it has not been viable to organise a coach.

Fr Vincent Brady

This weekend is Fr Vincent's last weekend as parish priest of Pinner before he begins his retirement. Please keep him in your prayers. We give thanks for his priestly ministry (especially as Parish Priest of Northwood) and we wish him well . We also pray for Fr Tony Thomas who will take up his post next week.

Pope Leo XIV

Pope Leo restarted his catechesis series on the Second Vatican Council and its documents at his weekly Wednesday General Audience in August. This is the catechesis that he gave on Wednesday 5th August. (We will eventually catch up on his addresses)



Catechesis. The Documents of Vatican Council II.
III. Constitution Sacrosanctum Concilium.
5. The prayer of the Church

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning and welcome!

In this catechism, we will resume our reflection on the Conciliar Constitution on the liturgy, Sacrosanctum Concilium (SC). Today we will look at the ecclesial dimension of liturgical prayer.

As the Apostle Paul suggests, it is the Holy Spirit who teaches us to pray. From the day of Pentecost, the Spirit dwells in the Church, inspiring every one of her activities and, in particular, prayer. The life of the first community, born in Jerusalem after the Pasch of Jesus, is life in the Spirit given by the risen Lord. "From that time onwards the Church has never failed to come together to celebrate the paschal mystery: reading those things 'which were in all the scriptures concerning him' (Lk 24:27), celebrating the Eucharist in which 'the victory and triumph of his death are again made present', and at the same time giving thanks 'to God for his unspeakable gift' (2 Cor 9:15) in Christ Jesus, 'in praise of his glory' (Eph. 1:12), through the power of the Holy Spirit" (SC, 6).

In our time, in contexts dominated by an efficiency-driven and consumerist mindset, prayer may seem pointless and trivial. In a world where science and technology claim to provide all the answers, praying may appear to be a form of escapism. Furthermore, even in many Christian families, the tradition of prayer is no longer passed on, whilst many people risk confusing it with just another technique, of a psychological nature aimed at personal well-being. Prayer, however, as a fundamental dimension of our humanity, is worth rediscovering in its true form.

The Constitution Sacrosanctum Concilium took this need seriously. This greatly pleased Pope Saint Paul VI, who, on promulgating this first document approved by the Second Vatican Council, stated: "God comes first; prayer is our primary duty; the liturgy is the primary source of the divine life communicated to us, the primary school of our spiritual life" (Address, Saint Peter's Basilica, 4 December 1963).

Indeed, in the Constitution, the term "prayer" designates the liturgy as a whole. This perspective is decisive, for it guided the liturgical reform, making the active participation of the faithful its central pillar. The liturgy is presented first and foremost as the place of encounter, of God's initiative in drawing near to humanity in his Son, "the Word made flesh, anointed by the Holy Spirit" (SC, 5), to whom we may respond "through Christ, with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit", that is to say, thanks to "the very prayer which Christ Himself, together with His Body, addresses to the Father" (SC, 84).

For this reason, Saint Paul VI ardently desired that the Liturgy of the Hours, the Church's daily public prayer, inseparable from the Eucharist, might deeply permeate, enliven, guide and express all Christian prayer, and effectively nourish the spiritual life of the People of God (cf. Apostolic Constitution Laudis canticum).

For this desire to be fulfilled, the Liturgy of the Hours needs to be more fully embraced and lived out in the daily lives of the baptized and of the communities. To the many people who wish to learn to pray, especially catechumens, it can offer the path and the school of Christian prayer.

Every week and every day, the Eucharist and the Liturgy of the Hours are the breath of the life of the Church, which makes the Holy Spirit circulate through her Body. In this prayer, Christ "joins the entire community of mankind to Himself, associating it with His own singing of this canticle of divine praise" (SC, 83). In this way, day by day, we are ever more united with the Paschal Mystery and conformed to him.

Saint Augustine affirms that "When we speak to God in prayer for mercy, we do not separate the Son from Him; and when the Body of the Son prays, it separates not its Head from itself: and it is one Saviour of His Body, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who both prays for us, and prays in us, and is prayed to by us. He prays for us, as our Priest; He prays in us, as our Head; He is prayed to by us, as our God. Let us therefore recognize in Him our words, and His words in us" (Enarr. in psalmum LXXXVI: PL 37, 1081).

Bound to the Eucharist, whose light it prolongs, the Liturgy of the Hours sanctifies the time of our daily lives: in the morning, we begin the day with faith and gratitude; at midday, we ask for the strength to remain faithful amidst our labours; in the evening, once our work is done, Vespers accompany the moment of sunset; at night, we fall asleep entrusting ourselves to God's peace. Each Hour is an act of hope: during our earthly pilgrimage, we keep watch, awaiting with the whole Church the glorious return of the Lord.

Lamp Prayer Intentions

(St Matthew's)
Blessed Sacrament
For those that are in a care home
Our Lady
Cardinal Cormac Murphy - O'Connor RIP (Anniv)



(St Joseph's)
Blessed Sacrament
Maurice & Florence Rodrigo & John Crowle RIP
Our Lady
Catherine Birch - thanksgiving and private intentions

Novena for the Protection of Human Life (2–10 September 2026)

"Choose life, that you and your offspring may live, loving the Lord your God, obeying his voice and holding fast to him." (Deuteronomy 30:19–20)

Introduction

As Parliament prepares to debate legislation concerning assisted suicide, we are invited to respond first and foremost with prayer. Christians believe that every human life is a gift from God, possessing an inherent dignity that neither illness, disability, age nor suffering can diminish. At the same time, we recognise the fears that many people experience as they approach the end of life. Our prayer is therefore not simply for legislation, but for a society in which no one feels abandoned, burdensome or without hope.

During these nine days we ask the Lord to bless our nation with wisdom, to strengthen all who care for the sick, to comfort those who suffer, and to deepen within each of us a renewed commitment to accompany one another with compassion.

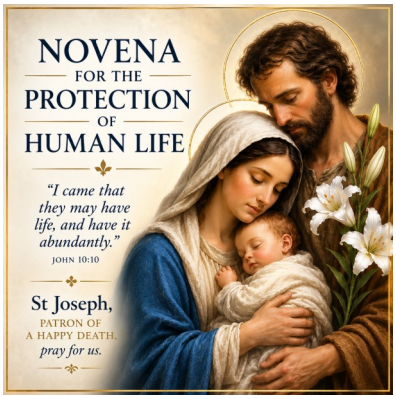
We place these intentions under the protection of Saint Joseph, Patron of a Happy Death, who was privileged to die in the loving presence of Jesus and Mary.

Daily Opening Prayer

Heavenly Father,
you are the Creator and Lord of all life.
Every person is fashioned in your image
and loved with an everlasting love.
As we pray this novena,
grant us hearts filled with compassion,
minds open to your wisdom,
and courage to witness to the dignity of every human person.
Bless those who are sick,
comfort those who are anxious,
strengthen families and carers,
guide healthcare professionals,
and enlighten those entrusted with making laws for our nation.
Through the prayers of Saint Joseph,
Patron of a Happy Death,
may we always cherish, protect and serve the gift of life.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Concluding Invocation

Saint Joseph, Patron of a Happy Death, **pray for us.**
Our Lady, Mother of Life, **pray for us.**
All the Saints of England and Wales, **pray for us.**
Sacred Heart of Jesus, **have mercy on us.**



Day One (2 September)
Every Human Life is God's Gift

Scripture

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him." (Genesis 1:27)

Reflection

The opening pages of Scripture remind us that every human being bears the image and likeness of God. Our dignity does not depend upon our achievements, our health, our independence or our usefulness. It is a gift bestowed by our Creator and therefore can never be taken away.

Many people today fear the prospect of illness, dependence or suffering. These fears are real and deserve our compassion. The Christian response is never to dismiss them but to accompany those who experience them with love, practical care and hope. The measure of a society is found in the way it treats those who are weakest.

Today we thank God for the gift of life and pray that our nation will always recognise the equal worth of every person, especially those whose voices are least heard.

Prayer

Lord God, help us to recognise your image in every person we meet. May we never judge another's worth by strength, ability or independence, but always see each life as a precious gift entrusted to our care. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Day Two (3 September)
Wisdom for Those Who Govern

Scripture

"If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all." (James 1:5)

Reflection

Public service carries immense responsibility. Those elected to Parliament are asked to make decisions that affect the lives of millions of people. As Christians, we pray for them whether or not we agree with them, asking God to grant them wisdom, integrity and a sincere desire to seek the common good.

The Church encourages all who hold public office to act with respect for the dignity of every human person and with particular concern for those who are most vulnerable. Good laws help to build a society marked by justice, compassion and solidarity.

Today we pray for every Member of Parliament. May they listen carefully, reflect honestly and act with wisdom and courage.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, pour out your Holy Spirit upon all who serve in public office. Grant them wisdom in deliberation, integrity in decision-making, and compassion for those whose lives will be affected by the choices they make. May they always seek the common good and protect the dignity of every human person. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Day Three (4 September)
Standing Beside Those Who Suffer

Scripture

"Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." (Galatians 6:2)

Reflection

None of us can escape suffering. Serious illness, advancing years and frailty remind us that we depend upon one another throughout life. Far from diminishing our dignity, this dependence reveals something essential about our humanity: we are made for love.

The Gospel never asks us to face suffering alone. Jesus drew close to the sick, the lonely and those who mourned. He touched them, listened to them and remained beside them. His disciples are called to do the same.

Today we pray especially for those living with terminal illness, chronic pain, disability or loneliness. May they experience not abandonment but loving companionship. May they know that their lives continue to have immeasurable value in the eyes of God and in the hearts of those who care for them.

Prayer

Merciful Father, draw close to all who suffer. Comfort those who are afraid, strengthen those who are weary, and surround them with the love of family, friends and compassionate carers. May no one ever believe that they are a burden, but may all discover their enduring dignity as your beloved children. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Day Four (5 September)
Supporting Families and Carers

Scripture

"Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ." (Galatians 6:2)

Reflection

When serious illness enters a family, it touches everyone. Husbands and wives, parents and children, relatives, friends and neighbours often become carers, quietly giving of themselves day after day. Their love is expressed in countless hidden acts of service: preparing meals, sitting through sleepless nights, offering encouragement, and simply remaining present.

These acts of loving care remind us that compassion is not merely a feeling but a way of living. They reflect something of Christ himself, who came "not to be served but to serve." While the demands of caring can sometimes feel overwhelming, no act of love is ever unnoticed by God.

Today we give thanks for all who care for loved ones at home, in hospitals, hospices and care homes. We pray that they may be sustained by hope, strengthened by grace, and supported by the communities around them. May no family carry this burden alone, but may all discover the generosity and kindness that build up the Body of Christ.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, you showed us the meaning of self-giving love. Bless all who care for those who are sick, elderly or frail. Renew their strength, give them patience in difficulty, joy in their service, and the assurance that every act of love is precious in your sight. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Day Five (6 September)
The Ministry of Healing

Scripture

"Heal the sick who are there and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.'" (Luke 10:9)

Reflection

Throughout his earthly ministry, Jesus revealed God's compassion by drawing close to the sick. He healed many, comforted those who mourned and restored hope to those who had lost it. Today his healing ministry continues through the dedication of doctors, nurses, paramedics, chaplains, hospice staff, therapists, care workers and countless volunteers.

Modern medicine can achieve remarkable things, but alongside medical skill there remains the indispensable gift of human presence. A gentle word, a listening ear, a reassuring hand or a quiet prayer often brings comfort beyond measure.

We pray especially for those working in palliative and hospice care. Their vocation reminds us that even when illness cannot be cured, every person can still be cared for with dignity, tenderness and love. May God bless all whose daily work is to relieve suffering while cherishing the value of every life.

Prayer

Compassionate Father, bless all who work in healthcare and hospice care. Grant them wisdom, gentleness and perseverance. May they always recognise the dignity of those entrusted to their care, bringing comfort, hope and peace through their knowledge and their kindness. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Day Six (7 September)
Our Hope is in Christ

Scripture

"I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live." (John 11:25)

Reflection

Death is one of life's greatest mysteries. It brings sadness, uncertainty and grief. Yet Christians do not face death without hope. Our confidence rests not in our own strength but in Jesus Christ, who died, rose again and opened for us the way to eternal life.

Christian hope does not ignore suffering, nor does it pretend that loss is easy. Rather, it proclaims that suffering and death do not have the final word. The Cross is followed by the Resurrection. Every tear will one day be wiped away, and those who trust in Christ will share in his everlasting life.

Today we pray for all who are approaching death. May they experience the peace of Christ, the comfort of the sacraments, and the loving presence of those who care for them. May they know that they are held securely in the hands of God.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, you conquered sin and death by your glorious Resurrection. Strengthen all who are nearing the end of this earthly life. Fill them with your peace, surround them with loving care, and lead them safely into the joy of your heavenly kingdom. For you live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

Day Seven (8 September)
The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Scripture

"Blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her from the Lord." (Luke 1:45)

Reflection

Today the Church celebrates the birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary, whose faithful "yes" opened the way for the coming of our Saviour. Mary's whole life points us towards her Son, teaching us to trust in God's loving plan even when the future is uncertain.

In welcoming the gift of life entrusted to her, Mary became the Mother of the Redeemer and the Mother of the Church. She stands beside all who suffer, offering comfort to the sorrowful, hope to the discouraged and courage to those who carry heavy burdens.

On this joyful feast we entrust our nation to Mary's maternal care. May she help us to build a culture in which every human life is welcomed, cherished and protected, and where those who are suffering encounter love rather than loneliness.

Prayer
Holy Mary, Mother of God and Mother of the Church, pray for our nation. Help us to welcome every human life as a gift from God. Comfort those who suffer, strengthen those who care for them, and lead us always to your Son, the Lord of Life. Amen.

Day Eight (9 September)
A Culture of Compassion

Scripture
"Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful." (Luke 6:36)

Reflection
The word "compassion" literally means "to suffer with." Jesus showed true compassion by entering into the suffering of others, never abandoning them, never treating them as burdens, but always revealing their immeasurable worth.
Our society is at its strongest when those who are weakest know they are loved, protected and valued. Compassion is expressed through friendship, patient listening, generous service, excellent healthcare and communities that refuse to leave anyone behind.
Today we pray that our homes, parishes and communities may become places where every person is welcomed with tenderness and respect. May our words and actions bear witness to the Gospel of Life, offering hope wherever there is fear and companionship wherever there is loneliness.

Prayer
Father of Mercies, make us instruments of your compassion. Open our eyes to those who are lonely, our ears to those who long to be heard, and our hearts to all who suffer. Teach us to love as Christ has loved us. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

Day Nine (10 September)
Entrusting Our Nation to God

Scripture
"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." (Psalm 23:1)

Reflection
As this novena comes to its conclusion, we entrust our prayers to the loving providence of God. Whatever lies before us, we know that the Lord remains faithful. He calls us to continue witnessing to the Gospel with charity, humility and hope.
Tomorrow Parliament will consider legislation with profound consequences for our society. Today we pray for all who will take part in that debate, for those whose lives are touched most directly by its outcome, and for our nation as a whole. We ask that every decision may be guided by wisdom, justice and reverence for the God-given dignity of every human person.
Above all, we renew our own commitment to accompany those who suffer with generous hearts, to support families and carers, to value the ministry of healthcare professionals, and to proclaim by our lives that every person is infinitely loved by God.
May Saint Joseph, who died in the loving presence of Jesus and Mary, obtain for us the grace to live faithfully, to care compassionately, and to entrust ourselves with confidence into God's merciful hands.

Prayer
Heavenly Father, receive the prayers we have offered throughout these nine days. Guide our nation in the ways of truth, justice and compassion. Protect the vulnerable, comfort the sick, strengthen those who care for them, and inspire each one of us to bear faithful witness to the dignity of every human life. Through the intercession of Saint Joseph, Patron of a Happy Death, may we remain steadfast in faith, abounding in hope, and generous in love. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Archbishop Sherrington warns of "flawed and dangerous" assisted suicide Bill



Archbishop John Sherrington, Archbishop of Liverpool and Lead Bishop for Life Issues, has issued a statement on the upcoming Second Reading of the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill, which will take place on Friday 11 September.

In his statement, Archbishop Sherrington warns of the flaws in the draft legislation and the dangers that they present to the most vulnerable in our society, as well as to healthcare workers who are opposed to assisted suicide.

"It is wrong in principle that medical professionals should be involved in ending the lives of their patients. Furthermore, this bill does not contain sufficient safeguards against coercion or protect vulnerable people, including disabled people, those with eating disorders, and victims of domestic abuse."

Archbishop Sherrington urges Members of Parliament to vote against this Bill and calls for a shift in focus towards preserving and promoting "high quality and compassionate end-of-life care for all."

Catholics can contact their MP to register their opposition to this legislation using the form below or by using the postcards that will be delivered to parishes this weekend with a message to Members of Parliament from the disability network Not Dead Yet UK.

Statement on the upcoming Second Reading of the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill

On 11 September, Members of Parliament will vote on the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill at Second Reading. This important vote will shape the future of care for the most vulnerable members of our society. We remain opposed to this bill, both in principle and in practice.

It is wrong in principle that medical professionals should be involved in ending the lives of their patients. Furthermore, this bill does not contain sufficient safeguards against coercion or protect vulnerable people, including disabled people, those with eating disorders, and victims of domestic abuse. These concerns are shared by disability rights groups and organisations that support people with eating disorders.

They are also shared by relevant professional bodies. Organisations such as the Royal College of Psychiatrists, the Association for Palliative Medicine and the British Medical Association have either opposed the bill or raised serious concerns about its provisions. The experience of other countries shows that, once assisted suicide is legalised, its scope can broaden, often dramatically, to include groups who suffer from mental health problems and others who are not terminally ill.

Furthermore, the bill does not adequately protect the conscience rights of health and social care professionals, many of whom are vulnerable and lack job security.

The bill fails to provide an institutional opt-out for hospices and care homes that do not wish to participate. This could lead to the closure of many organisations that provide compassionate care at the end of life.

Many people who are not opposed to assisted suicide as a matter of principle are opposed to this bill. Prime Minister Andy Burnham has joined others in suggesting that assisted suicide should not be considered while palliative and social care services face significant pressures. It is also important to note that evidence from other countries suggests that legalising assisted suicide negatively affects the quality and development of palliative care.

Let us focus on how we can preserve and promote high quality and compassionate end-of-life care for all. If we were to legalise the provision of medical assistance in suicide, it would mark a significant change in our culture. I call upon all people of goodwill to oppose this flawed and dangerous bill.

I also urge Members of Parliament to reject the bill. I thank those MPs who opposed the Bill in the last Parliament and ask you to do so again, especially as we now recognise more clearly the bill's shortcomings.

I also encourage everyone to join me in prayer and action.

You can contact your MP using the form below or by using the postcards that will be delivered to parishes this weekend with a message to Members of Parliament from the disability network Not Dead Yet UK.

Our Lady, Help of the Sick, pray for us.

Archbishop John Sherrington
Lead Bishop for Life Issues
Archbishop of Liverpool

Readings at Sunday Mass

First reading *Jeremiah 20:7-9*

O Lord, you have deceived me,
and I was deceived;
you are stronger than I,
and you have prevailed.
I have become a laughing-stock all the day;
everyone mocks me.
For whenever I speak, I cry out,
I shout, 'Violence and destruction!'
For the word of the Lord has become for me
a reproach and derision all day long.
If I say, 'I will not mention him,
or speak any more in his name',
there is in my heart as it were a burning fire
shut up in my bones,
and I am weary with holding it in,
and I cannot.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm *63(62):2. 3-4. 5-6. 8-9. ℟2b*

For you my soul is thirsting, O Lord, my God.

O God, you are my God; at dawn I seek you;
for you my soul is thirsting.
For you my flesh is pining,
like a dry, weary land without water.

For you my soul is thirsting, O Lord, my God.

I have come before you in the sanctuary,
to behold your strength and your glory.
Your loving mercy is better than life;
my lips will speak your praise.

For you my soul is thirsting, O Lord, my God.

I will bless you all my life;
in your name I will lift up my hands.
My soul shall be filled as with a banquet;
with joyful lips, my mouth shall praise you.

For you my soul is thirsting, O Lord, my God.

For you have been my strength;
in the shadow of your wings I rejoice.
My soul clings fast to you;
your right hand upholds me.

For you my soul is thirsting, O Lord, my God.

Second reading *Romans 12:1-2*

I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
enlighten the eyes of our hearts,
so that we may know the hope to which he has called us.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Gospel *Matthew 16:21-27*

The Lord be with you.
And with your spirit.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.
Glory to you, O Lord.

At that time: Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, 'Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you.' But he turned and said to Peter, 'Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.'

Then Jesus told his disciples, 'If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.'

The Gospel of The Lord
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Please join us in praying for those who are sick and those who have died:

Please contact us with any additional names you may wish to be added to these lists which are updated weekly, and accept our apologies for anyone we have omitted.

For those who are sick: Mary Emmanuel, Joe Mullen, Leo McLoughlin, Patrick Coyle, Lourdes D'Silva Torres, Eliana Ost, James Conradi, Anne Paget, Mary Vaughan, Helen Jones, Sinead Ceasar, Gilda Kumarathasan, Siobhan Frost, Leslie Caesar, Mary Elizabeth Thomas, Georgette Gornall, Ann Archer, Kathleen Lynch, Kathleen Andrews, Harry Nandlal, Dawn Tannian, Phil Carey, Alice Sheppard, Brendan Davern, Shay Murray, Ruby King, John Wildsmith, Cecil Swampillai, Belinda Plummer, Marilyn Theodore, Veronica Savill, Levan Soloman, Patricia Procter, Philip Wilson, Mary Hyde, King Charles, Moira Montgomery, Patricia Lee, Peter Fitzpatrick, Mark O'Connor, Marie Marron, Carol-Ann Frost, Ron Picardo, Kerry Blackburn, James Wilson, Rafael Pino, Julius Fayiti, Anna Kelly, Justin, Margaret Downing, as well as others for whom we have been praying together recently.

For those who have died recently, Horace Clarke and all who have died as a result of violence, war and conflict or natural disaster and those who have no one to pray for them.

For those whose anniversary occurs around this time: Veva Saurin, Nancy Reid, Marion McNeil, Bertha Schuler, Annie Scudder, Jim O'Sullivan, Dorothy Miles, Colin De Souza, Brendan Flahive, Howard Baker, Gwen O'Connor, Baby Daniel Kee Shin Munro, Mary O'Connor, Dolores Wallace, Christine Hill, Eileen Stone, Luigi Fattighetto, Francesco De Leo, Edward Phelan, Jessica Cooke, Abelardo Catolico, Ann Walsh, Cardinal Cormac Murphy - O'Connor.

Pope's Prayer Intention for August. For the care of water, we pray for a just and sustainable management of water, a vital resource, so that everyone may have equal access to it. .

Worship this week

Sunday Readings: *Year A* ***Weekday Readings:*** *Week 22 (Year 2)* ***Daily Office:*** *Week 2*

	5.00pm -5.45pm: Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Confessions *(St Joseph's)*
	6.00pm: Anticipated Mass of Sunday - *People of the Parishes (St Joseph's)*
Sunday 30th	**9.00am: Mass** - *Gilda Kumarathasan (Sp Intns) (St Matthew's)*
22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time	**11.15am: Mass -** *Catherine Birch (Thanksgiving & Private Intns) (St Joseph's)*
	6.00pm: Mass - *Florence Rodrigo RIP-Birthday (St Matthew's)*
Monday 31st	**9.30am Rosary**
S. Aiden & Saints of Lindisfarne	**10.00am: Mass** - *Caroline Reddyhoff RIP (Anniv) (St Matthew's)*
Tuesday 1st	**9.00am** Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament **09:40 Morning Prayer**
Feria	**10.00am Mass** - *Molly Byrne RIP (Anniv)* ***Followed By Rosary*** *(St Joseph's)*
Wednesday 2nd	**NO PUBLIC MASS**
Feria	
Thursday 3rd	6.00pm Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
S Gregory the Great	**7.00pm Mass** - *Terry Ryan RIP (St Joseph's)* ***Followed By Rosary*** *(St Joseph's)*
Friday 4th	**9.00am** Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament **09:40 Morning Prayer**
S Cuthbert	**10.00am: Mass** - *Maeve Hadden (Birthday) (St Matthew's)* ***Followed By Rosary***
Saturday 5th	**09.45 Morning Prayer 10.00am: Rosary**
S Teresa of Calcutta	**10.30am: Mass -** *Ingrid Pino (Birthday) (St Matthew's)*
	11.00am - 11.50am: Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Confessions **ending with Benediction**
	5.00pm -5.45pm: Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Confessions *(St Joseph's)*
	6.00pm: Anticipated Mass of Sunday - *People of the Parishes (St Joseph's)*
Sunday 6th	**9.00am: Mass** - *Audrey Potts RIP (St Matthew's)*
23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time	**11.15am: Mass -** *Gertrud Birch RIP (Anniv)(St Joseph's)*
	6.00pm: Mass - *Kathleen & Eardley McHeyzer RIP (St Matthew's)*
	8.00pm: Holy Hour *Concluding with Night Prayer (St Matthew's)*

Please contact the Parish Office if you wish to have a Mass intention or lamp intention for a particular date.

Parish Directory

Parish Priest: Fr Tom Montgomery ***Email:*** tommontgomery@rcdow.org.uk
Tel: 01923 840736 ***Emergency:*** 07576 455450
Deacon: Rev Hervé Boisson ***Email:*** herveboisson@rcdow.org.uk

	St Matthew's	***St Joseph's***
Parish Office	Cheryl Myring Siobhan Hogg ***Tel:*** 01923 840736 ***Email:*** northwood@rcdow.org.uk	Linda Grimes ***Tel:*** 020 8428 0088 ***Email:*** carpenderspark@rcdow.org.uk
Catechetical Team	Elvadia Tolputt northwoodcat@rcdow.org.uk	Donna Osborne carpenderscatechist@rcdow.org.uk
Parish Safeguarding Representatives	Colette Quirk & Elizabeth Scudder ***Email:*** northwoodsg@safeguardrcdow.org.uk northwoodsg2@safeguardrcdow.org.uk	Awaiting Appointment

Or safeguarding@rcdow.org.uk