

The Parishes of Northwood and Carpenders Park & South Oxhey

TWENTY FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
(13th September 2026)



Dear Parishioners

Many of you will have followed the recent debates in Parliament concerning the Assisted Dying Bill. Parliament has now voted against the legislation. I think it is important for us, as Catholics, to reflect on what this decision means and why the question of assisted suicide has caused such strong and sincere feelings on all sides.

For the Church, this is not simply a political issue. It touches upon some of the most fundamental questions about what it means to be human, the dignity of life, the nature of suffering and the way in which we care for those who are most vulnerable.

We believe that every human life is sacred because every person is created in the image and likeness of God and is loved by him. That dignity does not depend upon our age, our physical abilities, our independence or our state of health. A person does not become less valuable because they are seriously ill, disabled, elderly or dependent upon others. Indeed, precisely when someone is vulnerable, our responsibility to care for them becomes all the greater.

This is why the Catholic Church has opposed the legalisation of assisted suicide. There is an important distinction between a person tragically taking their own life and another person deliberately assisting them to die. When someone takes their own life, we should never respond with condemnation. Such a person may have been experiencing profound suffering, fear, loneliness, depression or despair. We entrust them to the mercy of God and remember them in our prayers. Assisted suicide, however, would involve deliberately making another person's death the intended outcome of an action. That is something the Church cannot support.

At the same time, opposing assisted suicide does not mean that we believe that every possible medical treatment must be continued indefinitely. The Church does not demand that dying people undergo treatments that are excessively burdensome, disproportionate or offer no reasonable hope of benefit. There is a genuine moral difference between deliberately causing death and recognising that death cannot always be prevented. A person may be allowed to die naturally while receiving appropriate care, pain relief, nourishment, comfort and the loving presence of others.

This makes the provision of good palliative care so important. If someone is approaching the end of life, they deserve the best possible medical and nursing care, together with emotional, psychological and spiritual support. Their families and carers also need support. No one should ever be made to feel that they are a burden simply because they have become dependent upon others.

This is perhaps one of the greatest concerns surrounding any move towards assisted suicide. Even where legislation contains safeguards, we cannot ignore the possibility that vulnerable people might begin to feel that they ought to choose death. Someone who is elderly, disabled, seriously ill or dependent may ask themselves whether their continued existence is causing too much difficulty or expense for their family. That is not the message we should give them.

The Christian message is the opposite: you are loved; you are not a burden; your life has dignity; and you do not have to face suffering alone.

The parliamentary vote does not remove the suffering that prompted this debate, nor does it remove the difficult questions that families and doctors face when someone is dying. We should therefore resist the temptation to treat the vote as a simple victory for one side. Instead, let us use this moment to renew our commitment to a society in which the elderly, the sick and the dying are accompanied with compassion and never abandoned.

Let us give thanks for the decision that has been made, while continuing to pray for those who are suffering, for those approaching the end of their lives, for their families and carers, and for all those who work to provide palliative and medical care.

And let us pray that we will always be a people who respond to suffering not by saying that some lives are no longer worth living, but by offering love, care, dignity, companionship and hope.

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

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

In anticipation of the special exhibition opening soon at the British Library, our next meeting on **Wednesday 14 October** (7pm, Fr Bebb Room, St Matthew's) will be dedicated to the life and works of Agatha Christie. Read anything by or about her and come along to share your thoughts!

If you would like to join our group visit to the exhibition at 2 pm on Wednesday 4 November, a few discounted tickets (£18) are available. Please contact Siobhan in the office at St Matthew's by 18 September to arrange payment.

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 this weekend.**

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**

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.

An Day with Mary

The next Day with Mary in our diocese are is **Saturday 26 September** at ***St Joseph's Church, Wembley*** , 9.30am - 5.30pm. For more details see **https://adaywithmary.org/**

Archbishop thanks those who united to defeat assisted suicide Bill

Archbishop John Sherrington, the Archbishop of Liverpool and Lead Bishop for Life Issues for the Bishops' Conference, has offered his gratitude and thanks to those who wrote to their MPs to stop the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill progressing through parliament. Archbishop Sherrington also expressed his gratitude to disability rights groups and legal and healthcare professionals for raising a collective voice to uphold "the dignity and sanctity of every life."

The Bill failed after Second Reading by 270 (Yes) votes to 286 (No) – a majority of 16.

Archbishop's Full Statement

We are pleased that MPs have voted to oppose the passage of the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill. We would like to thank those who wrote to their MPs to stop the bill's progression and who assisted the campaign against the bill in other ways.

I would like to express my gratitude to those MPs who voted against the Bill and the many people from across society who made their voices heard – doctors, legal professionals, disability groups, other faith communities and those of no faith who stood up for the dignity and sanctity of every life. We are thankful for the many prayers which have been offered during these weeks.

Throughout this debate, we have argued that our response to those facing serious illness, disability or the challenges of old age should be rooted in solidarity, care and respect. The true measure of a compassionate society is its willingness to support people through difficult circumstances rather than encouraging them to end their lives.

Every day, families, friends, carers and healthcare professionals demonstrate extraordinary generosity in accompanying and supporting those who are suffering. Their dedication reminds us of the value of human relationships and of our shared responsibility to care for one another, especially at life's most vulnerable moments.

We remain convinced that the most effective way to address suffering at the end of life is through greater access to excellent palliative and end-of-life care. Ensuring such care is available to all who need it can help people experience comfort, dignity and support in their final days. We will continue to promote these as priorities and to stand alongside those who devote themselves to caring for the dying in hospices, hospitals, care homes and communities.

May all the sick and frail find comfort in the support of their loved ones, and the love of God, which transcends all suffering. I ask the Catholic community to continue to pray for our legislators, that they will ensure that our laws always uphold the dignity of human life.

Archbishop John Sherrington
Lead Bishop for Life Issues
Archbishop of Liverpool

Feast of The Week
Exaltation of the Holy Cross



The Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, also known as the Feast of the Triumph of the Cross, commemorates three events: the discovery of the True Cross in 326, its exaltation for public veneration in 335, and the recovery of the Cross from the Persians in 628. Today, this feast also celebrates the boundless impact of Christ's Cross upon all of creation.

The Edict of Milan, issued in 313, granted religious freedom across the Roman Empire. After the Edict was signed, from 314 to 324, there was continual conflict between Roman Emperors Constantine I in the West and Licinius in the East. Tensions escalated when Constantine accused Licinius of plotting against him. In 324, Constantine defeated Licinius in battle and executed him on charges of conspiracy. Constantine became sole ruler of the Roman Empire, including Jerusalem, which had previously been under Licinius's control.

In 326, Constantine's mother, Saint Helena, a devout Christian, embarked on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land to identify significant sites from Christ's life and establish a church at each. In Jerusalem, she hoped to find the True Cross and to build a church over the sites of Mount Calvary and Jesus' tomb, known as the Holy Sepulchre. Upon identifying Mount Calvary and the empty tomb, she discovered three buried crosses. After an investigation, the local bishop confirmed they were the crosses used to crucify Jesus and the two thieves. Since Helena did not know which cross was Christ's, she arranged for a sick woman to touch all three. The woman was immediately healed upon touching one of them, indicating that it was the True Cross.

Emperor Constantine ordered the construction of a church to encompass Mount Calvary and Christ's tomb and to house the True Cross. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre was erected and dedicated on September 13, 335. Legend says that the following day—September 14, 335—Christ's Cross was brought outside the church for the faithful to venerate. Over the next three centuries, the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross was celebrated annually in Jerusalem and varied elsewhere.

In 614, the Persians invaded Jerusalem, taking the True Cross as a trophy. The Persians, followers of the ancient religion of Zoroastrianism, were not Christians. Allowing the Holy Cross to remain in their possession was seen as sacrilegious. In 622, Eastern Roman Emperor Heraclius initiated military campaigns to recapture Jerusalem and the True Cross. In 628, he triumphed, and the following year, Emperor Heraclius entered Jerusalem with the True Cross, restoring it to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. After that, the Feast of the Holy Cross became a universal celebration within the Church, starting in Rome and subsequently spreading throughout the empire.

Although we commemorate three historical events today, the celebration's core is not the Cross's wood or the holy sites where Jesus died and was buried. The primary focus is the infinite love shown through the Son of God's selfless and perfect Sacrifice and the boundless mercy that has poured forth upon the world as a result. The Cross, a cruel instrument of torture and death, is now the symbol of God's perfect love, further magnifying that love and showcasing God's infinite power to use the worst for the best: to use death to bring life and to transform the greatest act of cruelty ever known into the greatest act of mercy ever bestowed upon the world.

Most glorious and triumphant Lord, You gave Your life for my soul's salvation,
using the most horrific act of cruelty as the means of Your redeeming grace.
I open myself to that grace, asking You to bestow it superabundantly.
May I have the courage and wisdom to embrace my crosses every day, uniting them to Your Cross,
and trusting that You will use my sacrifices to further bestow Your love on the world.
Saving Cross of Christ, have mercy on me.
Jesus, I trust in You. .

At the end of Mass on Monday there will be the opportunity to venerate the relic of the True Cross.

Lamp Prayer Intentions

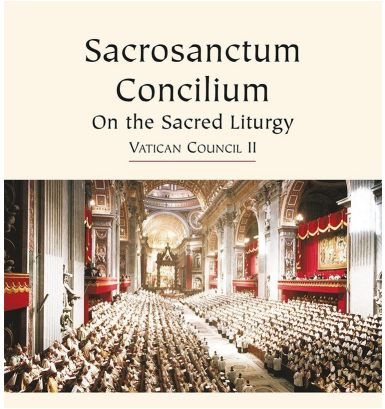
(St Matthew's)
Blessed Sacrament
Ann Grant
Our Lady
Those who mourn



(St Joseph's)
Blessed Sacrament
Jona Miraclin (Thanksgiving)
Our Lady
Sheila Butler (Intentions)

Pope Leo XIV

We continue Pope Leo's catechesis series on the Second Vatican Council and its documents at his weekly Wednesday General Audience. On the 26th August he concluded his teaching on Sacrosanctum Concilium



Catechesis. The Documents of Vatican Council II.
III. Constitution Sacrosanctum Concilium.
8. The motivations of the liturgical reform

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning and welcome!

In this final catechesis on the Constitution Sacrosanctum Concilium, today I would like to look at the reasons why the Council Fathers sought to promote a reform of the liturgy. In this regard, the third Letter from the Council, which Cardinal Giovanni Battista Montini, then Archbishop of Milan, sent on 28 October 1962 to the faithful of his Church, is particularly enlightening. The liturgy, he wrote, "is a sincere expression of both the divine and the human. It is language. On the one hand, it is a vehicle for divine teaching; on the other, it is a voice in dialogue with God. It is clear that it cannot renounce its didactic function, nor can it fail to offer faith and piety the opportunity to be expressed with spontaneous intelligibility". Motivated by these convictions, the future Pope Saint Paul VI affirmed that the faithful "cannot and must no longer remain silent and passive. Their physical presence cannot be reconciled with their spiritual absence".

The similarity between these statements and those which would appear in no. 48 of the Conciliar Constitution is evident: "The Church … earnestly desires that Christ's faithful, when present at this mystery of faith, should not be there as strangers or silent spectators; on the contrary, through a good understanding of the rites and prayers they should take part in the sacred action conscious of what they are doing, with devotion and full collaboration. They should be instructed by God's word and be nourished at the table of the Lord's body; they should give thanks to God; by offering the Immaculate Victim, not only through the hands of the priest, but also with him, they should learn also to offer themselves; through Christ the Mediator they should be drawn day by day into ever more perfect union with God and with each other, so that finally God may be all in all". These words express a renewed awareness of the value of the liturgy. Through the Church's ritual actions, while the memorial of the work of salvation is celebrated, the opportunity is provided to experience a true relationship with God, coming into contact with the salvific event. Since the gestures and the words of the sacred liturgy are critical to realizing this experience, the participation of the faithful cannot be passive.

By placing what constitutes the heart of the ecclesial experience at the centre, the Conciliar reform was intended to allow the liturgy to shine forth as "the primary source of that divine exchange in which the life of God is communicated to us" [3]. From this conviction, the need arose to make the richness of biblical texts and prayers more accessible to all the faithful, and to streamline the order of the celebration compared with what had been set out in the liturgical books in use at the time.

Indeed, since the liturgy is a living entity, it has always been subjected to developments and changes throughout the centuries. The Magisterium adapted its forms to the needs of different eras. It is therefore not surprising that the Second Vatican Council too, with the utmost respect for the heritage of tradition, and precisely in order to make it more accessible, considered it necessary to revise the liturgical books.

The aim that the Fathers had in mind is explained in no. 21 of the Constitution Sacrosanctum Concilium: "In order that the Christian people may more certainly derive an abundance of graces from the sacred liturgy, holy Mother Church desires to undertake with great care a general restoration of the liturgy itself. For the liturgy is made up of immutable elements divinely instituted, and of elements subject to change. These not only may but ought to be changed with the passage of time if they have suffered from the intrusion of anything out of harmony with the inner nature of the liturgy or have become unsuited to it. In this restoration, both texts and rites should be drawn up so that they express more clearly the holy things which they signify; the Christian people, so far as possible, should be enabled to understand them with ease and to take part in them fully, actively, and as befits a community". The distinction, within the liturgy, between divine, immutable elements, and human elements, which instead "admit of various modifications, as the needs of the age, circumstance and the good of souls may require, and as the ecclesiastical hierarchy, under guidance of the Holy Spirit, may have authorized", dates back to Pope Pius XII's Encyclical Mediator Dei (Acta Apostolicae Sedis 39, 1947, 541–542).

Moreover, the desire for a "general reform" did not come about suddenly, but had been evident in the actions of successive Popes since the beginning of the 20th century, in keeping with the demands of the Liturgical Movement. The assertion that the faithful should not attend celebrations "as strangers or silent spectators" had already been raised in Pope Pius XI's Apostolic Constitution Divini Cultus . Furthermore, one may recall Pope Pius XII's interventions regarding the ordering of the rites of Holy Week, which he rescheduled to the hours corresponding to the events of Easter, after they had for centuries been brought forward to the morning hours. Nor should it be forgotten that Saint John XXIII regarded it necessary to simplify the rubrics of the Breviary and the Missal, approving this with the Motu proprio Rubricarum instructum of 25 July 1960, in which he referred the proposal of fundamental principles for a reform of the liturgy at the forthcoming Ecumenical Council.

The liturgical reform promoted by the Second Vatican Council is thus firmly rooted in the living tradition of the Church. A correct understanding of it also enables us to reject the abuses that occurred in certain sectors of the Church during the post-Conciliar period, and which, unfortunately, still occur from time to time today, where some of the principles underlying the reform itself have been taken to extremes or misunderstood.

In this regard, it is worth recalling that the Conciliar Constitution affirms that "Liturgical services are not private functions, but are celebrations of the Church, which is the 'sacrament of unity', namely, the holy people united and ordered under their bishops. Therefore liturgical services pertain to the whole body of the Church; they manifest it and have effects upon it" (Sacrosanctum Concilium, no. 26).

It is therefore the primary responsibility of pastors, of bishops, but also of each individual priest, to safeguard and promote a liturgy which, while respecting liturgical norms, shines with noble simplicity (cf. no. 34) and thus manifests the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. Such a liturgy will also be a fundamental vehicle for evangelization, the instrument of grace through which, as the Council teaches, we may learn to offer ourselves and, through Christ's mediation, be perfected in unity with God and amongst ourselves (cf. no. 48).

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

Some more details of our 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. Please contact the parish office to register your interest and we will send you a brochure (when it is printed).

The programme (subject to change) is as follows:

Mon 12 Morning departure from London Heathrow Airport (Terminal 5) at 10.55 on ***British Airways*** Airbus 320/321 flight **BA552** to Rome. Arrival at Rome Fiumicino (14.35) and transfer by coach to **Palazzola** overlooking Lake Albano with time to settle-in, celebrate evening Mass and enjoy dinner.

Tue 13 Morning coach transfer around Lake Albano to the village of Castel Gandolfo for a timed-entry guided tour of the **Papal Palace and Secret** (= private) **Garden** that now also includes an exhibition of life there in WWII, an exhibition on the Popes from 1503 to today. Lunch. Free afternoon to enjoy Palazzola. Late afternoon walk around the Villa grounds with its Roman consul's tomb and mosaics of 100 BC and terraced garden, the 13th century Cistercian church and cloisters, the 18th century Franciscan developments including the 18th century Baroque fountain in the garden of the Villa. Evening Mass and dinner.

Wed 14 Full-day excursion to the east of Rome for a morning visit to the Benedictine Monastery of Sacro Speco at **Subiaco** with a guided tour by one of the monks or lay assistants and to celebrate Mass. Lunch in a local restaurant. Afternoon return to Palazzola. Dinner.

Thu 15 Morning visit to the **Catacombs of San Callixtus** for a tour by one of the brothers and Mass**.** Lunch. Late afternoon visit to the local town of **Frascati** for sampling ice cream, enjoying the shops or walking in the footsteps of the Cardinal Duke of York. Dinner.

Fri 16 Full-day excursion into **Rome** to the Church of **San Alfonso** (with the icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour and also Cardinal Vincent Nichols titular church) for Mass followed by a visit to the **Basilica of Saint Mary Major** (where the Pope's celebrated the first Mass of Christmas until 1870 and relics of St Thomas Becket and where Pope Francis is laid to rest). Afternoon guided tour of **St Peter's Basilica**. Dinner.

Sat 17 Morning coach transfer around Lake Albano to the village of **Castel Gandolfo** for a timed-entry eco-bus tour of the **Borgo Laudate Si'**, the gardens and farm of the Palazzo Barberini. Lunch in the gardens. Afterwards free time to enjoy the village with its cafes, shops and a parish church designed by Bernini with maybe a coffee or ice-cream or aperitif while looking back across the lake to Palazzola. Evening Mass. Dinner.

Sun 18 Morning transfer into Rome to attend Mass at the **Venerable English College** (the oldest British institution abroad dating back to 1362) before transferring to **St Peter's Square** to join Pope Leo XIV for the *Angelus*. Afternoon transfer via the **Basilica of St Paul's Outside the Walls** (with its many English connections including King Charles III being awarded the title of Royal Confrater, and also the mosaic portraits of the 267 Popes - and a cafe) en-route to Rome Fiumicino Airport for ***British Airways*** Airbus 320/321 flight **BA557** at 18.15 arriving London Heathrow (Terminal 5) at 19.55.

COST £1395 per person inclusive of:

- flight London Heathrow/Rome Fiumicino return
- airport taxes and security charges
- one piece of 23 kg hold luggage
- one piece of hand luggage
- reserved seating
- 6 nights at Palazzola
- continental breakfast
- 4 lunches and 6 dinners
- wine and water with main meals
- all transfers and excursions in Italy
- entry/audio charges and Mass offerings
- tips to coach drivers/guides

The following items are not included:

- travel insurance
- UK airport transfers
- two lunches
- any increases in/additional local taxes
- personal expenditure

PALAZZOLA







Organ Recital by Isabella Flynn

Sunday 20th September

3.00pm

St Matthew's Church

followed by Refreshments.



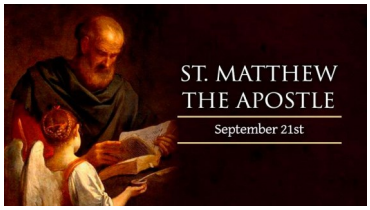
Programme

Meditation sur Salve Regina - Saint-Martin

Franck - Prelude, Fugue et Variation

Bach- Prelude and fugue in G Major BWV 541

Novena to St Mattthew



Opening Prayer *(each day)*

God of mercy you chose a tax collector, Saint Matthew, to share the dignity of the apostles. By his example and prayers help us to follow Christ and remain faithful in your service. We ask this through Our Lord Jesus Christ, your son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

Day One *(12th September)*

Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven." (Matthew 5:3)

Dear Jesus, I have sinned against God and you. I have gone against you and hurt you with each and every sin I have committed. I am not worthy of your love, but you are my only hope. Please save me, and please forgive me, for I am lost without you.

Saint Matthew, as you were one of the lucky twelve who walked the Earth with Jesus by your side, you were continually made aware of your own nothingness before his greatness and saw many evidences of God's immense grace. Help me to be so poor in spirit that I acknowledge my own nothingness before God on a moment-by-moment basis, and please intercede with Jesus in asking him to grant my desperate request, *(STATE REQUEST).* Amen.

Day Two *(13th September)*

Jesus said, "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted." (Matthew 5:4)

Dear Jesus, even though I have committed such grave offenses against you and God, you still loved me enough to give your life for me so I could be free in Heaven. With all my heart, please forgive me for ever having offended you. I know it was my sins that condemned you to die. I love you more than I love myself, and can do nothing without you. All that I am and all that I hope to be is solely because of your grace and mercy and nothing else.

Saint Matthew, as a former tax-collector, you were considered one of the worst sinners, but Jesus called you anyway to be one of his apostles. Help me to truly mourn for all the sins I have committed and please intercede with Jesus in asking him to grant my desperate request, *(STATE REQUEST).* Amen.

Day Three *(14th September)*

Jesus said, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the Earth." (Matthew 5:5)

Dear Jesus, I know that I can do all things through you who gives me strength, but not according to my will, but yours. Therefore, I submit my will totally to you. Although evil may seem to triumph, these are temporary triumphs indeed, because the meek, not the wicked, shall inherit the Earth.

Saint Matthew, you gave up a life of worldly pleasures to follow God's word made flesh in Jesus, trusting that he would take care of all your needs. This must not have been easy, since you came from a life of privilege. Please help me to have the quality of meekness before God constantly being produced within me, relying on his strength for every move I make and every action I take, and please intercede with Jesus in asking him to grant my desperate request, *(STATE REQUEST).* Amen.

Day Four *(15th September)*

Jesus said, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled." (Matthew 5:6)

Dear Jesus, I want to be just like you. Please lead and guide me so I can live my life completely in conformity with the will of God, going contentedly wherever his will takes me. Help me to do everything just as you would.

Saint Matthew, you left behind a very financially lucrative career and the ways of the world to follow Jesus's way instead. Help me to constantly hunger and thirst for righteousness just as you did, and please intercede with Jesus in asking him to grant my desperate request, *(STATE REQUEST).* Amen.

Day Five *(16th September)*

Jesus said, "Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy." (Matthew 5:7)

Dear Jesus, thank you for the mercy you have shown me time and time again, even when my actions have not merited it. Thank you for comforting me in times of sickness and trouble. Help me to look at everyone I

come across with a tender heart, truly feeling in my heart the pain and suffering of others. Help me to always make the effort to ease the pain and suffering of others, with an ever ready, always affectionate, and joyful heart.

Saint Matthew, as an apostle, you were an extension of Jesus in the world. You got to see his kindness and mercy displayed first-hand and then were asked to emulate it. Help me to emulate Jesus by demonstrating true kindness and mercy to others, just as Jesus did, and please intercede with Jesus in asking him to grant my desperate request, *(STATE REQUEST).* Amen.

Day Six *(17th September)*

Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God." (Matthew 5:8)

Dear Jesus, I have so often let you down because of my impure heart; please forgive me. Help me to be pure in my imagination, in my thoughts, in my words, in my decisions, and in my desires. Help me to think how God thinks, desire what God desires, hate what God hates, and love only what God loves. Please make my heart completely free of all evil thoughts.

Saint Matthew, I know you understand what it means to struggle with maintaining a pure heart because you were a man and struggled with the desires of the flesh just as I do. Help me to remain truly pure in heart, and please intercede with Jesus in asking him to grant my desperate request, *(STATE REQUEST).* Amen.

Day Seven *(18th September)*

Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the children of God." (Matthew 5:9)

Dear Jesus, first and foremost, help me to find peace with God, for only then can I find true peace with others. Help me to do whatever it takes to create peace wherever I go, although my efforts may often meet with failure. Help me to love, desire, and delight in peace. Forgive me for all of the times my actions have resulted in discord and dissention, whether intentional or unintentional.

Saint Matthew, you made your peace with God through Jesus, now please help me to make mine. Help me also to sow peace wherever I may go, just as you did, as a witness to Jesus Christ, and please intercede with Jesus in asking him to grant my desperate request, *(STATE REQUEST).* Amen.

Day Eight *(19th September)*

Jesus said, "Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven." (Matthew 5:10)

Dear Jesus, please show me how to persevere in this struggle for things which are holy and honourable, because I fall down and grow weak so often. Help me to be faithful to you in all things, so that your will may be done in and through my life. Help me to be bold in my steady struggle for faith and unwavering in my commitment to all Godly things.

Saint Matthew, please guide me to be courageous like you in standing on the side of God's truth, even in the face of being persecuted for righteousness, and please intercede with Jesus in asking him to grant my desperate request, *(STATE REQUEST).* Amen.

Day Nine *(20th September)*

Jesus said, "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me." (Matthew 5:11)

Dear Jesus, as the times in which we live become darker and darker, living by your ways and following you is branding me in such a way that invites persecution and insult, just as it did you. If I live by your ways and love you with my whole being, I live by the light and provide a target for those who do not live by the light. Sinning is what gives most people pleasure, but I can no longer live that way, because I am aware of how much you sacrificed for me in love by dying on the cross. For all that you have done for me, I no longer desire to live in the darkness. Each time I receive an insult for belonging to you, please help me to bear it with great patience.

Saint Matthew, in being given the awesome honour of being chosen to be an apostle, you were persecuted just as Jesus was persecuted. You felt, however, the persecution you experienced was also a great honour, because Jesus was not just a man, but he was indeed God. Help me to be strong enough to love Jesus's light and to run from the darkness of sin and then, when persecution comes, to be strong enough to handle that as well. And please intercede with Jesus in asking him to grant my desperate request, *(STATE REQUEST).* Amen.

Readings at Sunday Mass

First reading *Sirach 27:30-28:7*

Anger and wrath, these are abominations, and the sinful man will hold them fast. The one who seeks vengeance will be paid vengeance from the Lord, and he who keeps a record will have his own sins recorded. Forgive your neighbour the wrong he has done, and then your sins will be pardoned when you pray. Does one person harbour anger against another and yet seek for healing from the Lord? Does he have no mercy towards someone like himself and yet pray concerning his own sins? If he himself, being flesh, maintains wrath, who will make atonement for his sins? Remember the end of your life and cease from enmity, remember destruction and death and be true to the commandments. Remember the commandments and do not be angry with your neighbour; remember the covenant of the Most High and overlook error.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm *103(102):1-2. 3-4. 9-10. 11-12. R8*

The Lord is compassionate and gracious,
slow to anger and rich in mercy.

Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and all within me, his holy name.
Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and never forget all his benefits.

The Lord is compassionate and gracious,
slow to anger and rich in mercy.

It is the Lord who forgives all your sins,
who heals every one of your ills,
who redeems your life from the grave,
who crowns you with mercy and compassion.

The Lord is compassionate and gracious,
slow to anger and rich in mercy.

He will not always find fault;
nor persist in his anger for ever.
He does not treat us according to our sins,
nor repay us according to our faults.

The Lord is compassionate and gracious,
slow to anger and rich in mercy.

For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so strong his mercy for those who fear him.
As far as the east is from the west,
so far from us does he remove our transgressions.

The Lord is compassionate and gracious,
slow to anger and rich in mercy.

Second reading *Romans 14:7-9*

Brothers and Sisters: None of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
A new commandment I give to you, says the Lord,
that you love one another, just as I have loved you.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Gospel *Matthew 18:21-35*

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: Peter came up and said to Jesus, 'Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?' Jesus said to him, 'I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven.

'Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. When he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. And since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything." And out of pity for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt. But when that same servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him, he began to choke him, saying, "Pay what you owe." So his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you." He refused and went and put him in prison until he should pay the debt. When his fellow servants saw what had taken place they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their master all that had taken place. Then his master summoned him and said to him, "You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?" And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.'

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, Vicky Falcao, 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: Lucy Ames, Elizabeth Arnold, Peter Curran, Peg Moran, Arianna Achieng Ndaya, Milton Hughes, Fr Ken Thorn, Irene Athey, William Kellaway Burnell, Kate Monaghan, Michael Maguire, Francis Lonergan, Frank Ward, Sarita Mascarenhas, Margaret Josephine Kelly, Ann Temmink, Michael Ball, Betty Rosso, Kathleen Keating.

Pope's Prayer Intention for September. 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 24 (Year 2)* ***Daily Office:*** *Week 4*

	5.00pm -5.45pm: Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Confessions *(St Joseph's)*
	6.00pm: Anticipated Mass of Sunday - *John Moore RIP (Anniv) (St Joseph's)*
Sunday 13th	**9.00am: Mass** - *People of the Parishes (St Matthew's)*
24th Sunday in Ordinary Time	**11.15am: Mass -** *Michael Cassidy RIP/LD (St Joseph's)*
	6.00pm: Mass - *Fedric Alphanso -for a visa to be granted (St Matthew's)*
Monday 14th	9**.00am** Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament **09:40 Morning Prayer**
The Exaltation of the Holy Cross	**10.00am: Mass** - *Jake & Karla McAleer (Wedding Intentions)* ***Followed By Rosary*** *(St Matthew's)*
Tuesday 15th	**9.00am** Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament **09:40 Morning Prayer**
Our Lady of Sorrows	**10.00am Mass** - *John Andrews RIP* ***Followed By Rosary*** *(St Joseph's)*
Wednesday 16th	**NO PUBLIC MASS**
Ss Cornelius & Cyprian	
Thursday 17th	6.00pm Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
Feria	**7.00pm Mass** - *Daniel Foley (Intentions) (St Joseph's)* ***Followed By Rosary*** *(St Joseph's)*
Friday 18th	**9.00am** Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament **09:40 Morning Prayer**
Feria	**10.00am: Mass** - *Barbara Whitehead RIP (St Matthew's)* ***Followed By Rosary***
Saturday 19th	**09.45 Morning Prayer 10.00am: Rosary**
Saturday Memorial of he BVM	**10.30am:Mass -** *Tony Marano RIP (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 - *Philomena Dempsey RIP (St Joseph's)*
Sunday 20th	**9.00am: Mass** - *Liam Potts RIP (Anniv) (St Matthew's)*
25th Sunday in Ordinary Time	**11.15am: Mass -** *People of the Parishes (St Joseph's)*
	6.00pm: Mass - *Garnet De Four RIP (Anniv) (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

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	St Matthew's	***St Joseph's***
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