

The Parishes of Northwood and Carpenders Park & South Oxhey



TWENTY SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
(27th September 2026)

Dear Parishioners

This past week has been an important one in the life of our parish. We have welcomed the first meetings of our First Holy Communion programme, our Confirmation programme and our RCIA group. Three different groups, three different stages of life, and three different journeys — but all united by one purpose: coming to know Jesus Christ more deeply and discovering what it means to live as his disciples.

At our Masses this Sunday, we will formally enrol our children and young people who are preparing for First Holy Communion and Confirmation. This is an important moment for them and for their families, as they begin a period of preparation and reflection. At the same time, our RCIA group is beginning its own journey of discovery, as adults explore the Catholic faith and consider what it means to enter more fully into the life of the Church. These three programmes remind us that our journey of faith is never simply about reaching a particular sacrament and then stopping. The Christian life is a continuing journey in which God calls each of us to grow, to learn, to pray and to deepen our relationship with him.

For our First Holy Communion children, this is a time of discovering more about Jesus, the Eucharist and the wonderful gift of receiving Christ in Holy Communion. They are beginning to understand more deeply what happens when we gather around the altar and why the Eucharist is at the heart of the life of the Church.

For our Confirmation candidates, this is a time of preparing to receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit and to grow in their identity as Christian disciples. Confirmation is not simply a ceremony or a rite of passage. It is an invitation to live our faith courageously and to recognise that the Holy Spirit continues to guide and strengthen us.

For those who are part of RCIA, this is a time of asking questions, discovering the Catholic faith, encountering the Scriptures and the teaching of the Church, and discerning where God may be leading them. Some may be preparing for Baptism, others for reception into full communion with the Catholic Church, while others may simply be exploring their faith and seeking to understand where they belong. Each person's story is unique, and each journey deserves our welcome and our prayers.

The Gospel this Sunday, speaks to us about responding to God's call. Jesus tells the story of two sons who are asked by their father to work in the vineyard. Their responses are different, but the important thing is ultimately what they do. Faith is not simply about words; it is about responding to God's invitation and allowing that response to shape the way we live. That message applies not only to those beginning these three programmes but to every one of us. We are all still on a journey of faith.

And so, the responsibility for supporting these journeys belongs to the whole parish. Parents have a vital role in passing on the faith to their children. Catechists generously give their time to accompany and teach. Sponsors, families and friends have their own important part to play. But the wider parish community also has a responsibility.

Our young people need to see adults who take their faith seriously. Those coming to RCIA need to experience a parish where they are genuinely welcomed. Those preparing for the sacraments need to know that the whole community is praying for them and rejoicing in their progress.

We can support them simply by being a welcoming parish, by participating faithfully in Sunday Mass, by praying for those on these journeys and by taking an interest in their lives and their faith. Sometimes a kind word, a warm welcome or an invitation to become involved in parish life can make a lasting difference.

This Sunday, as we celebrate these beginnings, let us give thanks for all those who are taking another step towards Christ. Let us pray for our First Holy Communion children, our Confirmation candidates and our RCIA members. May they discover in our parish not simply a place where they attend Mass, but a community and a family in which their faith can grow.

And may their journey encourage all of us to ask once again how we are responding to God's invitation to come closer to him.

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

Sunday Masses

At our four Sunday Masses this weekend, we will be enrolling our First Holy Communion Children and our Conformation Candidates on their catechetical programmes. Please pray for them!

Fr Tom

Fr Tom is having a small medical procedure on his big toe on Friday afternoon. He has been told that he will have to rest his foot for a few days, keeping off it a much as possible. Fr Tim Hutton and Fr Bernard Boylan will be covering the Masses during his absence from next weekend and he expects to be back on his feet by Thursday 8th

School Forms

Fr Tom will be available this week to sign school forms for those who are in year 6 and are due to transfer to secondary school next September.

He will be available on Monday 28th in the presbytery in Northwood from 6.30pm -7.30pm and Thursday 1st October in St Joseph's between 4.00pm and 5.30pm. Please email him to let him know that you are planning to see him. His email is **tommontgomery@rcdow.org.uk**

Nicholas Birch



The time has come and this weekend Nicholas is running the Berlin Marathon! *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**

His parents Greg and Anne are in Berlin this weekend supporting him. More pictures next week (hopefully)

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 12th October**. (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.

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.

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.

Catholic Chaplaincy to London's Universities

Are you a student at one of the universities or colleges in London, or in Hatfield? Our Catholic Chaplaincy is for you! It's based at Newman House, 111 Gower Street, WC1E 6AR. We have Sunday Masses for students and regular events during the week. And in many of the universities and colleges we also have campus-based Catholic societies and activities. Go to: **www.universitycatholic.net** or our Instagram page: **@newmanhouselondon** to find out more. If you are a full-time student (undergraduate or graduate student) heading to a university outside London, then why not take a look at **https://www.catholicsatuniversity.org.uk/** to identify the Catholic chaplaincy in your place of study.

November Blessing of Graves

The annual blessing of graves will take place of **Saturday 14th November** in Northwood cemetery and **Sunday 15th November in** Pinner New Cemetery.

All Saints Day

This year All Saints Day falls on a Sunday (1st November). All Saints Day is also known as All Hallows Day - as a result, Halloween means "All Hallows' Eve,". This year we are planning an All Saints Party on Saturday 31st October. We are inviting our young people to dress up as a Saint (rather than a ghost or ghoul) and after the party to come to the 6.00pm Mass in their costumes. More details later!

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

There are still one or two places on our 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. **Those who have registered their interest are now able to collect a brochure and booking form for either of the parish offices.**

COST £1395 per person

Saints of The Week
Michael, Gabriel and Raphael, Archangels

Patron Saints of soldiers, police, paramedics, and the sick and dying (Michael); messengers, postal workers, broadcasters, and expectant mothers (Gabriel); travelers, the blind, medical workers, and matchmakers (Raphael)



The existence of the spiritual, non-corporeal beings that Sacred Scripture usually calls "angels" is a truth of faith. The witness of Scripture is as clear as the unanimity of Tradition. Who are they? St. Augustine says: "'Angel' is the name of their office, not of their nature. If you seek the name of their nature, it is 'spirit;' if you seek the name of their office, it is 'angel:' from what they are, 'spirit,' from what they do, 'angel'" (St. Augustine, En. in Ps. 103, 1, 15: PL 37, 1348). With their whole beings the angels are servants and messengers of God. Because they "always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven" they are the "mighty ones who do his word, hearkening to the voice of his word" (Mt 18:10; Ps 103:20). As purely spiritual creatures angels have intelligence and will: they are personal and immortal creatures, surpassing in perfection all visible creatures, as the splendour of their glory bears witness. ***~Catechism of the Catholic Church #328–330***

In the fifth or sixth century, Church theologian Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite used the Bible to articulate what has become the traditional understanding of the hierarchy of angels. Saint Thomas Aquinas later built upon that teaching. Both taught that the hierarchy is made up of nine choirs, divided into three triads. The three highest, in the first triad (Seraphim, Cherubim, and Thrones), are devoted to God's service, worshiping Him continuously. The second triad (Dominions, Virtues, and Powers) governs the created world and the Universe. The third triad (Principalities, Archangels, and Angels) mediates between God and man. We honour the Archangels today.

The heavenly spirits are mentioned numerous times in the Old and New Testaments. In the Old Testament, they stood at the entrance to the Garden of Eden, directed Abraham, stayed his hand at the sacrifice of Isaac, destroyed Sodom and protected Lot, wrestled with Jacob, led Moses and the Israelites, and interacted with Israel's kings and prophets. In the New Testament, the Archangel Gabriel announced the births of John the Baptist and Jesus. Angels ministered to Jesus during His agony in the garden, were present at His Resurrection, and set Peter free from prison.

The archangels are a step above the guardian angels and serve humanity directly, performing the most important tasks. The three honored today are the only three mentioned in the Bible, but Jewish traditions name seven archangels, and some speculate that God uses a whole host of archangels.

Michael's name means "Who is like God?" The Book of Daniel names him as the prince who stands up for Israel's people (Daniel 10:13, 10:21, and 12:1). The Letter of Jude speaks of Michael fighting Satan in a dispute over Moses' body (Jude 1:9). The Book of Revelation reveals Michael's battle with Satan, casting him from Heaven (Revelation 12:7–8). In these passages, Michael is the great defender against Satan and his demons, the Church's protector, and the Prince of the Angels. Saints Basil, Robert Bellarmine, and Bonaventure have speculated that Michael directs the entire host of angels, taking Lucifer's place who was a Seraph of the highest realm. Pope Leo XIII wrote the prayer to Saint Michael, who defends us in battle, still prayed in many churches and in private devotion.

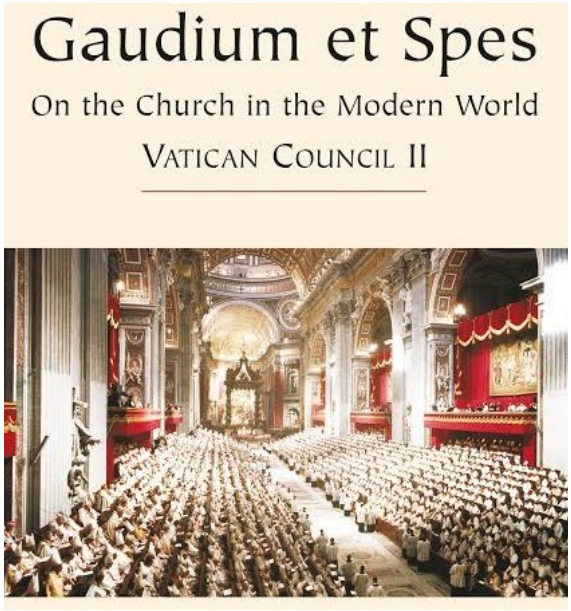
Gabriel's name means "God is my strength." In the Book of Daniel, Gabriel interprets Daniel's vision (Daniel 8:15–27; 9:20–27). In the New Testament, Gabriel appears to Zechariah to reveal John the Baptist's birth (Luke 1:5–20), and to the Blessed Virgin to announce the Messiah's birth (Luke 1:26–38). It might have been Gabriel who told Saint Joseph in a dream not to fear taking Mary as his wife (Matthew 1:18–25). Gabriel often appears in sacred art blowing a trumpet for his role in conveying divine messages, guiding prophets, and participating in important historical events.

Raphael, whose name means "God has healed," is mentioned only in the Book of Tobit. Raphael guided Tobit's son, Tobias, on a journey, led him to the woman who became his wife, and accompanied the two back to Tobit, whom he healed. It is speculated that Raphael is one of the seven angels in the Book of Revelation who receives one of the seven trumpets (Revelation 8:2).

Glorious Archangels Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael, I entrust myself to your angelic mediation.
Please set into motion God's plan for my life, protect me from the evil one,
deliver to me God's holy word, and heal me of my sin.
I thank you for the glorious duties you fulfil in the divine mission and rely upon you in my life.
Saints Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael, pray for me and mediate God's grace to me. Jesus,
I trust in You. .

Pope Leo XIV

We continue Pope Leo's catechesis series on the Second Vatican Council and its documents at his weekly Wednesday General Audience. He began exploring the document Gaudiem et Spes in September (These are his talks from Wednesday 16th September)



Catechesis. The Documents of Vatican Council II.
IV. Pastoral Constitution Gaudium et spes (GS, 23-32).
3. The human community

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning and welcome!

By dedicating the second chapter to the "human community", the Constitution Gaudium et Spes (GS) invites us to consider "the growing interdependence of men" as "one of the salient features of the modern world" (no. 23). This reality must, however, find fulfilment "on the deeper level … of this communion between persons", for which "a mutual respect for the full spiritual dignity of the person" is essential (ibid.).

These are statements which, in our times, have taken on even greater urgency. On the one hand, technological development, the spread of the mass media and social media, and the ever-increasing use of artificial intelligence are opening up new possibilities, breaking down barriers and bridging distances; on the other hand, relationships are tending to become less and less personal, more virtual, and there is a risk of becoming accustomed to delegating to algorithms decisions that are the sole preserve of the human conscience. Ensuring that social relationships have real substance and personal depth is, in this regard, the contribution that the Christian community seeks to offer.

The Council invites us to draw criteria and strength from God's creative plan, in which He willed that "all men should constitute one family and treat one another in a spirit of brotherhood", which is why "love for God and neighbour is the first and greatest commandment" which found its full revelation and complete fulfilment in Christ (cf. GS, 24).

The perfection of the human person and the development of society must be regarded as closely interdependent: to set them against one another or separate them would be to render them meaningless. History, even recent history, clearly confirms this truth; we must therefore never tire of reiterating, in the words of the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council, that "the subject and goal of all social institutions is and must be the human person which for its part and by its very nature stands completely in need of social life" (GS, 25).

From this perspective, Gaudium et Spes affirms that the diversity of people and peoples in the world must not be considered as a danger or a threat, but rather as a resource for enrichment and growth. Conflict, which at times degenerates into violence, is the result of the power of sin and the way it conditions mindsets and actions at every level, causing destruction and death. We must be ever more open to the logic of reciprocity, sharing and care, as is also the case amongst the various members of the human body (cf. 1 Cor 12:21–25).

On this point, the Pastoral Constitution also offers a concise definition of the "common good", recalling that it consists of "the sum of those conditions of social life which allow social groups and their individual members relatively thorough and ready access to their own fulfilment" (GS, 26). At the same time, acknowledging the interdependence among peoples, its states that "every social group must take account of the needs and legitimate aspirations of other groups, and even of the general welfare of the entire human family" (GS, 26).

Starting from this premise, the Council Fathers then set out some "practical and particularly urgent consequences" (GS, 27). First and foremost, respect for the human person. Gaudium et Spes states: "Whatever is opposed to life itself, such as any type of murder, genocide, abortion, euthanasia or wilful self-destruction, whatever violates the integrity of the human person, such as mutilation, torments inflicted on body or mind, attempts to coerce the will itself; whatever insults human dignity, such as subhuman living conditions, arbitrary imprisonment, deportation, slavery, prostitution, the selling of women and children; as well as disgraceful working conditions, where men are treated as mere tools for profit, rather than free and responsible persons; all these things and others of their like are infamies indeed" (ibid.).

Second consequence: respect and love for adversaries or for those who think and act in ways different from our own (cf. GS, 28).

Thirdly: the fundamental equality of all human beings, which demands social justice. The Document states: "Every type of discrimination, whether social or cultural, whether based on sex, race, colour, social condition, language or religion, is to be overcome and eradicated as contrary to God's intent" (GS, 29).

Finally, the Council Fathers exhort us to overcome the individualistic mindset and to adopt an attitude of responsibility and participation (cf. GS, 30-31).

Dear brothers and sisters, this vision of humanity as a "community of people" is a valuable legacy that the Second Vatican Council has left us. It helps us all to engage in personal and communal discernment, so that we may responsibly evaluate today's social and political projects, based on the criteria of the dignity of the human person, social justice and free participation in constructing the common good. For the future of humanity depends on each person's commitment to collaborate with God and with their brothers and sisters in building a more humane world (cf. GS, 30).

Lamp Prayer Intentions

(St Matthew's)
Blessed Sacrament
Maura Ferguson
Our Lady
Monica & Laurie Scudder RIP



(St Joseph's)
Blessed Sacrament
Maurice & Florence Rodrigo & John Crowle RIP
Our Lady
Nicholas Birch wellbeing / The Passage

NOVENA TO ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI to mark the800th Anniversary of his Transitus
25 September – 3 October 2026

This year marks the 800th anniversary of the death of St Francis.
We continue to pray a Novena to mark this special anniversary

OPENING DAILY PRAYER
Heavenly Father,
we thank you for the gift of your servant Francis,
whom you called to follow Christ
in simplicity, poverty, humility and joy.
As we prepare to celebrate
the eight hundredth anniversary of his Transitus,
open our hearts to the spirit of the Gospel
which transformed his life.
Teach us to love Christ more deeply,
to serve those in need,
to seek peace,
to care for your creation,
and to trust in your mercy.
Through the prayers of St Francis,
renew our faith, strengthen our hope,
and make us faithful witnesses to the Gospel.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

DAY TWO - 26 SEPT - BROTHER TO THE POOR

SCRIPTURE "Whatever you did for one of the least of these my brothers, you did for me." Matthew 25:40

REFLECTION Francis discovered Christ among those whom society rejected. His encounter with the leper transformed his understanding of poverty and human dignity.

In the Earlier Rule, Francis instructed his brothers:
"Let the brothers gladly and willingly serve and minister to the poor."

For Francis, the poor were not simply people who needed his charity. They were brothers and sisters.

This challenges us to look again at those around us. The homeless person, the refugee, the lonely elderly person, the struggling family and the person who feels forgotten are not merely problems to be solved. They are people created and loved by God.

Francis teaches us that Christian charity begins when we stop looking away.

PRAYER
Lord Jesus,
give us the eyes of St Francis
to recognise you in the poor and forgotten.
Save us from indifference
and make us generous in giving,
patient in listening
and faithful in serving.
May our parish be a place
where nobody feels unwanted or forgotten,
and where those in need encounter
the compassion and love of Christ. Amen.

DAY THREE - 27 SEPT - THE GOSPEL MADE LIFE

SCRIPTURE ."Freely you have received, freely give." Matthew 10:8

REFLECTION Francis wanted his whole life to become an expression of the Gospel.

The Earlier Rule begins with a wonderfully simple description of the Franciscan vocation:
"The rule and life of the lesser brothers is this: to observe the holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Francis did not want merely to speak about the Gospel. He wanted to live it.

He sought to live simply, forgive generously, serve humbly and trust completely in God.

The Gospel therefore became visible in his life.

This remains a challenge for us. Our faith is not only what we believe or what we say at Mass. It is also how we live when Mass is over: how we speak to others, how we treat those who disagree with us, how readily we forgive and how generously we serve.

Francis reminds us that the most powerful proclamation of the Gospel is often a life transformed by Christ.

PRAYER
Lord Jesus,
make us faithful people of the Gospel.
May your Word guide our thoughts,
our choices and our relationships.
Give us courage to proclaim our faith
and humility to serve without seeking recognition.
Through the example of St Francis,
renew your Church in holiness and joy. Amen.

DAY FOUR - 28 SEPT - THE CROSS OF CHRIST

SCRIPTURE "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me." Galatians 2:20

REFLECTION Francis desired to follow Christ so completely that his life became conformed to the Crucified Lord.

In one of his Admonitions, Francis wrote: "Let us follow the poor and crucified Christ."

These words express the heart of his vocation. The Cross was not simply something he admired; it became the pattern of his life.

Francis knew illness, suffering and rejection. He also received the stigmata at La Verna, bearing in his body the marks of Christ's Passion. Yet he never regarded suffering as the final word.

For Christians, the Cross always points towards Resurrection. We all carry crosses. Some are visible; others are known only to God. Francis encourages us to bring them to Christ, trusting that his love is stronger than every suffering.

PRAYER
Lord Jesus,
give us the eyes of St Francis
to recognise you in the poor and forgotten.
Save us from indifference
and make us generous in giving,
patient in listening
and faithful in serving.
May our parish be a place
where nobody feels unwanted or forgotten,
and where those in need encounter
the compassion and love of Christ. Amen.

DAY FIVE - 29 SEPT - PRAISE OF CREATION

SCRIPTURE "God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good." Genesis 1:31

REFLECTION Francis looked upon creation with wonder because he saw beyond the gift to the giver.

In his Canticle of the Creatures, he prayed:
"Praised be you, my Lord, with all your creatures."

Francis called the sun, moon, water, fire and earth his brothers and sisters. Creation reminded him that everything comes from the goodness of God.

His praise is especially striking because the Canticle belongs to the final period of his life, when he was suffering greatly. Even in weakness he could praise.

Francis teaches us gratitude. Creation is not simply ours to

possess. It is a gift entrusted to us.
May we learn to receive the world with grateful hearts, to care for it responsibly and to allow its beauty to lead us towards the Creator.

PRAYER
Most High God,
giver of every good gift,
teach us to receive creation with gratitude.
Forgive us when we waste or destroy your gifts.
Help us to live simply and responsibly
and to praise you for the beauty of your creation.
May everything you have made
lead our hearts to deeper love of you. Amen.

DAY SIX - 30 SEPT - INSTRUMENT OF PEACE

SCRIPTURE "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God." Matthew 5:9

REFLECTION Peace was at the heart of Francis's vocation.
In his Testament, Francis recalled: "The Lord revealed to me a greeting, that we should say: 'May the Lord give you peace.'"
Peace was therefore more than a greeting. It became a way of life. Francis lived in an age marked by conflict. Yet he sought to meet others with humility rather than hatred. His famous encounter with the Sultan remains a powerful expression of his desire to cross barriers and seek peace.
Our world continues to need peacemakers. There are wars between nations, divisions within communities and conflicts within families. Francis reminds us that peace begins with the human heart.
Sometimes the first step towards peace is an apology, a conversation, forgiveness, or simply refusing to speak words which deepen division.

PRAYER
God of peace,
bring peace to our troubled world.
Protect those caught up in war
and comfort those who have lost loved ones.
Give wisdom to those who have responsibility for nations.
And make us instruments of your peace
in our homes, our parish and our communities.
Where there is hatred, let us bring love;
where there is division, reconciliation;
where there is despair, hope. Amen.

DAY SEVEN - 1 OCT- PERFECT JOY

SCRIPTURE "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice."Philippians 4:4

REFLECTION
Francis was a joyful man, but his joy was not dependent upon having an easy life.
He knew illness, disappointment, rejection and suffering.
The famous story of Perfect Joy, preserved in the later Franciscan collection The Little Flowers, tells of Francis and Brother Leo returning to their friary cold, hungry and exhausted. Francis imagines that they are refused entry and treated harshly.
Yet he says that if, in such circumstances, they remain patient and faithful to Christ, that is perfect joy.
The story is not presenting happiness as the absence of difficulty. It points to something deeper.
Francis discovered that Christian joy comes from Christ.
Even when circumstances are difficult, Christ remains.
Even when we are disappointed, Christ remains.
Even when we lose something precious, Christ remains.
That is the joy which the world needs to see in Christians today: not superficial happiness, but a hope which survives suffering.

PRAYER
Lord Jesus,
give us the joy that comes from knowing you.
When we are discouraged, give us hope.
When we are anxious, give us peace.
When we are lonely, remind us of your presence.
May the joy of your Gospel
shine through our lives
and bring hope to those around us.

DAY EIGHT - 2 OCT - SISTER DEATH

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

REFLECTION In the final section of his Canticle of the Creatures, Francis wrote:
"Praised be you, my Lord, through our sister bodily death, from whom no living man can escape."
Francis did not deny the sadness or reality of death. He could call death "sister" because he believed that Christ had transformed death through his Resurrection.
For Francis, death was a passage into the fullness of life with God.
As we approach the 800th anniversary of his Transitus, we remember those whom we have loved and who have gone before us. We entrust them to God's mercy.
We also remember our own mortality. One day each of us will make this journey. Francis teaches us not to live in fear, but to live faithfully, so that when our time comes we may place ourselves peacefully into the hands of God.

PRAYER
Lord Jesus Christ,
you are the Resurrection and the Life.
Comfort all who mourn
and be close to those who are dying.
Receive our departed loved ones into your Kingdom
and strengthen our faith in your promise of eternal life.
Through St Francis,
teach us to welcome each day as a gift
and to place our lives completely into your hands. Amen

DAY NINE - 3 OCT - HIS TRANSITUS AND ETERNAL LIFE

SCRIPTURE "In my Father's house are many rooms." John 14:2

REFLECTION Eight hundred years ago today, Francis lay dying at the Portiuncula. His earthly pilgrimage was coming to its end. He had surrendered the ambitions of his youth and discovered the treasure of Christ. He had embraced poverty, served the poor, loved the Cross, praised God for creation and become an instrument of peace.
In his Testament, Francis looked back upon his whole journey and recognised God's hand guiding him: "The Lord gave me, Brother Francis, thus to begin to do penance." His life had been a response to God's grace. Now he was ready to surrender everything.
On the evening of 3 October 1226, Francis passed from this life into eternal life. The Church calls this his Transitus - his passing, his crossing over. Today we give thanks for his witness. But Francis always points beyond himself to Christ. His message remains simple:
Follow Christ. Live the Gospel. Love the poor. Seek peace. Praise God. Trust him completely.
As we complete this novena, may the spirit of Francis be renewed within us. And when our own earthly pilgrimage comes to its end, may we pass safely into the eternal joy of God.

PRAYER
Most High, glorious God,
we thank you for the gift of St Francis.
We thank you for his conversion,
his love of Christ,

his service of the poor,
his love of creation,
his work for peace
and his joyful trust in you.
On this 800th anniversary of his Transitus,
renew his spirit within your Church.
Make us people of prayer,
people of peace,
people of mercy
and people of joy.
May we follow Christ faithfully
throughout our earthly pilgrimage
and, when our journey is complete,
may we join St Francis and all the saints
in the eternal praise of your glory.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen..



CONCLUDING INVOCATION

St Francis of Assisi, **pray for us.**
St Clare of Assisi, **pray for us**.
All holy men and women of the Franciscan family, **pray for us**.
Mary, Queen of Heaven, **pray for us.**
All the saints of God, **pray for us.**
Most High, glorious God, **have mercy on us.**

Readings at Sunday Mass

First reading *Ezekiel 18:25-28*

Thus says the Lord: 'You say, "The way of the Lord is not just." Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way not just? Is it not your ways that are not just? When a righteous person turns away from his righteousness and does injustice, he shall die for it; for the injustice that he has done he shall die. Again, when a wicked person turns away from the wickedness he has committed and does what is just and right, he shall save his life. Because he considered and turned away from all the transgressions that he had committed, he shall surely live; he shall not die.'

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm *25(24):4-5b. 6-7. 8-9. R6a*

Remember your compassion, O Lord.

O Lord, make me know your ways.
Teach me your paths.
Guide me in your truth, and teach me;
for you are the God of my salvation.

Remember your compassion, O Lord.

Remember your compassion, O Lord,
and your merciful love, for they are from of old.
Do not remember the sins of my youth,
nor my transgressions.
In your merciful love remember me,
because of your goodness, O Lord.

Remember your compassion, O Lord.

Good and upright is the Lord;
therefore he shows the way to sinners.
He guides the humble in right judgement;
to the humble he teaches his way.

Remember your compassion, O Lord.

Second reading *Philippians 2:1-11*

Brothers and Sisters: If there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy; complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
My sheep hear my voice, says the Lord,
and I know them, and they follow me.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Gospel *Matthew 21:28-32*

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 said to the chief priests and the elders of the people, 'What do you think? A man had two sons. And he went to the first and said, "Son, go and work in the vineyard today." And he answered, "I will not", but afterwards he changed his mind and went. And he went to the other son and said the same. And he answered, "I go, sir", but did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?' They said, 'The first.' Jesus said to them, 'Truly, I say to you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him. And even when you saw it, you did not afterwards change your minds and believe him.'

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, Nora O'Sullivan, Colin Power, John Casey 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: Stephen Franklin, Denis Carey, Mary Hughes, Betty Turner, Eileen Kavanagh, Laurie Scudder, Teresa Lavender, Fr John Elliott Fr Dominic McKenna, Fr Barry Ffrench, Magdalene Oxley, Margaret O'Neill, Mary O'Mahoney, Mary Nicol, Patricia Capewell, Hildegard Allaway, Vera Loughney, Michael John Gough, Richard Bransfield.

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. .

Pope's Prayer Intention for October. For mental health ministry, we pray that the mental health ministry be established throughout the Church, helping to overcome the stigma and discrimination of persons with mental illnesses.

Worship this week

Sunday Readings: *Year A* ***Weekday Readings:*** *Week 26 (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 - *William Gordon RIP (Anniv) (St Joseph's)*
Sunday 27th	**9.00am: Mass** - *Laurie Scudder RIP (Anniv) (St Matthew's)*
26th Sunday in Ordinary Time	**11.15am: Mass -** *Nicholas Birch/Wellbeing/The Passage (St Joseph's)*
	6.00pm: Mass - *People of the Parishes (St Matthew's)*
Monday 28th	**9.00am** Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament **09:40 Morning Prayer**
Feria	**10.00am: Mass** - *Craig Edwards (Birthday)* ***Followed By Rosary*** *(St Matthew's)*
	12 noon: Funeral Mass of Victoria Falcao RIP *(St Matthew's)*
Tuesday 29th	**9.00am** Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament **09:40 Morning Prayer**
Ss Michael, Gabriel & Raphael	**10.00am Mass** - *Patricia Wilson (Birthday Intns)* ***Followed By Rosary*** *(St Joseph's)*
Wednesday 30th	**NO PUBLIC MASS**
S Jerome	
Thursday 1st	6.00pm Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
S Therese of the Child Jesus	**7.00pm Mass** - *Jeno Miraclin (Thanksgiving) (St Joseph's)* ***Followed By Rosary*** *(St Joseph's)*
Friday 2nd	**9.00am** Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament **09:40 Morning Prayer**
Holy Guardian Angels	**10.00am: Mass** - *Boaventura Figueiredo RIP (Anniv) (St Matthew's)* ***Followed By Rosary***
Saturday 3rd	**09.45 Morning Prayer 10.00am: Rosary**
Saturday Memorial of the BVM	**10.30am:Mass -** *Oisin O'Driscoll 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 - *People of the Parishes (St Joseph's)*
Sunday 4th	**9.00am: Mass** - *Rafael Pino (Birthday Intns) (St Matthew's)*
27th Sunday in Ordinary Time	**11.15am: Mass -** *Mary Cunningham RIP (St Joseph's)*
	6.00pm: Mass - *Sarath De Sylva 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

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	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	Awaiting Appointment

Or safeguarding@rcdow.org.uk