

### **A HAPPY, BLESSED AND JOYFUL EASTER TO YOU ALL!**

Thank you! On behalf of Fr Carlos, Fr Stuart and Fr James for all of your cards, greetings and your work of prayer during Holy Week and Easter Week. Bishop John Sherrington also sends his greetings to the parish and thanks us all for a prayerful and very splendid Vigil of Easter.

THANK YOU also for all the offerings made at Easter. These go a long way to paying for the priestly ministry to the parish for the entire year and all you offer is very deeply appreciated. Thanks indeed for all this generosity.

**HOLY WEEK COLLECTIONS:** Thank you also for your contributions to the Lenten Alms and Holy Places collections. We will publish totals for these in the coming weeks.

**DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY:** The Second Sunday of Easter is now known throughout the Church as the Sunday of Divine Mercy, the title given by St John Paul II, not as his own idea, but responding to the request made of St Faustina by the Lord Jesus in mystery. Essentially Our Blessed Saviour asks us to centre ourselves in a particular way on this Sunday in devotion to the power of his mercy - as a moment of grace to remind ourselves of what should be at the heart of our lives every day! It is a grace filled expression of the meaning of Easter and a way to touch sacramentally the Passion, death and Resurrection of the Lord. We will offer the DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY DEVOTIONS at 2pm at St Bernard's, with a time of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and celebrating the "hour of mercy" with the 3pm prayers. Those wishing to make the Divine Mercy devotions should attend their Sunday Mass as normal and make use of the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the week before or after this Sunday.

**MARY DUNNE RIP:** Mary's Funeral Mass is on Thursday 20 April at 12Noon. Of your charity come to prayer for her soul if you are available on Thursday.

**JOE (PHELM) TUFFY RIP:** Joe's Funeral Mass will be on Tuesday 25 April at 12 Noon at St Gabriel's.

**CORONATION OF H.M. KING CHARLES:** The Bishops' Conference asks each parish to offer Mass for God's grace for the King on 5 May. This will be the intention at the 10am mass that day, and particular prayers for Mass have been provided by the bishops. We pray indeed that our new king will always uphold all that is in accord with the truth of Catholic faith and the common good.

**CORONATION OF H.M. KING CHARLES: PARISH LUNCH:** To mark Coronation weekend we hope to have a Parish Lunch on Sunday 7 May. This will follow the established pattern, in St Gabriel's hall following the 12 Noon Mass, as a way to celebrate Easter together and also this significant national moment. Come along and bring something to share for lunch. *Coronation Chicken might be especially appropriate!*

Can you help? Please let the Parish Office know if you can help on the Sunday, or in preparation on Saturday. Non-perishable items can be brought in on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> between 4-5pm.

**MAY DEVOTIONS:** Lunch on 7 May will be followed at 3.30pm at St Gabriel's by our May Devotions and we will crown the statue of our Lady - a good thing to do on Coronation weekend to honour the Queen of Heaven in her Dowry of England, finishing about 4.15pm.

**14 MAY SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF WILLESDEN MAY PROCESSION:** The annual May Procession in honour of Our Lady will take place at the diocesan Shrine of Our Lady of Willesden at 3pm on Sunday 14th May. The preacher will be Fr Alan Robinson, Rector of the diocesan Shrine of the Blessed Sacrament. See poster in church for details.

**PLANNED GIVING, BOXES OF ENVELOPES 2023-24:** are available now to collect from the Parish Office (St Gabriel's), should you for any reason not have collected yours. Any queries about this please ask the clergy after Mass.

**SYCAMORE: A COURSE IN EXPLORING CHRISTIAN FAITH: *How can we find happiness? What's the meaning of life? Is there a God?*** These are questions that you or someone you know may be thinking about. *Sycamore* is an informal course about the Christian faith and its relevance for life today. It gives you space to meet other people, share ideas, explore your beliefs, and think about questions that really matter. It can form a real sense of community, a spirit of friendship, some great conversation. **NEXT MEETING will be at St. Gabriel's Church Hall on 18 April 2023 at 7.00pm refreshments available!** All are welcome - whether a faithful parishioner of many years or someone who is starting his/her journey of faith. Meetings then will be every two weeks or so, giving five more up to the summer. Ask Fr Carlos for more information.

**DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES 21-28 JULY:** Bookings are not open yet, but '*Expressions of Interest*' are sought from all who intend to participate in the Pilgrimage, whether as Praying Pilgrims, Clergy etc. An expression of interest can be made at the website: <https://rcdow.org.uk/pilgrimages/lourdes/>

**PILGRIMAGE TO ROME AND ASSISI 6-13 NOVEMBER:** Fr Tom has sent details of a pilgrimage he will be leading from Northwood parish between 6-13 November. 4 nights in Rome and 2 in Assisi. Full details on the poster in church.

**DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND 19-27 NOVEMBER:** The annual Pilgrimage to the Holy Land will take place from Sunday 19th Nov to Monday 27th Nov, led by Bishop John Sherrington and Fr John Farrell OP. It will include visits to Galilee, Jerusalem and Bethlehem. Flights will be from Heathrow. Costs are £2265 per person sharing, £682 single room supplement; travel insurance essential. Booking forms are available from Tangey Tours or from Elizabeth Uwalaka in the Pilgrimage Office or at <http://www.tangey-tours.com/WHL>

**PARISH ACCOUNTS FOR 2022:** A summary of the Parish Accounts for 2022 is posted in the foyer of each church. From this you can see the following:

- Income is up, which is good news. BUT we are not giving to the parish in the most efficient way. Please consider giving by means of a Standing Order and, if you are a tax payer, making a Gift Aid declaration.
- The amount of Gift Aid we were able to claim in 2022 was roughly the same as in 2021. This means that several thousand pounds of FREE MONEY from the government went to waste.
- Expenditure is roughly in line with what we expect. Less repair and fabric work were done in 2022, so it looks as though we have a much bigger surplus. However, fabric work will need to be done, and of course fuel/energy costs are rising dramatically in 2023.

*Thank you!* For your commitment and generosity to the parish and to other causes. Please keep under review what you are able to contribute, and if you can move away from using cash to a Standing Order, please ask for the details.

**JOB OPPORTUNITY AT SACRED HEART LANGUAGE COLLEGE:** Opportunity for We're a technician to work within the design technology department. This is a part time post for 18 hours per week. See poster in church foyer for details.

**CARITAS HOMES FOR UKRAINE MATCHING SERVICE:** See the poster in church. Caritas, in partnership with St John of God Hospitaller Services have launched a service to bring together displaced Ukrainians with those in the Catholic community willing to host them for 6 months. If you have room in your home in these difficult times to consider welcoming a stranger displaced by the evil war, visit <https://sjog-homesforukraine.uk/> for information.

**COST OF LIVING CRISIS:** News about the Warm Spaces in the Westminster Diocese (which, going by today's weather, could be needed for a little while to come) has crossed the Atlantic! If you have a few minutes, take a look at this news video, featuring Fr Richard Nesbit from White City: [CBS "Warm banks" open doors to people struggling to stay warm in U.K. - YouTube](#)  
For anyone struggling with fuel bills, this might be useful - Money Saving Expert Martin Lewis has created a handy tool for anyone who would like to calculate their likely energy bills from April 1st:  
[www.moneysavingexpert.com/utilities/what-are-the-price-cap-unit-rates-/#epgcalculator](http://www.moneysavingexpert.com/utilities/what-are-the-price-cap-unit-rates-/#epgcalculator)

**GOOD COUNSEL NETWORK CAMPAIGN INFO:** GCN have sent their 2022 Review (copy on the noticeboard at St Bernard, which amongst other things lists the names of lives saved with your support during the last year. GCN writes: *"Please also pray that the plans to introduce national buffer zones around abortion centres in the UK will not come to pass. In GK Chesterton's epic poem, The Ballad of the White Horse, Our Lady tells King Alfred, "I tell you naught for your comfort, Yea, naught for your desire, Save that the sky grows darker yet And the sea rises higher." Things may seem very dark indeed and the tide seems to rise higher but it is Christmas, and this is a season of hope. We do have a reason to hope. And the children that will celebrate their first Christmas this year because of your support, are a witness to this hope and this Christian joy!* To be a regular supporter or get involved in peaceful prayer vigils, write to [info@goodcounselnetwork.com](mailto:info@goodcounselnetwork.com).

"There have now been over ten **million abortions** in Great Britain since the Abortion Act was passed 55 years ago, in October 1967. With this terrible number of lives lost, please pray and fast for the end of abortion in this country. GCN have sent a link to an article about the 10 million abortions that have taken place in Britain since the Abortion Act was passed on 27<sup>th</sup> October 1967. Also see what you can do to help end abortion. Please also share the article, <https://mariastopsabortion.blogspot.com/>. There are cards in the foyer to help you get involved.

**ESCORTED PILGRIMAGE TO KNOCK SHRINE, IRELAND:** 15th May 2023. £699.00 per person sharing. Price includes flight, all transfers, 4 nights' in Knock House Hotel with full board. All entertainment and excursions included. Day trips to Westport, Ballintubber Abbey, Croagh Patrick, Fr. Peyton Centre & National Museum. Single supplement £150.00. Contact Patricia on 01268 762 278 or 07740 175557 or email [knockpilgrimages@gmail.com](mailto:knockpilgrimages@gmail.com). See poster in church.

**CONTACTLESS MACHINES:** We, like other parishes have been experiencing problems with the contactless payment consoles. We have made a little progress with determining the problems, but not yet as far as getting a solution. *Thank you for your patience. Thank you to everyone for your commitment and generosity in hard and uncertain times.*

**CALLING ALL SINGERS/MUSICIANS! MUSIC FOR SUNDAY MASS:** During August there's less music at Sunday Mass. That reminds us how important music is to our worship and how, like anything valuable, it needs to be constantly renewed and developed. For the foreseeable future our Sunday Mass schedule is remaining as it is now, and we want to build up the music especially at 9am, 10am and 11am Mass. A GREAT WAY TO OFFER A MINISTRY TO YOUR PARISH IS TO COME AND JOIN THE SINGERS TO LEAD MUSIC AT THESE MASSES. Speak with the clergy or with Simon (Director of Music) if you can offer your talent in this way...and don't be shy!

**CARITAS WESTMINSTER:** The umbrella department for all social outreach have written to share a film that was produced to show the impact of our social justice work across the Diocese. It is a celebration of what we have achieved together across the Diocese. Here is a link to the film: <https://youtu.be/Vgxvkd-8Ug>

**YOUNG CATHOLICS (AGE 18-35 YEARS):** Keep in touch with the Youth Ministry website at [www.dowym.com](http://www.dowym.com) for many resources. Particularly now "Words of advice for Catholic Young Professionals".

**HELP EMERGENCY APPEAL FOR UKRAINE:** The Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral in London and community organisations have united to work with accredited and registered Ukrainian charities to provide medicines, food and critical services to support the most vulnerable to overcome the consequences and trauma of war. Donations can be made by cheque (payable to AUGB LTD - Central Appeal Fund and sent to Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of the Holy Family of London, Chancery Office, 21-22 Binney Street, London W1K 5BQ), directly to the central appeal fund (AUGB Ltd, Account Number: 80038237, Sort code: 20-65-89, with reference HelpUkraine) or online: <https://www.gofundme.com/f/helpukraine>. Alternately, donations can also be made to Cafod, who are a member of the Disasters Emergency Committee at <https://cafod.org.uk/News/Emergencies-news/Ukraine-crisis>. There's a poster in the foyer with a QR code and the above details, or just put cash in an envelope marked "Ukraine" and it will be forwarded.

**NEWS FROM CARITAS WESTMINSTER: POVERTY CHALLENGE - SEE, JUDGE, ACT:** Following the Pandemic many households face new hardships as prices rise. Caritas Social Action Network (CSAN) the Catholic agency addressing poverty and injustice in England and Wales has released a new booklet to increase awareness of Catholic Social Teaching on poverty. This can be downloaded at [www.csan.org.uk](http://www.csan.org.uk)

**COST OF LIVING HUB:** The Mayor of London has launched a new Cost of Living Hub to help people access information, support and advice about claiming benefits, dealing with debts, financial management and mental health support. Visit <https://www.london.gov.uk/cost-living-hub>

**GRANTS TO HELP WITH ENERGY DEBTS:** Possible help from a charitable trust plus links to other advice providers at <https://fuelpoverty.org.uk/focus-on/fuel-debt-and-trust-funds/>

**THE CATHOLIC NETWORK:** See the poster in church advertising this free digital on-line service, a point of contact and interaction for Catholics seeking to interpret the world we live in. Each week the network welcomes guests, commentaries, reflections and instruction, as well as news items about work being done by Catholic organisations. More information at [www.thecatholicnetwork.co.uk](http://www.thecatholicnetwork.co.uk).

**INTRODUCING CATHOLIC LISTENERS:** Catholic Listeners; Diocese of Westminster, a new confidential listening helpline has been set up for those who are returning to the faith. The number is 0800 448 0704.

This service is based on the Landings ethos of compassionate listening. Although not a counselling service, they have a professional team trained on signposting to other services and agencies. They aim to help those in need of a safe space to talk. For further information please contact Ade at [Catholiclisteners@gmail.com](mailto:Catholiclisteners@gmail.com)

**SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION IN OUR PARISH:** As we emerge from the Covid period to a new reality, so too our approach to preparation for the sacraments needs to change. We don't have an official line on this in our diocese as yet, but Cardinal Grech, Chair of the European Conference of Bishops, memorably said in 2020 that if after Covid the Church went back to doing what we did before it would be suicide!

There are some radical new ways of thinking on this unfolding in some parishes around the UK as we wait for the bishops to take a lead. We will be a little less radical.

As Parish Priest I ask families and candidates not to come with particular expectations or sense of entitlement to what should happen when: candidates should come to the sacraments when they are ready, and the first step to being ready is that habitual Sunday worship in line with the "Obligation" should be the *established* norm for the families of small children - and the children be part of this - or chosen

personally by those of teenage years and above. After that, we can start to look at the base on which to build. If you have any questions or observations, contact Fr James. **(Notice issued March 2022)**

*(Copies of the bishops' statement on Sunday and Holy Day worship of May 2022, and Fr James' digest of the previous statements by the bishops are available in the foyers of our churches and on the website. This will help to give context to the above.)*



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**Support our parish.**

You can make a donation to the parish by scanning the QR code or making a card payment on the card machine at the entrance of both of our churches.