

**N.B. HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION: SOLEMNITY OF THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD THURS 18 MAY:** Thursday 18 May is for us a Holy Day. All Catholics should attend Mass on that day, the 40<sup>th</sup> day from Easter Day and the glorious conclusion of the season of Easter. Holy Day Masses in the parish will be at the usual times: 10.00am at St Gabriel's and 7.30pm at St Bernard's.

**THANKS** to everyone who contributed so finely to our Parish Lunch for Coronation Weekend. It was a joyful celebration and a real feast!

**PRIEST TRAINING FUND COLLECTION: THANK YOU!** Thank you for your generosity to the Priest Training Fund collection last weekend. It is not too late to make a donation if you wish. Envelopes are available in the back of the church, or by contacting the parish office. Please continue to pray for vocations to the priesthood. For more information, or to make a donation, visit [www.rcdow.org.uk/donations](http://www.rcdow.org.uk/donations). We will publish a total for the collection after another couple of weeks.

**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 Tues 16 May 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.

**NEWS FROM THE DIOCESAN VOCATIONS TEAM:** On Weds, 17 May, there will be an Open Evening at St James, Spanish Place, for any men interested in learning about or discerning a vocation to the priesthood. The regular evening Mass at 6pm will be followed by a gathering in the social centre for a short presentation, informal conversations and refreshments. Do come and join us if you can. The nearest tube stations are Bond Street and Baker Street.

**NATIONAL GALLERY EXHIBITION ON ST FRANCIS:** The National Gallery, Trafalgar Square, is holding an exhibition from 6 May to 30 July exploring the life and legacy of St Francis of Assisi. The exhibition includes paintings by Botticelli, Sassetta, Caravaggio, Murillo, El Greco, and Antony Gormley as well as a new commission from Richard Long. Admission is **free** and likely to be very popular. More info at the exhibition's website at <https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/exhibitions/saint-francis-of-assisi>. *Fr James writes: This small exhibition contains some real gems and is well worth a visit. It includes more than the usual works of art, including two astounding artefacts, one being a reliquary of a habit of St Francis. Offered free of charge, it is highly recommended.*

**VISIT OF BLESSED CARLO ACUTIS'S MOTHER:** Antonia Salzano, the mother of Blessed Carlo Acutis, will be visiting the Church of Corpus Christi, Maiden Lane, on Thurs 1 June at 6.30pm. Following a Sung Mass, Antonia Salzano will give a talk about her recently-beatified son, his life and his relationship with Our Lord. There will also be the opportunity to venerate a relic of Blessed Carlo. See poster in church.

**DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES 21-28 JULY:** Cardinal Nichols will lead the annual Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes from 21 - 28 July. People are encouraged to book now via the Tangney Tours portal at: <https://www.tangney-tours.com/pilgrimages/lourdes/westminster-lourdes> to avoid disappointment as places are limited. If people have previously indicated 'St Frai Pilgrim' on an Expression of Interest Form, or you know of someone with significant medical and mobility needs who intends to come to Lourdes, then contact the Pilgrimage Office on 0207 798 9173 immediately, so the Medical Team can look into assisting with requirements and care. Similarly, any individuals or groups wishing to travel independently to join Westminster in Lourdes, by making their own travel and accommodation arrangement, must confirm this in writing to the Pilgrimage Office by 30th April 2023 as well as submitting payment towards the Pilgrims' Levy at £35 per pilgrim. More info at webpage [www.rcdow.org.uk/pilgrimages/lourdes/](http://www.rcdow.org.uk/pilgrimages/lourdes/) or Elizabeth Uwalaka on 0207 798 9173.

**DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE TO WALSINGHAM:** The annual Diocesan Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady at Walsingham will take place this year on Sat 23 September. Note the date now and look for further information nearer the time.

**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. You can book online at <http://www.tangney-tours.com/WHL> or call Gill at Tangney Tours 01732 886666 or Elizabeth at the Pilgrimage office 0207 798 9173. 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.

**MISSIO RED BOXES THANK YOU!** In 2022 our parish raised £1,625.45 through our Red Boxes and donations to MISSIO and the Mill Hill Missionaries. This is part of a worldwide network of people supporting missionaries through prayer and financial assistance. Your support of projects such as the Fundong Mission Station in Cameroon has enabled Fr Leon, a Mill Hill Missionary, to help children learn in a safe environment and instil values that empower them to turn away from conflict and towards faith in God. Visit [missio.org.uk](http://missio.org.uk) to find more about how your support changes lives for the better. Red Boxes are available from the Parish Office or from the Sacristy at St Bernard's.

**JOB OPPORTUNITY, St MARY'S CEMETERY:** Manager required at St Mary's Cemetery, Harrow Road, NW10. Full time, salary £45-50k. For info contact Angela Rowe at [secretary@secularclergy.org.uk](mailto:secretary@secularclergy.org.uk) or call 07968310643.

**NEWS FROM CAFOD:** Did you know that Church teaching says that we should not only support those in poverty but also tackle the root causes of poverty? Pope Benedict XVI said that "Love — caritas — is an extraordinary force which leads people to opt for courageous and generous engagement in the field of justice and peace." For decades CAFOD has spoken out against injustice. To find out more and get involved in tackling the root causes of poverty, please go to [cafod.org.uk/latestcampaigns](http://cafod.org.uk/latestcampaigns)

**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.

**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, Sortcode: 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://fuelpovertysource.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.