

SS MICHAEL AND MARTIN



Roman Catholic Parish of Hounslow
Archdiocese of Westminster

This Parish is served by the Spiritans

PARISH NEWSLETTER

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THE HOLY FAMILY

28th December 2025

PASTORAL LETTER FOR THE FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

28 DECEMBER 2025

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ,

Today's Feast of the Holy Family continues our rejoicing in the birth of Jesus, our hope and our salvation. This Feast has also been chosen as the moment in which dioceses throughout the world mark the end of the Jubilee Year with its theme of *'Pilgrims into Hope'*. I think these two themes, of hope and family life, go well together.

During this Holy Year we have been reflecting on the virtue of hope and how it shapes our lives in good times and bad. Words of Pope Benedict showed us the way when he said that evoking the memories of goodness in our lives serves to open our hearts to hope. The experience of goodness and the awakening of hope go hand in hand.

Think, for a moment, of the goodness that has been part of our own lives: the love of friends we have enjoyed; the moments of great joy we recall, such as the birth of a child or moments of success; the kindness of neighbours and of strangers. Of course, to remember goodness does not mean forgetting the times of great distress and sorrow. That is always the mix in our lives. Generally, we are probably more likely to forget the good things and dwell on the bad. But this is a moment to grasp firmly all that is good in our lives and see it as giving us true hope.

Goodness gives rise to hope when we see it as a gift of God. Indeed, we believe that God uses so many different ways of touching our lives with grace and goodness. Circumstances that seem to be no more than chance are gifts of grace. God gives us people who are faithful and steadfast to encourage and enrich us, as well as utterly unexpected displays of faith and kindness from people unknown to us.

These gifts of goodness, like the gifts we have been exchanging in these days, are also promises. In giving these gifts, God is reminding us that we are never forgotten. His gifts proclaim that God always wishes us well, that God promises to us our true fulfilment, in his presence, for ever. This is the virtue of hope. This hope is not a vague feeling that things will turn out all right. Rather, hope is the strong and enduring belief that God will hold us in his love until, finally, he brings us into his presence in heaven. When we see goodness as a gift of God, then we understand hope as God's gift too.

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PARISH OFFICE IS CLOSED

From Tuesday 23rd December 2025 till Friday 2nd January
2026



Such an appreciation of goodness in every sphere of life gives rise in our hearts not only to a sense of gratitude but also to a willingness, on our part, to be generous in return. When we are touched by goodness then we are moved to be compassionate to others and to add to the sum of goodness in the circle of our living. In this way we begin to proclaim the love of God, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, in our daily life and actions. Then we ourselves become agents of goodness for others.

Today, on this Feast, I thank all who work hard to sustain their family circle, to deepen its stability and love. Families, in so many different shapes and sizes, are the bedrock of our society and of our Church. I thank all who expend great love and effort to sustain family relationships, across generations, especially in times of crisis, hardship and distress. Surely the coming of Jesus into a family is the greatest sign that in the plan of the loving Creator the family is the first school of life. There we learn the meaning of love, of mutual trust that makes us who we are. This is what was occupying the mind of St Paul when he wrote those words of exhortation to every family that we have just heard.

But I am only too aware that for many the family can also be a place of the most profound dismay, a place in which rejection is experienced and suffering endured. Too many families struggle with lack of resources or outright poverty. These are critical challenges for our society and for our Church. We work and pray that the help which is provided never diminishes the role of the family but is provided in a manner which enhances the dignity of family life. So I thank all who work in our parishes and through our Caritas social action, to support and sustain those who are in need and losing heart.

For me, one of the great sources of goodness and hope is to be found among our young people. I

know that so many of you young people have a real love for the Lord and want to contribute to the reservoir of goodness in our society and world today. You have real concern for those in need and those who feel excluded. I also understand that you look for encouragement, support and leadership in your lives. I therefore rejoice in your families who are so often proud of you. And I rejoice in the work of our Youth services, in our parishes, in the Youth Centre in Pinner. I thank our young leaders who work in those Services and I ask you all to give them great support in the time ahead.

Now, as this Jubilee Year comes to a close, we are preparing to give a warm welcome to our new Archbishop, Bishop Richard Moth. My time of service to the Diocese of Westminster as your Archbishop, then, is coming to an end. I want to take this opportunity of thanking you all for your prayers, both those offered in every celebration of Mass and those made privately too. I thank you for the energy and generosity that is so often brought to the life of our parishes and diocese. I ask pardon for my failings, which, if I listed them, would make this Pastoral Letter far too long. And I ask for your prayers as I enter a new phase in my life, as a pilgrim into Hope. I am fully aware of the goodness that has surrounded me in the last fifteen years or so spent in your service. I thank you most sincerely.

I hope that you have celebrated Christmas joyfully and that these days of continuing holiday can also be holy days for you and your families, gathered round the crib and rejoicing in the goodness and blessings of this great gift of life.

May God bless you all.

Yours devotedly,

+ Vincent Nichols

✠ Cardinal Vincent Nichols

CHURCH CARPARK ACCESS

Please note the Church car park will **NOT** be in use till the 2nd January. There will be a marquee in the Church car park to support the crowd expected for Christmas and New Year Masses. The school car park will be open for cars to park, and entry and exit will be via St Mark's school car park.

DAY OF PRAYER BEFORE THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Wednesday 31st December after the 9am Mass will be followed by a Day of Prayer with an exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and ending with Benediction at 2.30 pm.

CRIB OFFERING 2025

This Christmas, our Crib Offering will be donated to the Catholic Children's Society to support their work with disadvantaged children and families. This will help provide mental health services, family support and emergency grants for vulnerable children in our Diocese.

JUBILEE END OF YEAR MASS

The parish will celebrate the Jubilee end of year Mass on January 6th at 12noon. Please join us for tea/coffee in the parish centre after the 12noon Mass. We congratulate all those who celebrated their birthdays and Wedding anniversaries.

CATECHETICAL PROGRAMMES

WHERE TO FIND INFORMATION ON PARISH SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMMES:

Type parish.rcdow.org/Hounslow in your browser. Then navigate to PARISH WEBSITE → PARISH LIFE → SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION; it has general information on the various programmes. The next place to check is the Parish Newsletter. If the information you seek is not found on either of these then email the Parish Catechist Lionel Pereira on hounslowcat@rcdow.org.uk.

BAPTISM PREPARATION COURSE

in our parish is held once every two months. Parents are advised to register for the preparation course even before the delivery. Use the online form available on the Baptism page of

the Parish website to sign up. Please read the Baptism webpage for requirements & other details.

Leave a legacy

Please consider including our parish in your will or leaving a legacy for the parish. For further details please email us on hounslow@rcdow.org.uk

Online Giving/ Standing Order

To make your donation online, please visit:
<https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hounslow/donate/other-ways-to-give/>

Bank Transfer

To make a one-off donation please use the parish bank account details:

Account Name: **WRCDT Hounslow**
Sort Code: **40-05-20**
Account Number: **11095463**
Reference: **Surname and First Initial**

QR Code

Scan on the QR code below to donate



*If you are a UK taxpayer, please Gift Aid your donation. The government will top up your gift by 25 percent, meaning a £20 offering becomes £25, at **NO** cost to you.*

PRAYER FOR THE SICK AND HOUSEBOUND

God our Father, your Son accepted our sufferings to teach us the virtue of patience in human illness. Hear the prayers we offer for sick brothers and sisters. May all who suffer pain, illness, or disease realize that they have been chosen to be saints and know that they are joined to Christ in his suffering for the salvation of the world. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sts Michael and Martin, Pray for us.

TEXTS FOR THIS SUNDAY'S MASS

The Holy Family

Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14 – 'He who fears the Lord honours his parents.'

Psalm Response – *Blessed are all who fear the Lord, and walk in his ways.*

Colossians 3:12-21 – Family life in the Lord.

Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23 – 'Take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt.'

NEXT SUNDAY'S MASS

2nd Sunday of Christmas

Sirach 24:1-2,8-12 – The wisdom of God has dwelt in the chosen people.

Responsorial Psalm – *The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.*

Ephesians 1:3-6, 15-18 – 'He predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus.'

John 1:1-5,9-14 – 'The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.'

WEEKLY OFFERTORY COLLECTION

20th/21st Dec 2025

Loose: £3,732.61

Envelopes: £1,140.72

TOTAL: £4,873.33

Thank you very much for your generosity. May God continue to bless you as you support our parish

NB: On average, it costs £50,000+ monthly to run our parish.

IN YOUR PRAYERS – REMEMBER

OUR SICK: Sarah Asher, Joaquim De Souza, Fr Derek McGuire, Jennita Aluan, Nizelle Soares, Peter Newton, Hubert Teles, Amy Burns, Steve, Sandra, Carson Javier Dabasia, Igor Sitarska and Don Lynch.

DECEASED: Leo Machado, Bella Felix, Cynthia Souza, Clifton Dominic Colaco, Elcina Alpesh Makwana, Tadeusz Z Wolanski, Heather Philomena Marklew, António José Visitação da Cruz Barreto, Fr Bernard Scholes, Sybil Knox, Carlos D'Silva, Mary Maher, Emma Noronha.

PARISH/PRAYER GROUP MEETINGS

SYRO-MALABAR CHAPLAINCY MASS

1st Sunday of the month at 3pm

SINHALESE CHAPLAINCY MASS

2nd Sunday of the month at 4pm

GOAN CHAPLAINCY MASS

3rd Sunday of the month at 4pm

MASS OF THE SICK

Last Tuesday of the month at 12noon.

ST ANTHONY NOVENAS

Will resume on Tuesday 6th January in the Church

DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS &

IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

Every Thursday 5pm in the Church

DIVINE MERCY DEVOTION

First Friday of each month at 3pm

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

Every 2nd Thursday of the month after evening Mass.

FIRST FRIDAYS EXPOSITION

The Blessed Sacrament will be exposed on every first Friday of the month for adoration and silent prayers after the morning Mass and end at 5pm.

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY (SVP) MEETINGS

Weekend: 2nd Saturday after the Foodbank at 12pm in the Parish Centre.

GHANAIAN COMMUNITY- MEETING DAY

1st Sunday of every month after the 12.00 noon Mass in the Parish Centre.

UCM MEETINGS

2nd Tuesday of the month after 9am Mass and 4th Tuesday of the month after 6pm Mass in the Parish Centre.

LIVING WORD CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC RENEWAL PRAYER GROUP

Invites parishioners to our weekly prayer meeting/fellowship every Friday evening in the Parish Centre. Time: 7pm - 9pm. All are welcome. Email us at livingwordccr@gmail.com; contact Sam (447450355567), Graham (+447908287917) for other enquiries.