



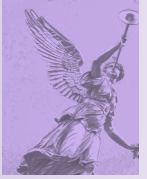
Wreccsam Clarion



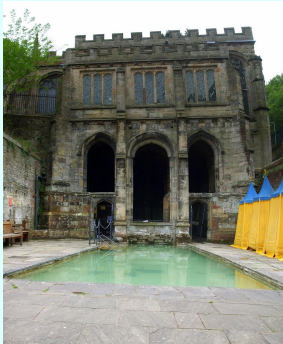
Issue no 13
December 2023
Advent

The newsletter of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Wrexham –
serving the parishes of North and Mid Wales

To make clearly known
To declare
To clarify
To call to prayer



In this issue of the “Clarion”:



Holywell is designated a National Shrine.

St Winefride’s Well is now to be recognised in practice and law as a **National Shrine** of special devotion.

Read More on Page 5



Bishop Peter’s Column appears on page 2.

In a reflection on the plenary Meeting of the Bishops’ Conference, Bishop Peter also looks ahead to the challenges facing the Diocese

The Gospel Year of Mark

The liturgical cycle moves to Year B, and the readings are taken largely from St. Mark. Find out more about Mark on page 4



Altar Servers to the fore!
A **Golden celebration** in Connah’s Quay, followed by sadness and sorrow. A tribute to **David**, on page 5



Spotlight ON.....

The Archconfraternity of St Stephen. Altar Servers are a ‘special group’ ...Page 6

Praying through Advent:

Join St Beuno’s Outreach team in prayerful activity during the stress of preparation in Advent on page 3



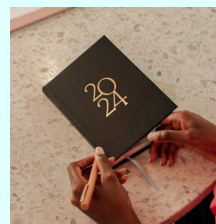
Workshop on Music for Lent & Easter

To be held in Buckley in January with the Diocesan Director of Music. Details and contacts on page 8



Altar Servers joined Archbishop Mark O’Toole in Cardiff for a special Mass. (Page 7).

The invitation to join Bishop Peter for the Wrexham Diocese celebration of Altar Servers and the Guild of St Stephen is on page 8



Bishop Peter’s Engagements

Read where Bishop Peter will celebrate Mass, and other events on page 9.



2024
Yearbook
(see page 8)

Prayer Intentions and Cycle of Prayer on Page 3

The season of Advent on page 6

Crib Offerings this year on page 6

Children’s Corner, and ideas for Advent page 9

Synod on Synodality, and Resolutions from the Bishops’ Conference (CBCEW) on page 5

Retreats and courses at Loreto, Llandudno, on page 6

Secular Franciscan Order on page 8

Looking Ahead -Events on page 2

November, this year, has been a bittersweet month to close the Church's year for both the Diocese as a whole, and more especially for a number of individuals. These have been sad and difficult events. At one point in the latter half of the month five of our active priests were in hospital at the same time. Fortunately for three, the stay was short and now (at the time of writing) only one remains, but periods of recuperation and rehabilitation have still to be spent before full recovery. With the depletion by five in the number of priests earlier in the year you can imagine the challenges which face individual parishes, the Diocese as a whole, the remaining priests, and me.

I have to put on record my gratitude to those priests who through their generosity and their preparedness to move around have enabled parishes to keep the Lord's day holy with the celebration of Mass. Those circumstances were, I think, my worst ongoing nightmare, become reality, though one for which I was already preparing with a further phase in restructuring within the Diocese. About which a little more in a moment.

The 'sweet' is the joyous and happy event was that at the Plenary meeting of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales (CBCEW), which took place at the same time as this sickness, the bishops passed the resolution that the Shrine of St. Winefride in Holywell should have the designation of "The National Shrine of St. Winefride in England and Wales." It may surprise many that this was not already the case; that the Shrine with its antiquity and centuries' old cult, its tradition of pilgrimage and devotion should not already have been a national shrine, but in terms of recognition and law that was the case – a situation now rectified. Included in that recognition, drawing on the legend of St. Winefride and bringing her life's experience into the twenty-first century is the particular strand of prayer, hope and consolation for the victims, especially women, of sexual harassment, violence or abuse that was inaugurated at the annual Pilgrimage Mass this year.

Only days before the bishops met to discuss this matter,

the Holy Father (in an address to the Rectors of Shrines) spoke of the important place of shrines in the life of the Church: they must be places of prayer and forgiveness, adoring silence to 'gaze on the essentials of faith', and consolation and mercy.

Pope Francis said: *"Finally, one goes to the Shrine to look to the future with greater confidence. Pilgrims need hope. They seek it in the very gesture of pilgrimage: they set out in search of a safe destination to reach. They ask for hope in prayer, because they know that only a simple and humble faith can obtain the grace they need. So, it is important that, returning home, they feel this has been fulfilled, and are filled with serenity because they have placed their trust in God"*.
<https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2023/november/documents/20231111-incontro-santuari.html>

Those words of Pope Francis, of looking 'to the future with greater confidence', resonate with me as I address you on Advent Sunday about the way we must take the Church into the future in North Wales. There are many facets to the challenge we are already facing and we cannot ignore them now, with an unrealistic hope that things will change for the better sooner rather than later.

Early in the New Year I will hold a number of meetings across the Diocese and explain, in person, a way forward as I see it. All this is to be done in a spirit of hope and preparedness to accept inevitable change. As we begin a new year in the life of the Church I ask you to pray throughout Advent that, inspired and renewed by the celebration of the birth of our Lord and Saviour, we may together accept those difficult decisions which have to be made, and grow stronger as 'missionary disciples' as a consequence.

Please be assured of my continued prayer for you and your families and may Advent be for you a time of blessing, joyous expectation and holiness,

† Peter

LOOKING AHEAD - EVENTS AND INVITATIONS

For further information of these events and celebrations please look for the details in your church, on the Diocesan website 'Diocese of Wrexham' www.rcdwxm.org.uk or ask your priests.

December

Sunday 3rd First Sunday of Advent
 Migrants' Day (see page 8, the words of the Holy Father)
 Diocesan Advent Family Day
 Saturday 30th Guild of St. Stephen, Altar Servers' Mass.
 St. Mary's Cathedral

January 2024

Saturday 6th BSL Mass for those with Hearing Disability 12noon at Bishop's House
 Sunday 7th Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord
 Sunday 14th Peace Day
 Sunday 21st Sunday of the Word of God
 18th -25th Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity



ST BEUNO'S OUTREACH
IN THE DIOCESE OF WREXHAM



Image: Shutterstock.com

Praying with St Beuno's Outreach: 'As one friend to another

...'

In this monthly reflection, St Beuno's Outreach invites you to pray with an image and a verse of Scripture or other material.

During Advent our hearts turn to watching and waiting in hope for the coming of Christ Jesus: the One who comes in the light of truth to dispel our darkness. It is also a season when we try to prepare ourselves personally for the Lord's coming, repenting of those times when we have failed to let his light shine through us.

Take a moment to reflect on this month's image of the Advent wreath. Its intertwined evergreen leaves remind us of the promise of eternal life that Christ brings, and the light of the candles carries special symbolism. In most traditions the first candle, lit on the first Sunday of Advent, represents **hope** – a sign of our hopeful expectation as we await the coming of the Messiah. The next three candles mark the themes of **peace**, **joy** (the pink candle, for the third Sunday of Advent – *Gaudete* or 'Rejoice' Sunday) and **love**. The large white candle is the '**Christ candle**', lit as we mark the birth of Jesus on Christmas Day.

As you read the prayer, take a moment of quiet to unite consciously with Christians all over the world who are longing and waiting in hope for Christ's coming.

You may then like to reflect:

What do I really desire from Jesus, God made man for me?

What am I *longing* and *waiting* for?

How can I be more ready to welcome Jesus when he comes this Christmastide?

Our text this month is the old Opening Prayer for the First Sunday in Advent, which invites us to pray with longing and waiting for the coming of the Lord.

**Father in heaven,
our hearts desire the warmth of God's love
and our minds are searching
for the light of your Word.**

**Increase our longing for Christ our Saviour
and give us the strength to grow in love,
that the dawn of his coming
may find us rejoicing in his presence
and welcoming the light of his truth.**

Amen.

Speak to the Lord, as one friend to another, and ask for what you need to grow in love. You may like to close your time of prayer with the expectant, joyful Aramaic word '*Maranatha*', the language of Jesus himself: 'Come, our Lord!'

You can download the weekly Prego at <https://stbeunosoutreach.wordpress.com/>
Contact us at stbeunosoutreach@beunos.com

Sunday 10th December, 7pm:

Advent Journey by Zoom with St Beuno's Outreach. Please email us for the Zoom link.

Prayer Intentions

THE POPE'S PRAYER INTENTION - December

That people with disabilities may be at the centre of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusive programmes which value their active participation.

CYCLE OF PRAYER

During Advent and Christmastide we are asked to pray for these intentions: Migrants and Refugees (3rd December), Expectant Mothers (4th Sunday of Advent)

Gospel Year of Mark



The Coming

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the son of God.

. . . John appeared, baptising in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sin. And all the country of Judea and Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptised by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, "After me comes one who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptised you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.

(Mark

1:1,4-8 ESV-CE)

Nothing that is worth doing can be achieved in our lifetime; *therefore*, we must be saved by **hope**.

Nothing which is true or beautiful or good makes complete sense in any immediate context of history; *therefore*, we must be saved by **faith**.

Nothing we do, however virtuous, can be accomplished alone; *therefore*, we must be saved by **love**.

No virtuous act is quite as virtuous from the standpoint of our friend or foe as it is from our standpoint. *Therefore*, we must be saved by the final form of love which is **forgiveness**.

(Reinhold Niebuhr 'The Irony of American History' ©1952 Charles Scribner's Sons)

The Gospel According to Mark

As we embark upon the 'Year of Mark' for the Gospel readings through the liturgical year, here is a thumb nail description of his work.

The gospel of Mark has a narrative structure composed of a particular liveliness of accent assembled within a project in which theological interest dominates historical preoccupation. His scope in fact, is to place in relief the figure of Jesus as the "gospel of God," the kingdom which he came to announce, his destiny as the suffering king, crowned on the cross and victor over death.

Throughout the coming months we will hear much of St. Mark's Gospel in the liturgy (Lectionary: Sundays Cycle B - 61.1% and Weekdays Cycle 2 - 96.3%), there is that and still more to discover from the sixteen chapters comprising 678 verses. Why not give it a go and read the whole of St. Mark's Gospel at home, alone or with your family, or with fellow parishioners in the coming months. Reading the Gospel in that continuous way enables you to make connections and gain understanding that cannot be made with even the most attentive listening at Mass.

Discover the key highlights of this Gospel in a creative and fun way:

Download free a poster indicating key elements in **Fish with Mark** [Download](#) and **A Whistlestop Tour of Mark** [Download](#) posters.

These posters are ideal for schools, parishes and families.

A Layman's view

For centuries, it was thought that the Gospels were written in the order we say them, "Matthew, Mark, Luke and John". But biblical scholarship, (seen as too cerebral and intellectual) saw that really Mark must be the first to have been written.

Why?

Could Mark have heard Peter speak about Jesus?
Could he even have been there?

What makes us think that?

Because when Jesus calmed the waters, Mark says that Jesus was lying on a cushion in the boat, and when Jesus was arrested, Mark says that a young man ran away naked.

of Mark:

How did he know these things? They are such startling images!!

Then, scholars found that just about ALL the stories and parables, the miracles and the words of Jesus are found in Matthew and Luke, or one or the other, suggesting that Mark really was the source of information and detail.

So, if we want to get to know Jesus, then Mark is the best source.

AND, as the shortest Gospel, it won't take long to find out!!

It is well worth reading..... Of course!

NATIONAL SHRINE OF ST. WINEFRIDE IN ENGLAND & WALES

Bishop Peter writes:

"I am delighted that the Bishops of England and Wales have elevated the Shrine of St. Winefride in Holywell to the status of a National Shrine. Without changing the historic interest and character of the Shrine - drawing on the legend of St. Winefride itself – It brings the added relevance of that aspect of healing and consolation, for women especially, who have been the victims of sexual harassment, violence or abuse."

(An Interview and comment with Bp Peter can be found at the following two links-

[Bishop of Wrexham celebrates Shrine's elevation to National Status - Catholic Bishops' Conference \(cbcew.org.uk\)](#)

and

[Bishop wants shrine to be beacon of hope and healing for women - Catholic Bishops' Conference \(cbcew.org.uk\)](#)

Bishop Peter continues:

"It is a fortuitous coincidence that this should happen just ten days before the UN International Day for Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) in November [CSAN & NBCW Statement: 'Orange the World: Invest to Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls' - Catholic Bishops' Conference \(cbcew.org.uk\)](#) reminding us that prayer and action must go hand in hand if to be a force for change in the world."

You may also have read, or like to read, Joe Kelly's article in the *Catholic Network* about this resolution and what it means https://www.thecatholicnetwork.co.uk/winefride/?utm_source=CATHOLIC+NETWORK&utm_campaign=6d35a197cb-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2022_11_02_08_53_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_ed6d059f57-6d35a197cb-576160658

SYNOD ON SYNODALITY

Among other resolutions passed at the Bishops' Conference Plenary Meeting in November was that on the Synod: [Plenary Resolution: Synod on Synodality - Catholic Bishops' Conference \(cbcew.org.uk\)](#)

Those taking part in the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops have approved a Letter to the People of God giving thanks for their experiences. They explain the work of the past weeks and express the hope that, in the coming months, everyone will be able to "concretely participate in the dynamism of missionary communion indicated by the word 'synod'". [General Assembly to the People of God: The Church must listen to everyone - Catholic Bishops' Conference \(cbcew.org.uk\)](#)

The Synthesis Report can be read in full

<https://www.synod.va/en/news/a-synodal-church-in-mission.html>

A Chinese proverb:

War does not prove who is right -it only proves who is left

Sadness after a moment of Celebration



Joy and sadness are part of our human life. This has been the experience of the parish of Connah's Quay.

On Sunday 19th November, during the 11.00 am Mass celebrated by Father Jaspher, **David Marshall** was presented with his gold medal from Paul Briers, the National Honorary Lay President of the Archconfraternity of St Stephen.

The **Gold Medal** is normally presented for 50 years of service on the altar. The parish was delighted that David received his medal that weekend.

The joy of celebration turned to sadness, because that very week, on 23rd November David was found at home, having passed away suddenly.

David was a pupil at Venerable Edward Morgan, and then St Richard Gwyn High School, where although always in delicate health he nevertheless worked hard and loyally. David's life was always one of sincere effort, no matter the difficulty, and in which he always wanted to help others and succeed.

His many school friends will remember David with fondness and love, and the thoughts and prayers of his parish, and friends are with his father, Tom, and the family.

May David's eternal reward be in heaven, and may he rest in peace.

Bishops' Conference (CBCEW) Resolutions:

National Eucharistic Congress

CBCEW commits to supporting the National Eucharistic Congress at Oscott College in September 2024, encouraging at least one coach to attend from each diocese.

Israel and Gaza

We echo the appeal of a First World War veteran who, at the age of 100, said that "In war nobody wins. You might as well talk first. You have to, in the end." As Bishops of England and Wales we deplore and condemn the barbaric terrorist attacks perpetrated in Israel on 7 October 2023. We weep for the innocent victims of violence, especially the children, whose lives are traumatised by the escalation of violence in the region. We pray earnestly that the regional instabilities created will not lead to a wider conflict, fuelled by anti-Semitism, xenophobia and terrorism. We call on all in England and Wales to find the good in others. No one should live in fear in their community, or school, or workplace because of their faith or because of events taking place in this conflict. Our support for one another will be our strength both in these difficult times and in the future.

The Season of Advent

ADVENT RESOURCES

To help you pray your way through Advent and up to Christmas there is a plethora of inspiring resources available on line and free of charge. There are the ongoing resources on the God Who Speaks website for personal and family use: [The God Who Speaks](https://thegodwhospeaks.com) especially the monthly scripture (January to December) Newsletter to which you can subscribe (it's free) at the foot of the God Who Speaks website.

To help pray the Responsorial Psalm of the Advent Sunday Masses, go to the Psalm Project: <https://thepsalmsproject.com>

Among others and in print form from Alive Publications there is *Bible Alive* which contains personal reflections on the Scripture reading of the day as well as lead feature items on seasonal or topical issues.

<https://alivepublishing.co.uk/publications/bible-alive/>

Walk with Me is an A6 booklet that contains daily reflections either on the scripture reading of the day or on a catechetical theme.

<https://alivepublishing.co.uk/publications/walk-with-me/>

1st, 2nd, 4th Sunday of Advent – Purple vestments for preparation, royalty, and penitence

CRIB OFFERINGS

Not of Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh, but Identity and Opportunity, and a Safe Place to Sleep Tonight

Your kind donations made at the manger scene in your church this Christmastide will be divided between

TOYBOX

<https://toybox.org.uk/support/campaigns/a-gift-they-have-waited-for> Registered Charity No.1084243

The aim of this small British charity is to help children who have no official identity -so called 'XXX children'- obtain a birth certificate. Without a birth certificate these children their basic human rights will never be met. Education, healthcare, shelter and ultimately a marked grave – all of these are denied a child who is unregistered, officially they don't exist. The TOYBOX Christmas Appeal is devoted to helping children like these gather the necessary evidence to obtain official recognition that will help them obtain education, healthcare and shelter as well as reducing the risks of abuse, trafficking and modern day slavery.

DEPAUL

Homelessness has no place

www.depaul.org.uk Registered Charity 802384

This winter thousands of young people in the UK will have nowhere safe to sleep through no fault of their own. Through DEPAUL'S 'Nightstop' emergency service they 'Help a young person reach a safe place tonight' through a network of trained and vetted volunteer hosts who welcome young people into their homes and provide a safe and warm place to sleep, a hot meal and a listening ear.

In those parishes that operate a Contactless giving system please be sure to tap on 'Crib Offering' to make your gift.

Gaudete Sunday -3rd Sunday in Advent – "Rejoice, The Lord is near" - Pink (rose) vestments to celebrate hope

LORETO DAYS OF PRAYER 2024

'Come away and rest a while'
at Loreto Centre
Abbey Rd, Llandudno LL30 2EL



These days are for anyone who would like to come away for a few hours on a Saturday for some space for prayer and reflection. Everyone is welcome.
The day will be led by the Loreto Centre Team, and offer plenty of quiet time for personal prayer, and sharing for those who wish.

We ask you to bring your own packed lunch. Tea and coffee will be provided.

Loreto Days will take place on the following Saturdays in 2024:

6 January, 17 February, 16 March, 27 April, 25 May, 15 June, 14 September, 16 November, 7 December

Time: 10am coffee for a 10.30 start, and ending at 3.30pm with tea for those who wish.
No need to book, just come along and bring a friend!

There is no charge for the day, but a box will be left out for donations.
(Suggested donation: between £5-£10, or whatever can be afforded)

www.loretocentre.org.uk
Registered Charity 250607

Loreto Spirituality Centre, Llandudno

'Come with me to a quiet place, and rest a while . . .'

Welcome to Loreto Centre, where we offer an ideal location for peace, rest and prayer.

We are a Catholic retreat centre, who welcome people of all Christian denominations and none. The Centre is run by the IBVM/Loreto Sisters, who follow the spirituality of St Ignatius of Loyola.

All retreatants' rooms are en-suite and most are accessible by lift. All our programmed events are full board. Limited self-catering accommodation is available for those wishing to come for quiet time.

We also offer a large fully equipped conference room with Wi-Fi, projector and loop system, which can accommodate groups of up to 70 people.

Residential or non-residential conferences can be accommodated, with meals provided if required.

Programme 2024

Day Retreats
Individually Guided Retreats
Preached Retreats
Advent Triduum
Lenten Retreat
Holy Week Retreat

- We offer -

- Themed Retreats -

Praying with Philipians
Making Choices: A Discernment Retreat
A Poetry Retreat
Space to Grieve
Praying in a Changing Era
Visio Divina: A photography retreat
Bibliodrama
Praying with the Mystics

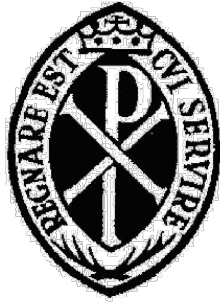
A Retreat for Religions: Eco-Theology and the Vows

A Weekend Retreat for Beginners

Living Theology Summer School

For more information, please contact:

Loreto Spirituality Centre, Abbey Road, Llandudno, Conwy LL30 2EL
Tel: 01492 878031 loretocentre@yahoo.co.uk www.loretocentre.org.uk



The Archconfraternity of St Stephen

Known as

The Guild of St Stephen

The Altar Servers' Guild

History of the Guild

The Guild of St Stephen is an International Organisation of Altar Servers founded in England in 1904 by Father Hamilton McDonald when he formed a Society of Altar Servers at the Convent of the Sacred Heart in London. In 1905, Pope Pius X gave his approbation to the Canonical establishment of the Guild at Westminster Cathedral and in 1906, the Sacred Congregation of Rites made the Guild an Archconfraternity prima primaria enabling all the parish branches to be linked with it. The Guild spread, and in 1934, Pope Pius XI enabled all Guilds of Altar Servers throughout the British Commonwealth to be affiliated with the Archconfraternity at Westminster. The objectives of the Guild:

- To encourage, positively and practically, the highest standards of serving at the Church's liturgy and so contribute to the whole community's participation in a more fruitful worship of God.
- To provide altar servers with a greater understanding of what they are doing so that they may serve with increasing reverence and prayerfulness and thereby be led to a deepening response to their vocation in life.
- To unite servers of different parishes and dioceses for their mutual support and encouragement.

The Guild Medal

Reminders of St Stephen,
the first Martyr.

At the top is the crown, the sign of victory and martyrdom.

The words

“Cui Servire Regnare est”

To serve is to reign.

The Chi Rho indicates Christ at the centre of servers' lives.

The palm branches are traditional signs of martyrs.

The medal is worn with a red cord - red as the colour of martyrdom.

The Guild Patrons are St Stephen, and St Thomas More.

The 1983 Code of Canon Law did not distinguish between male and female, so some parishes accepted female altar servers. It was not until 15th March 1994 that the Congregation for Divine Worship affirmed that both men and women may serve at the altar. Pope Francis in 2021 confirmed this as a 'permanent permission'.

Generally, altar servers are considered old enough after receiving First Communion.

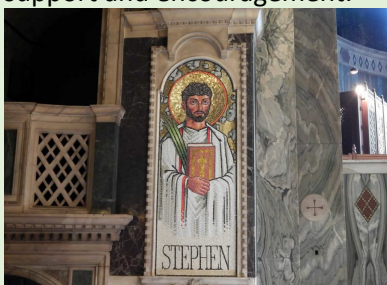
It remains an honour to be so closely involved in the liturgy

Annual Mass in Cardiff

Leaving Wrexham at 6am for Cardiff I joined members of the Archconfraternity of St Stephen for the annual Mass at St David's Cathedral. Making myself known to the persons in charge, I was made very welcome. With Mass starting at noon, I joined the many already there, and once robed we joined other servers already assembled. The Mass was celebrated by Archbishop Mark O'Toole and about 20 priests concelebrated. We were about 200 servers. The 300+ congregation consisted mainly friends and relatives of the servers.

Servers attended from England and Wales as well as one from Kentucky! Otherwise, the furthest travelled was from Lancaster.

After Mass we posed for photos, and then enjoyed refreshments before travelling home. (PRH)



Around and About in the Diocese

Secular Franciscan Order - SFO

(or O.F.S - Ordo Franciscanus Saecularis)

In the thirteenth century, St Francis of Assisi and his brothers became so popular that hundreds of people wanted to leave everything to join him. It became a bit of a problem!

Local tradesmen and ordinary people were needed to work at their jobs to keep the local economy going. Not everyone could be a monk or friar. Nor could every woman opt for the cloistered life with the newly formed Franciscan sisters started by St Clare.

So, the (friars) became known as the First Order. The ladies who joined Clare were the Second Order. Now there was a need for a Third Order: lay people who would be able to adopt the Franciscan spirituality and life-style without leaving jobs and family life.

Today, that Third Order has become the Secular Franciscan Order. It is a worldwide community of people who find a great example in the life and spirit of St Francis and St Clare. Because of the relevance and joyfulness of the Franciscan style and spirit, the appeal is there for the young and old.

Nowadays, many people are concerned about ecology, the environment, social justice, meditation / mindfulness and a lighter, freer touch when it comes to faith. All these are addressed by the Franciscan Way.

The Franciscan spirit is characterised by humour, humility, an appreciation of simplicity and earnest desire to live the Gospel while acknowledging our weakness, and often failure, to do so. Franciscans rejoice in being a brother or sister of all created things – rocks, stars, trees, rivers, animals and every human being. This blend of fraternity and gratitude make the pursuit of peace and concord inevitable.

I belong to the Chester fraternity and try to attend the monthly meetings where I can meet and talk with my brother and sister Franciscans for mutual encouragement in following the Franciscan way. The OFS in the Wrexham diocese is in Flint.

Having just joined the OFS I am still an 'enquirer', but I can already see that it is the sort of community needed today to counteract some of the more negative and destructive influences that are having such an impact on our lives.

There is a good website for more information (<https://ofsgb.org>). Have a look and see if you might like to come and see what attracted all those medieval folk over 800 years ago.

2024 Catholic Year Books

These have been delivered and will be available in your parish from this weekend commencing 2nd December. Published Price will be £5.50 for ringbound and £4.50 for ordinary. Full of information, and of course, the 'Ordo' the liturgical calendar.

Events and Invitations

Bishop Peter invites Altar Servers all over the Diocese to join him for the celebration Mass for the Guild of St. Stephen and to renew their commitment to serving at the Altar on Saturday 30th December at 12 noon in St. Mary's Cathedral.

Following the Mass there will be a 'Burger Lunch' for all servers in the Cathedral Hall. To help defray the costs a small cover charge will be made for the lunch.



If there are any servers to be enrolled into the Guild of St. Stephen that day, please let the Cathedral Office (office@wrexhamcathedral.org.uk) know ASAP in order that medals and membership cards can be prepared.

Bishop Peter to present a Benemerenti

Bp Peter will celebrate the 5.30 Mass on Saturday 9th December at the Blessed Sacrament, Connaught Quay, when he will present **Anne Thomas** with the **Benemerenti Medal** and certificate for her long service to the parish.

Congratulations, and thanks are offered on this auspicious occasion.

Music in the Liturgy- Lent, Easter & Beyond

Diocesan Director of Music, Paul Booth, with organist Tony Warren, will be presenting a "Music Workshop for Lent, Easter and Beyond" on Saturday 27th January 2024 10.30am until 3pm.

Venue: Our Lady of the Rosary, Buckley.

Tea and Coffee will be available. All are welcome.

It is for instrumentalists, singers and those interested in singing at Mass

If you are interested, please contact Tony Warren

Email: organistbuckley@rcdwxm.co.uk

Mobile: 07889238132

WORDS FROM THE HOLY FATHER

For the 109th World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2023 'Free to choose whether to migrate or stay'

<https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/migration/documents/20230511-world-migrants-day-2023.html>

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Telephone 01978 262 726 Views expressed are not necessarily those of the Bishop or the Diocese.

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Bishop's Engagements, and a 'gallimaufry of serendipity'

BISHOP PETER'S ENGAGEMENTS

December

03	Advent Family Day	Flint
06	Visit to St Mary's School	Newtown
07 6.30pm	Youth Commission Meeting	Colwyn Bay
08. 6.30pm	Confirmation	Rhyl
09 5.30pm	Benemerenti Presentation	Connah's Quay
12 1.30pm	Board of Trustees Meeting	Bishop's House
13. 7.00pm	Safeguarding Sub-Committee	Bishop's House
15	Advent Reflection	Carmel, Dolgellau
22. 6.00pm	Penitential Service	Cathedral
24. Midnight	The Nativity of the Lord	Cathedral
25. 10.00am	Christmas Day Mass	Cathedral
26. 10.00am	Boxing Day Mass	Cathedral
30. 12noon	Altar Servers' Mass	Cathedral
31 11.00am	Holy Family Mass	Holy Family Convent, Wxms
3.00pm	Kerala Christmas Celebration	Cathedral

January

07. 10.30am	Mass of the Epiphany	Cathedral
19	Visit to Christ The Word School	Rhyl
24	Mass for the Feast of St Thomas Aquinas	Bangor Chaplaincy
30-31	Joint Bishops' Conference	Norwich

Thought for the day:

You are writing a Gospel,
 A chapter each day,
 By the deeds that you do,
 And the words that you say.

They read what you write,
 If it's false or it's true.
 Now, what is the Gospel,
 According to you?

What is time?

When a man sits with a pretty girl
 for an hour, it seems like a minute.
 But let him sit on a hot stove for a
 minute -and it's longer than any
 hour.

That's relativity!

(Albert Einstein)

*Teacher: "Jimmy, name a great
 time saver".*

Jimmy: "Love at first sight"

Children's Corner

In Advent, the task is a simple tradition: create a **CRIB**
 Take a box, any size. Lay it on its side.

Cover with "crumpled" paper, preferably grey or black
 (like rock)

Place in it:

- week 1, hay/straw/grass, ox and ass
- week 2, shepherds, sheep, manger
- week 3, Mary and Joseph
- week 4 stars and angels
- Christmas Day, Baby Jesus.

The figures can be drawings, made and coloured by
 the children.

In this way, Advent is a time of anticipation, and
 preparation. It teaches the concept of 'waiting' and
 time passing. It can be decorated, and coloured as is
 wanted. Most of all, it is **YOUR** crib.

Advent wreath

Make a circle of leaves, with four purple candles, and
 one white. Light one each week, saying a prayer. A
 good song to sing is 'Christmas is coming, the church
 is glad to sing'. Words in the hymn books, or 'on line'.

Advent Calendar

Swap a chocolate for a prayer this year!! A daily
 prayer instead of a daily chocolate. Healthy as well!

The Christmas Tree

When that arrives (or is brought from the attic),
 decorate with a prayer about Light and Hope, and
 reflect that evergreen is the everlasting love of God.

The Christmas Cake

Stirring the cake is the time to make a wish (for
 others). A wish for someone else is a prayer.

Beware what you wish for.....

A young man fell in love with a highly respected actress. For
 months he escorted her to all the 'right' places and then
 decided he wished to marry her. Fearful for his own
 reputation, he hired a private detective to investigate her
 background. The agent had no knowledge of the client, and
 presented the report:

"Miss Xxxxxx has an excellent reputation. Her past, spotless,
 and her associates beyond reproach. The only hint of scandal
 is that in the past few months she has been seen in the
 company of a young man of doubtful reputation."

Out of the mouths....

A class of nine year-olds performed their nativity play. It opens
 at the inn. Joseph and Mary ask for a room.

Innkeeper: "Can't you see the 'No Vacancy' sign?"

*Joseph: "Yes, but can't you see that my wife is expecting a
 baby any minute?"*

Innkeeper: "Well, that's not my fault"

Joseph: "Well, it's not mine either."

Are we a welcoming community....?

The retiring parish sidesman was introducing his young
 successor to the role. "And, remember, my boy, that we have
 nothing but good kind Christians in this church – until you try
 to put someone else in their seat"

A definition of Patience:

*Something you admire in the driver behind you, but not in the
 one ahead.*