



Wreccsam Clarion



Issue no 41
March 2026

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



Of course the banner is purple! The Lenten theme of penance and fasting is characterised by purple. Yet, we should remember that purple represents 'kingship'. Mark, Luke and John all confirm that the soldiers put a purple robe on Jesus.**

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(left; Rear of Apostolic palace/Vatican bank)



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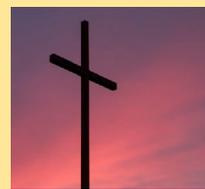


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** For students of theology, commentaries suggest that purple was used in the mockery of Jesus since this was the colour of Roman emperors' cloaks. Interestingly, Matthew describes it as a 'scarlet' cloak. This may also be possible, since soldiers wore scarlet cloaks, so may have used one of their own, to mock Jesus. This is part of the 'synoptic problem'. If Mark was the first Gospel, Matthew copied much from Mark, and used a source 'Q'. This leads to some differences in the Gospels.

In this issue: Lent is the focus of the month, and all items related to Lent are coloured in light purple. There are suggestions for action, as well as scripture and reflection. For future issues: Your parish, school, or organisation in the 'Spotlight'? Why not consider an article – after all, what value is a light if you hide it under a bushel?

Deadline for the April (Easter) issue is Sunday 29th March. Please send items to the Editor, email: clarion@rcdwxm.org.uk

Visit the Diocesan website: rcdwxm.org.uk

The events in the Church over the last twelve months have generated a favourable interest in the Catholic Church that we have not witnessed for a long time. These include the sickness and then death of Pope Francis; his funeral; the Conclave and election of Pope Leo XIV; his installation; the completion and close of the Jubilee Year - Pilgrims of Hope -; together with our own news of the retirement of Archbishop Vincent Cardinal Nichols and the appointment of Bishop Richard Moth as the, now installed, twelfth Archbishop of Westminster.

These are in many ways a 'spectator interest': what is of far greater importance and significance is the response to the stirrings of the Holy Spirit in the depth of the lives of men and women to prompt them to enquire about the Church, undertake months or even years of formation and instruction, and now desiring to be baptised or received into full communion with the Catholic Church and then seek Election as Catechumen or Candidate.

That is what the thirty-eight people did on the First Sunday of Lent in our Cathedral, a number of others who were not able to attend then will also be included in the final roll at Easter. In each case these people have seen in the Catholic Church a way of encountering, with a fresh vitality, the Lord Jesus Christ and a community of disciples with whom they wish to share the joy of faith, hope and love in their lives. At Pentecost I will celebrate the Mystagogy Mass with them and others; this is a recognition of our place within the body of Christ but also an acknowledgement that there is still much to learn and be formed in.

Mystagogy is the fourth step of Christian initiation following the celebration of the sacraments and is specifically the period of post-baptismal catechesis. 'This is the time for the community and the newly enlightened (neophytes) together to grow in deepening their grasp of the paschal mystery and in making it part of their lives through meditation on the Gospel, sharing in the eucharist, and doing the works of charity.' (*Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*. N.234) It is a time for growing into fuller and more effective understanding of the mysteries. 'For they have truly been renewed in mind, tasted more deeply the sweetness of God's word, received the

fellowship of the Holy Spirit, and grown to know the goodness of the Lord. Out of this experience, which belongs to Christians and increases as it is lived, they derive a new perception of the faith of the Church and of the world.' (*ibid.* N.236) Is not this the vocation of us all no matter when we celebrated and received the Sacraments of Initiation?

What is happening to those in our Diocese seeking life in the Church is, we are led to believe in the report *The Quiet Revival*, a far-reaching phenomenon in England and Wales. <https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/the-quiet-revival>

This research and report commissioned by the Bible Society is a wake-up call to us all and begs the question 'who is going to catechise and help form the enquirers in the future unless we ourselves are growing in our own knowledge and love of scriptures we read, the faith we profess and the liturgy we celebrate?'

I am not infrequently asked by parishioners about greater involvement by the lay faithful in their parishes and who want leaders or ministers in one way or another. I am grateful for the concern, but such service has to be built on firm foundations.

In the February issue of 'CLARION', I publicised and promoted just three possible courses individuals or parishes could follow during Lent. How many have taken up that invitation? Below under the heading, 'Come and study with the Maryvale Institute' is a host of opportunities to make mystagogy a life-long experience and even if they are not feasible for you, there are many other resources and plans you can follow at your convenience on your own or with other parishioners. I repeat the commitment of the Diocese to provide financial support for those undertaking study courses that will feed back and benefit the parish.

But free to all is the desire and commitment to follow a daily reading plan of the Bible and add to it just five minutes of reflection upon what you have read, or try Pray as You Go <https://prayasyougo.org/>

With every good wish and continued prayers for a blessed and fruitful Lent,

† Peter.

COME AND STUDY WITH THE MARYVALE INSTITUTE

The Maryvale Institute has a full range of programmes for every ability, from easy short courses to a five-year PhD programme.

Want to deepen your Faith? Thinking about getting more involved with your parish, Catholic organisation or Diocese? Would you like to teach in Catholic institutions?

Maryvale lies at the centre of the ancient settlement of Oscott, about five miles from Birmingham City Centre. With its charming buildings, in which Christian values and prayer are almost tangible, its long and interesting history and peaceful grounds, Maryvale is spiritual 'home' to many.

DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES 2026

12th– 16th May - 4 Nights Full Board

For further information and booking please contact:

Joe Walsh Tours 0808 1890468 (Freephone)
info@ioewalshtours.co.uk

It has been the aim of the Maryvale Institute from its inception to provide opportunities for lay people, clergy and religious to achieve a deeper understanding of the faith and to appreciate more clearly its joyful message for the lives of individuals and communities. Maryvale stands within the Catholic theological tradition, whose riches it seeks to explore, and draws from that tradition an insistence, not only on the foundational importance of faith for theological reasoning, but also on the place of reason in the response of faith.

Website <https://www.maryvale.ac.uk>

LENT MESSAGE OF POPE LEO XIV

The Holy Father Pope Leo XIV gave his message for Lent 2026 on the theme: "Listening and Fasting: Lent as a Time of Conversion". [Pope Leo XIV: Lent as a time of conversion](#) - Catholic Bishops' Conference

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.



Chartres Cathedral Labyrinth

Photo credit: Flickr

This month, we reflect on a very old spiritual practice: walking the labyrinth. This 'pilgrimage walk' has been used for over 4000 years for spiritual meditation and contemplation, where the path of the labyrinth represents a journey we might undertake to the inner centre. Here we meet God.

A number of medieval cathedrals have a labyrinth etched into the floor. The most famous and one of the largest is the 13th-century labyrinth in Chartres Cathedral, France, which has eleven 'courses' or circuits. Making a pilgrimage in this way was a far safer and cheaper option than going on pilgrimage to the Holy Land!

More from St Beuno's Outreach

A Date for your diary:

Day of Prayer for Lent at St Beuno's on Saturday 14th March on the theme of 'Walk with me, oh my Lord'. (There is now a waiting list for this event, but please email us at stbeunosoutreach@beunos.com if you would like your name to be added and we will keep you on the list for future events).

You can download our resources as well as the weekly Prego at <https://stbeunosoutreach.wordpress.com/>.

STILL TRUE TO-DAY – PERHAPS MORE SO?

... The world of today reveals itself as at once powerful and weak, capable of achieving the best or the worst. There lies open before it the way to freedom or slavery, progress or regression, brotherhood or hatred. In addition, man is becoming aware that it is for himself to give the right direction to forces that he himself has awakened, forces that can be his master or his servant. He therefore puts questions to himself. (N.9)

The tensions disturbing the world of today are in fact related to a more fundamental tension rooted in the human heart. In man himself many elements are in conflict with each other. On

A labyrinth is different from a maze: there is one single path leading to the centre with no dead ends, so you cannot get lost. Many retreat centres, including St Beuno's Jesuit Spirituality Centre, Tremeirchion, have stone or turf labyrinths for the use of retreatants, and they are also to be found in churchyards, schools, hospitals and parks.

These days finger labyrinths are also becoming increasingly popular, which can be 'walked' at home, in all weathers and by everyone, able bodied or not.



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You may like to try praying with this simple finger labyrinth, following the instructions below.

- First, find a quiet place where you can settle to pray. Have the labyrinth on your lap or on a small table. You can use either the end of a pen or your index finger to trace your 'walk'.
- Before entering the labyrinth, decide on a line of Scripture you would like to take with you, or perhaps focus on a loved one or an issue you would like to pray for.
- Become still and ask the Lord to be with you as you move along the labyrinth.
- Gently follow the path, opening your heart to God, speaking with him as one friend to another.
- When you reach the centre, pause and ponder. Reflect on the way you feel.
- When you are ready, return following the same path, perhaps thanking the Lord for any insights he has given you.
- As your finger or pen exits the labyrinth, pray a favourite prayer: perhaps a 'Glory be ...' or the Lord's Prayer.

You will show me the path of life,
the fullness of joy in your presence.

Psalm 15 (16):11

Wisdom of the ages, ordoes History repeat itself?

one side, he has experience of his many limitations as a creature. On the other, he knows that there is no limit to his aspirations, and that he is called to a higher kind of life.

... The Church believes that Christ died and rose for all, and can give man light and strength through his Spirit to fulfil his highest calling; his is the only name under heaven in which men can be saved. (N.10)

These quotations come from the Second Vatican Council Gaudium et Spes 'The Church in the Modern World' Published 7th December 1965. Has the world become more enlightened in the last 60 years?



Gospel Year of Matthew

THE CONSPIRACY TO KILL JESUS AND HIS ANOINTING AT BETHANY

“Then the Chief priests and the elders of the people gathered in the palace of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas, and plotted together in order to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him. But they said, “Not during the feast. Lest there be an uproar among the people.”

Now when Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, a woman came up to him with an alabaster flask of very expensive ointment, and she poured it on his head, as he reclined at table. And when the disciples saw it they were indignant, saying, “Why this waste? For this could have been sold for a large sum and given to the poor.” But Jesus, aware of this said to them, “Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a beautiful thing to me. For you always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me. In pouring this ointment on my body, she has done it to prepare me for burial. Truly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will also be told in memory of her.””

Matthew 26:3-13 ESV-CE

THE CYCLE OF PRAYER:

During Lent we are asked to pray for these intentions: Candidates for the Sacraments, (esp. Sundays of Lent); Women; the needy and Hungry of the World; Penitents and Wanderers.

POPE’S PRAYER INTENTION - March

For disarmament and peace.

Let us pray that nations move toward effective disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, and that world leaders choose the path of dialogue and diplomacy instead of violence.

To keep abreast of life and faith, public life and politics, Bp Peter suggests www.catholicunion.org.uk as a source of news and items currently in the public domain.

Commentary:

This account of the anointing of Jesus is the one that appears in all four Gospels, (*Lk.7:36-50; Jn 12:1-8; Mk.14:3-9*) though at different times and different women identified. Jesus had great admiration for the woman who anointed him at Bethany. It was common courtesy to anoint the head generously at banquets, generally from one-use only sealed vessels. He defended her against criticism, praised her for her lavish gift and promised her story would echo throughout the world; on no other occasion is such a promise made to the individual. Her action revealed something essential to Christian discipleship. Jesus’ anointing is a twofold sign: firstly, it points to the immeasurable value of Jesus’ presence. The costly ointment is not wasted but used in a generous act of reverence and worship demonstrating this woman’s extravagant love for Jesus. Secondly, it points forward to Jesus’ Passion and death as his own priceless gift for mankind’s salvation. Perhaps it is for this reason Jesus excuses her extravagance.

The exchange certainly made a profound impression on those who witnessed it.

Reflection Prayer –

Consider that she gave her best to the Lord. It is doubtful whether the woman had any possession more valuable than this flask of perfumed oil imported from some distant land. A gift comparable to the widow and her donation of two small coins into the Temple coffers. (*Lk 21:2ff*). Yet, because nothing could be more valuable than the life of Jesus laid down for us, only such a gift was suitable to acknowledge this. Consider, too, that she gave it all to the Lord. Nothing is held back. She could have poured out a small amount and still made a memorable impression. But her generosity was unrestrained by a desire to save something for herself.

Little wonder that the woman of Bethany is remembered for her loving deed.

Every believer is urged to make such a response to Jesus. It is when disciples offer all that they have, holding nothing in reserve that the world comes to learn how precious Jesus really is.

Lord Jesus may we be so generously inspired in our offering of worship of you and alms for our neighbour. Amen

LENTEN

The designated recipients of this year’s Lenten Alms are:

1. **The Pontifical Missions** – ‘The Society of St Peter the Apostle’ – funds the formation of seminarians, novices, and religious in mission territories. The Church in England and Wales supports this Pontifical Mission Society through *Missio*. <https://missio.org.uk/churchoftomorrow/> Reg. Charity No. 1056651

2. **The John Bradburne Memorial Society (JBMS)** supporting the Mutemwa Leprosy Care Centre, Zimbabwe. The Mutemwa Care Centre is home to patients with mixed illnesses ranging from leprosy, aids, epilepsy and other physical and mental disabilities.

The whole region in this part of Zimbabwe uses and refers

ALMS

to the Mutemwa clinic. The Mutemwa Care Centre provides healthcare needs for men, women and children.

JBMS pays for three permanent healthcare professionals at Mutemwa and the Zimbabwean Government provides an additional two nurses to assist them. They see approximately 130 people a week at the clinic.

For further information see page 5 of ‘Clarion’ or on line: <https://www.johnbradburne.com/> Reg. Charity No. 1046483

At the Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Maundy Thursday Lenten Alms, ‘Gifts for the poor, especially those collected during Lent as the fruit of penance, may be presented in the offertory procession while ‘*Ubi caritas est vera*’ is sung

Paschale Solemnitatis, N.52

ONE CHURCH, MANY JOURNEYS:

Migration in our Faith Community

Thursday 19th March, 7.00-9.00pm, St. Mary's Cathedral Hall, Wrexham

An opportunity to discover, hear, know the facts and lived experiences of members of our communities who have moved to Wales, in the context of Catholic Social Teaching. 'Immigration explained with a view to understanding'.

Pope Leo XIV wrote, 'In a special way, Catholic migrants and refugees can become missionaries of hope in the countries that welcome them, forging new paths of faith where the message of Jesus Christ has not yet arrived or initiating interreligious dialogue based on everyday life and the search for common values. With their spiritual enthusiasm and vitality, they can help revitalise ecclesial communities that have become rigid and weighed down, where spiritual desertification is advancing at an alarming rate. Their presence, then, should be recognised and appreciated as a true divine blessing, an opportunity to open oneself to the grace of God, who gives new energy and hope to His Church: "Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it" (Heb 13:2).' (*Message for the 111th World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2025. 25th July '25*)

THE GOOD FRIDAY COLLECTION FOR THE HOLY PLACES:

An invitation for solidarity with the Churches and people of the land of Jesus.

The Good Friday Collection aims to promote love for the Lord's land in the hearts of the people so that the Church there will survive, feel cherished and sustained by every Christian, and continue to bear witness of faith in him who was born, preached the Gospel, died and rose again in that land.

This initiative was born from the explicit will of several Popes. In the Apostolic Brief *Coelestis Regis* of 22 January 1618, Pope Paul V first invited the Universal Church to pray and to collect funds for the Catholic community which lives in the Holy Land and for the maintenance of the Places of the Redemption of Our Lord Jesus Christ. In the next century, Pope Benedict XIV confirmed this purpose for the Collection with the Apostolic Brief *In Supremo Militantis Ecclesiae* of 7 January 1746. And just fifty years ago, the most recent pontifical document dedicated exclusively to the Holy Land and the Collection was the 1974 Apostolic Exhortation *Nobis in animo* (cf. AAS 56:177188) of Pope Saint Paul VI, who was also the first successor of the Apostle Peter to make a pilgrimage to the land from which Salvation came to us.

By your generosity this Good Friday you have the opportunity to continue that work of bringing relief to the Holy City. In these days the very existence of Christian communities in many parts of the Holy Land is at even greater risk from political, cultural and social, economic, and religious pressures than a year ago. In addition to your prayerful support you can make a practical difference in the contribution you make to this day's collection.

<https://www.orientchurch.va/comunicazioni.html>

JOHN BRADBURNE

John Bradburne (1921–1979) lived an extraordinary life. He was a reluctant hero of the Second World War, a pilgrim and a hermit, a poet and a musician, a joker and a mystic, and a theologian. After many years travelling and searching, he found the place that God wanted him to be – living alongside men and women suffering with leprosy in Mutemwa, Rhodesia (now, Zimbabwe), a place he helped transform into a community of peace, joy and love. Soon after his arrival, in 1962, he confided to a Franciscan priest that he had three wishes: to serve leprosy patients, to die a martyr, and to be buried in the habit of St Francis.

The single-minded loving care he gave the residents eventually brought him into conflict with the management committee. He refused to put number tags around the patients necks and reduce their already small diet, so he was sacked. He then lived in a prefab tin hut, lacking water and sanitation, just outside the leprosy compound. From there he continued to help the leprosy patients as much as he could.

As a lay member of the Third Order of St Francis, he obeyed its rule, singing the daily office of Our Lady. He lived its hours, rising at dawn for Matins and ending the day with Vespers and Compline. This discipline provides the context for many poems written at the turning-points of the day.

Then, during the civil war of 1979, John was kidnapped and murdered. Since his martyrdom, word of his life has spread around the world, and miracles have occurred in association with his name.

For more detail of his life and poetry:

<https://www.johnbradburne.com/biography/>

ASSISTED SUICIDE IN WALES

On Tuesday, 24th February the Senedd voted to give consent to Westminster's Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill, paving the way for assisted suicide to be offered through NHS Wales should the legislation become law. The Archbishop of Cardiff-Menevia, Most Rev'd Mark O'Toole responded following the vote;

"The vote in the Senedd in which a majority have indicated support for assisted suicide being available through the NHS is deeply disappointing," he said. "The situation in other countries shows that the safeguards do not hold up. This is a very sad day for the most vulnerable in Wales."

St Germanus of Auxerre (c378 – 448)

Born in Auxerre, France, of Christian parents 'Germain' studied law. He married and was named Governor of the Armorican provinces (ie Brittany). Named Bishop of Auxerre, he changed lifestyle to one of poverty and austerity, built monasteries, and endowed churches. He was sent to Britain to combat the Pelagian heresy. During this trip he saved a small group of Britons from marauding Picts and Saxons. Taking them to a narrow land between two mountains, he had them shout 'Alleluia' three times, and the invaders, fearing a larger force, fled.

Legend has it that this all took place just outside the present day town of Mold, in Flintshire, where stands the 'Alleluia Monument'. However this site is probably the whim of an 18th century landowner of Rhual, the nearby manor house!*

St Germanus is often confused with Germanus, Bishop of Man – in Welsh, Garmon is widely recognised, eg Llanarmon.

(*Your editor doubts this siting. Passing it every day, he confirms that there is no recognisable ravine nor mountains!)

Hello from the Environmental Leads!

Rebekah and Ali :
environmentallead@rcdwxm.org.uk
 Care for the Environment
 in the Diocese of Wrexham



Cytûn and Eco- church

People are doing brilliant things to help our planet at an individual level and within their church. But sometimes it's hard to know where to begin. On Anglesey, where we are based, we are working within Cytûn - churches together - to adopt the ecumenical Eco-church Award. There are 5 pillars of focus: worship and teaching, community and global, lifestyle, buildings and energy and land use.

<https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk>.

Lent

Lent is a great time to do something positive for the environment: fasting need not just be fasting from food, we can fast from using the car as often, from buying things we don't need or from plastic packaging! We can be generous with our time: supporting environmental groups in our locality or writing to MPs or decision makers about environmental issues. In our church we can include bidding prayers for creation, ensure environmental concerns are on the agenda at parish council or committee meetings, pray in nature or plant a tree!

Build a network!

Across the diocese we are building up a network of representatives from each parish. The reps meet every other month on Zoom to share ideas, take actions and to keep positive!

Please get in touch if you have any ideas or would like to be your parish representative.

Rebekah and Ali :

environmentallead@rcdwxm.org.uk

(Photo: Members of Cytun-Caergybi at the Eco-Church Conference, St Asaph)

Lenten Environmental Actions

Lent is an opportunity to reflect in prayer, almsgiving and fasting. The practice of fasting and the commitment to giving something up, or doing something extra, can be a way to help address climate change.

Below are some thoughts of practical actions. Pick one or two and encourage family and friends to take up the challenge.

1. Fast from meat or buy a locally produced meat- Try a vegan or plant-based meal once a week. Explore tasty recipes with Meat Free Monday. Industrial meat production is taking a toll on the planet. JBS meat production supplies most of the meat for our UK supermarkets. This company alone produces around half the carbon emissions of fossil fuel giants such as Shell or BP and is driving deforestation in the Amazon by buying meat that has been grazed on deforested land.

2. Fast from Waste – think about packaging of food – can it be recycled, can you buy loose instead? Do you have a local plastic free and refillable shop? Some Boots outlets have blister pack recycling. Could your church have a blister pack collection point?

3. Reduce food waste. Strive to use all the food you buy before any goes bad. Try to cook fridge or freezer contents, where food items often get forgotten.

4. Shop Locally– support local shops, buy products that are made or grown more locally. Products not grown here, Tea, coffee, bananas and sugar buy Fairtrade and support the farmers.

5. Buy less or buy second hand. Ask yourself, “Do I really need this”. Get rid of excess clutter, donate to charity shops or other donation stations.

6. Carbon fasting: think ‘transport’. Instead of jumping in the car, if you are able, allocate time each day for walking, biking, car-pooling or even rollerblading!

7. Reflect on your morning routine. A good morning routine sets you up for the day. Try stillness, prayer, exercise.

8. Fast from digital Set parameters for use of personal devices, during the workday or evenings when you're with family. Limit Netflix, emails and social media.

9. Spend more time in nature. – creation prayer time - help to connect with God as Creator and celebrate His creation during Lent. Spend more time outside or at a favourite place looking at creation or people passing by.

10. Grow your own veg – herbs, salad, radish in pots. Or even a small indoor plant or flower that will remind you of the beauty and wonder of creation.

11. Save energy in your home. Draught-proof windows and doors, retain heat with heavy curtains, swap your bath for a shower, lights off, unplug plugs when not in use.

12. Move your money. Could you divest from fossil fuels and support a bank which invests in renewables? ‘Good with Money’ recommends some ethical choices, and the Just Money Movement have good resources on the topic : <https://justmoney.org.uk/money-makes-change-hub/banking/>

13. Join the movement for fossil free Churches. Support a commitment to divest. Encourage parish groups to change.

14. Join a group. Commit to action on the environment by joining Laudato Si, EcoChurch group or a local organisation making a difference in your area. Eg Keep Wales Tidy or the Wildlife Trust

15. Encourage decision makers to make right choices for environment. Visit MPs, talk to them about issues of concern, write to companies, councils or supermarkets about their environmental policies.

16. Sign-up for CAFOD's online Lent Calendar which will email you prayers and reflections for each day <https://cafod.org.uk/pray/lent-calendar>

Around and About in the Diocese

24 HOURS FOR THE LORD

The 12th edition of this Lenten initiative of prayer and reconciliation introduced by Pope Francis, will be celebrated in dioceses around the world. As with previous editions, the event will take place on the eve of the Fourth Sunday of Lent, from Friday 13th March to Saturday 14th March. Please look to your Deanery and Parish for the times of Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and the Sacrament of Reconciliation advocated by Pope Francis when he initiated this time of prayer and penance.

MASS OF THE CHRISM – St. Mary’s Cathedral – Wednesday 1st April -7.00pm

Bishop Peter invites the whole Diocese to join with him and the priests to this principal Mass of the Church in which the Oils to be used throughout the Diocese in the coming twelve months are blessed and the Oil of Chrism consecrated. This occasion with the consecration of the Oil of Chrism is a demonstration of the unity of the Church of Wrexham as well as being an opportunity for us all to pray with and for our priests as they renew again their priestly promises.

The Deacons will renew their diaconal ordination promises at a Mass on the First Saturday of Easter (11th April) at 12 noon in the Cathedral.

PARISHES AND THE EASTER TRIDUUM

The greatest mysteries of the redemption are celebrated yearly by the Church beginning with the evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday and ending with Vespers of Easter Sunday. This time is called ‘the triduum of the crucified, buried and risen’; it is also called the ‘Easter Triduum’ because during it is celebrated the paschal mystery, that is, the passing of the Lord from this world to his Father. The Church, by the celebration of this mystery through liturgical signs and sacramentals, is united to Christ, her spouse, in intimate communion. *N.38*

For the celebration of the Easter Triduum, it is necessary that there be a sufficient number of ministers and assistants who should be prepared so that they know what their role is in the celebration. Pastors must ensure that the meaning of each part of the celebration be explained to the faithful so that they may participate more fully and fruitfully. *N.41*

The chants of the people, and also of the ministers and the celebrating priest, are of special importance in the celebration of Holy Week and particularly of the Easter Triduum because they add to the solemnity of these days and also because the texts are more effective when sung. *N.42*

It is fitting that small religious communities, both clerical and lay, and other lay groups should participate in the celebration of the Easter Triduum in neighbouring principal churches.⁴⁶ Similarly, where the number of participants and ministers is so small that the celebrations of the Easter Triduum cannot be carried out with the requisite solemnity, such groups of the faithful should assemble in a larger church. Also, where there are small parishes with only one priest, it is recommended that such parishes should assemble, as far as possible, in a principal church and participate in the celebration there. *N.43*

Extracts from the document *Paschale Solemnitatis* ‘Circular Letter Concerning the Preparation and Celebration of the Easter Feasts’ Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments 16 January 1988

The letter in its entirety is worth reading by all liturgical ministers sooner rather than later in preparation for Holy Week and the Easter Triduum.

<https://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Calendar/Seasons/Documents/Paschale-Solemnitatis.pdf>

Events and Invitations

LOOKING AHEAD - EVENTS AND INVITATIONS

MARCH

- Fri 6th Women’s World Day of Prayer
- Sun 15th *Laetare* Sunday
- Thu 19th Solemnity of St. Joseph, Spouse of the B. Virgin Mary
- Wed 25th Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord
- Sun 29th Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

British Summer Time Begins

APRIL

- Wed 1st Chrism Mass 7.00 pm St. Mary’s Cathedral
- Thu 2nd The Paschal Triduum - Mass of the Lord’s Supper
- Fri 3rd Good Friday
- Sun 5th Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord
- Sun 26th World Day of Prayer for Vocations
(Good Shepherd Sunday)

RITE OF ELECTION



A record number of thirty-eight Catechumens and Candidates for our Diocese attended the Rite of Election in St. Mary’s Cathedral on the First Sunday of Lent, a small number more were unable to attend. They will be Baptised or Received into Full Communion with the Catholic Church at Easter or during the Triduum celebrations. We welcome them all and look forward to celebrating with them in their parishes in the coming weeks and also on the Vigil of Pentecost (23rd May) when they are invited to celebrate with Bishop Peter the *Mystagogia Mass* in the Cathedral. This represents a moment of reflection and thanksgiving by these new Catholics and all our parishes for the gifts in faith they have received and the gift that they are to the Church of Wrexham.

Feast of St Patrick, Patron of Ireland March 17th

Much of Patrick’s biography is conjecture, although his *Confessio* provides some. Aged 16, he was captured by Irish pirates and spent 6 years, before escaping, probably to Brittany. Returning to Britain, he studied Christianity and then went to Auxerre (France) where he was possibly ordained by St Germanus of Auxerre (see page 5).

Back in Ireland, Patrick certainly converted many thousands, which is why he is attributed with the conversion of Ireland. He founded the cathedral church of Armagh, raised standards of scholarship, and brought Ireland into communion with the western church.

Did Patrick rid Ireland of snakes? Actually, two centuries earlier it was noted that there were no snakes in Ireland!

And the clover? Three was a sacred number even in pagan Ireland, so it was convenient to turn it to advantage. The triskell is still significant in Brittany.

Finally, the St Patrick saltire dates from 1783, and in 1800 it was added (in red) to the crosses of St George, and St Andrew to become the Union Flag (Jack). (NB. Scotland as the prior cross is above the red, so the larger white next to the flagstaff)

Priests! - St. Winefride's Shrine Needs You!



'Calling priests who are willing and able to bring healing to souls here at the National Catholic Shrine of St. Winefride'.

With a significant increase in numbers entering the Church this Easter across neighbouring Dioceses and after experiencing a wonderful summer pilgrim season last year, we would love to have visiting priests here at the Shrine to be a welcoming presence here at this important site of healing and to offer the sacrament of Reconciliation for those who request.

It would be good to have a list of priests who could come and offer one hour per month - or whatever you can manage we would be most grateful.

Please pray and consider if this is something that you could help with at this important time in the Church's history at this National Shrine where many pilgrims are drawn from near and far seeking healing and reconciliation.

The Pilgrim Season is from Pentecost (24th May) until end September. For further information please contact Kate West: visitorcentremanager@rcdwxm.org.uk or Fr. Matthew Bond priesthollywell@rcdwxm.org.uk

The Knights of St Columba Buckley and district ..

would like to thank Parishioners of Mold, Buckley, Llay, Hawarden, Queensferry, Flint, St Claire's Chester and other parishes in the Diocese for supporting the calendar sales 2025 - 2026 which has enabled the Council to forward £2,511.00 in support of the Alma Mater Fund through the KSC Head office. This enables students in university to continue with their studies.

We are so grateful for your help and donations. To donate further to Alma Mater, contact Terry Loftus 07905302874

Lenten Stations of the Cross on 'Zoom'

The 'Way of the Cross' – The Stations – is celebrated in many parishes during Lent. For some, especially the housebound, elderly and infirm, it is not practicable to get to church. St David's Parish in Mold shares the Stations on Zoom, every Wednesday evening from Ash Wednesday until Holy Week at 7pm.

Each week, the Stations are prayed in a different format.

YOU are welcome to share these prayers, at home, via Zoom, or you can access the link to a **recording** to use at any time convenient to yourself. Request a link by email to clarion@rcdwxm.org.uk

TECHNICAL DETAILS

NO expertise needed!

LIVE – click on this link on computer, ipad, laptop, or phone:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7767387912?pwd=dkovd1RvbTNYMTNFOGIReDRIRmJ6dz09>

You **do not need** Zoom installed - If you have Zoom already, you can join with ID 7767 387 912, and passcode 066559.

On 11th 18th 25th Mar and 1st Apr, JOIN from **6.50 pm** organ music will be playing– start **7.00pm** it usually ends **7.35**. You will automatically be 'muted', and video 'off'

THIS IS OUR POPE

Pope Leo XIV's new apartment: a sober penthouse in the heart of the Vatican

'Privacy, simplicity and sport: this is the new residence of Pope Leo XIV'

Pope Leo XIV, known for his active and sporty lifestyle, is preparing to move into the Apostolic Palace soon, but breaking with some traditions, like his predecessor. Pope Francis moved out of the Pontifical Apartments, preferring the simple Casa Santa Marta. Pope Leo has chosen an attic in the upper area of the palace, marked by a focus on privacy, simplicity and personal well-being. A space adapted to the 'sporty' Pope. As a cardinal, he frequented gymnasiums and tennis courts in Rome. He played tennis at least once a week. An Augustinian religious described him as "a very good player" who plays the sport for health, to relieve stress and for the simple pleasure of playing.

This hobby has not disappeared in his pontificate. During his usual days of rest at Castel Gandolfo every Tuesday – he combines reading, prayer and physical activity: "A little swimming pool... Yes, yes. I think that human beings, to really take good care of themselves, everyone should do a little physical activity, together with the soul, all together... it does a lot of good." It also includes tennis and swimming in the recently renovated swimming pool of the papal villa.

The new apartment couldn't miss a gym. It is a space located on a side of the palace, overlooking the IOR (the Institute for Works of Religion, or Vatican Bank). Exercise is an integral part of his routine to take care of body, mind and spirit.

The Papal 'Penthouse': privacy and conviviality

Located in the attic between the third loggia (from where the Pope appears on Sundays for the Angelus) and the roof of the Apostolic Palace. Unlike the traditional papal dormitories – which allowed the presence of the Pope to be guessed by the light on – this new residence faces an interior courtyard, prioritising security and privacy.

- There will be no private bathroom inside the Pope's room; It is accessed from the hallway.
- A sober decoration predominates: white colours, basic furniture in a commercial and functional style.
- It includes a small chapel and access to the rooftop, where John Paul II ordered a replica of the Grotto of Lourdes to be installed for prayer.

- There are additional rooms for guests or collaborators.
- The Pope will live with his two trusted personal secretaries: Fathers Edgard Iván Rimaycuna (Peruvian) and Marco Billeri (Italian), for whom specific lodgings have been set up. Since his election, Leo XIV has continued to reside in his cardinal's apartment, in the building of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith (formerly the Holy Office), a practical and communal place that he already frequented.

A symbolic and practical change

The return to the Apostolic Palace – even if it is to a discreet attic – returns to tradition. However, the choice of the elevated and less visible space, together with the inclusion of the gymnasium and the close coexistence with his secretaries, reflects a pontificate which seeks to balance the Petrine service with a healthy, simple and communal lifestyle.

While Romans and tourists have seen for months a large crane on the façade of the Apostolic Palace due to the reforms, soon the light indicating the papal presence could come from a different window: not the traditional one towards the square, but towards the interior, symbolising a more reserved but equally active papacy ... also in sports.

(Article adapted from 'Exaudi' 9th February 2026)

St Mary's, Wrexham, Shines in Estyn Inspection – A Celebration of Catholic Education in the Diocese



(photo used with permission)

St Mary's Catholic Primary School in Wrexham is delighted to share the wonderful news of our very positive Estyn inspection, carried out from 6th–8th October 2025. The final report reflects the strength, joy, and faith filled commitment which characterises the school community, and we are thrilled to celebrate this achievement with the Diocese.

The inspectors' concluding statement captures the heart of our mission:

“Overall, the school provides a vibrant, nurturing, and inclusive learning environment where pupils thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. High quality teaching, a rich curriculum, and compassionate leadership enables the school to support nearly all pupils to make very strong progress, and develop the confidence, curiosity, and respect that prepares them well for the future.”

This outcome is a testament to the dedication of our staff, the enthusiasm of our pupils, and the unwavering support of our parents, carers, governors, and parish. It also stands as a joyful celebration of Catholic education in the Wrexham Diocese; education rooted in faith, community and the belief that every child is created to flourish.

This inspection success reflects not only our school's efforts, but the strong partnership that supports and strengthens Catholic education across our diocese. [Link to the FULL REPORT](#)

GOD WHO SPEAKS

Additional monthly resources for individuals, parishes and schools are available from the Bishops of England and Wales on their Biblical Apostolate website <https://www.godwhospeaks.uk/> There is also the amazing interactive Mosaic Experience 'Little bits of God.'



Farewell of Gratitude and Faith; Honouring Rev. Fr. Franklin Ebuka Umekachikelu, MSP

By Thomas Arthur Hopkinson

In the quiet beauty of North Wales, where the Conwy Valley meets the Irish Sea, the Catholic communities of Holy Family Church in Llandudno Junction, St Mary of the Angels Church in Llanfairfechan, and Eglwys Y Bugail (The Good Shepherd) Church in Llanrwst came together on the first Sunday of Lent 2026, in a heartfelt farewell gathering. This was no ordinary goodbye, it was a vibrant celebration of thanksgiving, an encomium in action, for a priest whose ministry had touched hearts deeply and profoundly.

Rev. Fr. Franklin Ebuka Umekachikelu, MSP, a dedicated member of the Missionary Society of St. Paul, served as parish priest to these three churches with extraordinary zeal and pastoral tenderness. Arriving to shepherd this cluster of faithful souls, Fr. Ebuka brought with him the charisma of his missionary society; a burning desire to proclaim the Gospel beyond borders, yet rooted here in the everyday lives of his parishioners. He ministered not as a distant figure, but as a servant leader who walked alongside his people, sharing in their joys, sorrows, hopes, and challenges.

What made Fr. Ebuka's time among us so memorable was the spirit with which he carried out his sacred duties. He shared the message of Christ with cheerfulness that lifted weary spirits on grey Welsh mornings, compassion that embraced the hurting and the lonely, and love that reflected the very heart of the Good Shepherd. Whether celebrating the Eucharist with reverent joy, visiting the sick, guiding in faith, or simply listening with genuine attention, Fr. Ebuka embodied the servant leadership Jesus modelled; washing feet, breaking bread, and pointing always to the One who is greater.

The farewell event itself was suffused with an atmosphere rich in faith, deep emotion, and overflowing joy. Parishioners from across the three churches gathered, their faces alight with gratitude. There were warm words

of appreciation, shared memories, tears mingled with laughter, hugs with handshakes, as the community expressed what words alone could scarcely capture: THANK YOU FOR BEING CHRIST AMONG US.

In his farewell message, Fr. Ebuka spoke with the wisdom and humility that defined his priesthood. He reminded us gently yet firmly that: “priests come and go according to God's providence. They are instruments in the Lord's hands, called for a season to serve, to love, to lead. But the true Shepherd; Christ Himself, Emmanuel, God with us - remains forever, he always stays place all your hope in him.” His words carrying the weight of truth and the lightness of faith. In that moment, he turned our eyes from himself to the Eternal One who never abandons His flock.

As Fr. Ebuka leaves for his next assignment to the diocese of Salford to continue his ministry, we hold him in our prayers and carry forward the legacy he leaves behind. He has reminded us that pastoral ministry is not about personal acclaim but about drawing souls closer to Jesus. He has shown us how cheerfulness, compassion, and love can transform ordinary parishes into living communities of faith.

Thank you, dear Fr. Ebuka, for your generous YES to God's call, for your tireless service, and for pointing us always to Christ, the Eternal Shepherd. May the Lord whom you have proclaimed so faithfully bless you abundantly, guide your steps, and grant you joy in every mission ahead.

The parishioners of Holy Family, St Mary of the Angels, and Eglwys Y Bugail bid you farewell not with sorrow alone, but with hearts full of gratitude and hope. Go forth in peace, servant of the Gospel. And may Christ, Emmanuel, remain ever close to you, as he remains ever close to us.

THE BACK PAGE
Bishop's Engagements, and a 'gallimaufry of serendipity'

BISHOP PETER'S ENGAGEMENTS

March

11	11.00am	Presbyteral Council	Bishop's House
13	11:45am	Lenten Mass	St Richard Gwyn HS
17	1.30pm	Trustees' Meeting	Bishop's House
18	12Noon	Overseas Clergy mtg	Rhyl
29	10.30am	Palm Sunday	Cathedral

April

01	7.00pm	Chrism Mass	Cathedral
02	7.30pm	Lord's Supper & Watching	Cathedral
03	3.00pm	Passion of the Lord	Cathedral
04	8.30pm	Easter Vigil	Cathedral

Selection from the Ordo:

(Or.... Out of the Ordinary....!)

Most weekdays in Lent follow the pattern of the season of Lent, ie purple vestments.

1st March, however, was a Sunday, so the **Feast of St David**, Patron of Wales, was transferred to Monday 2nd March. (White)

Saturday 7th the Commemoration of **Sts Perpetua and Felicity** may be celebrated. Perpetua, a lady of noble birth was accompanied by Felicity, a slave. Condemned to the 'circus' it is possible they were unharmed, so killed with swords. Patron saint of mothers and childbirth. A considerable worship grew up around them, and that is why they are included in the Roman Canon.

Monday 9th St Frances of Rome. At age 12 she wished to become a nun, but was forced to marry, and in fact happily so. A pious lay person, many cures were attributed to her. She is the patron saint of automobilists and widows.

March 17th St Patrick of Ireland (c389 -c461) Son of Calpurnius, a Romano-British official. (see p 7)

March 18th St Cyril of Jerusalem. (315-386) Probably born of Christian parents, Cyril taught catechumens until 349 when he became Bishop of Jerusalem. Caught amidst the Arian controversies, Cyril accepted the Nicene Creed, and was a strong opponent of Arianism. Pope Leo XIII declared him a Doctor of the Church in 1882

March 19th St Joseph. Apart from the birth narratives there are just two mentions of Joseph in the New Testament. He was noted as Jesus' parents when Jesus was aged 12 and remained in Jerusalem. At Lk 4.22 he is mentioned as the father of Jesus. It is thought probable that he had died before the Passion and death of Jesus. References suggest Joseph was some years older than Mary. He is Patron of the Universal Church, and in particular of workers and fathers. Pope Pius XI named him patron of social justice, and Pope Pius XII established the feast of St Joseph the Worker on May 1st, connecting with a strong European tradition of 'May Day' holiday, marking the beginning of summer.

March 23rd St Toribio Alfonso de Mogrobejo (1538-1605) Lawyer and university professor, he was named chief judge of the Inquisition of Philip II of Spain. A layman, he was named Archbishop of Lima, Peru, and despite objections was ordained and consecrated. In Peru he defended Indians' rights, learned the dialects, founded schools, churches and hospitals. He was known for his charities. He died in Santa, Peru on March 23rd 1605, and was canonised in 1726

March 25th Feast of the Annunciation

The Duel

All was well in heaven; it was joyous, peaceful, and calm. Archangels, angels and cherubim all went about their business full of joy knowing how honoured they were to be able to serve such a wonderful, loving and generous God. All was well, I said, until one day a young, trusted servant of God who some say was named Lucifer, whereas others called him Satan, still others the Devil, foolishly challenged God to a duel! This young usurper was truly beautiful; there is a school of thought that thinks that he led the worship in heaven. He had been full of wisdom and the very model of perfection but for some unknown reason he had changed. He was no longer content with his position, even though it was a highly exalted position. He had allowed pride to corrupt him. He became violent in his dealings with others and he wanted more; he wanted to be God!

God who is ever gracious calmly accepted this usurper's challenge. The rules of engagement had been drawn up; each opponent would be allowed one shot. God even allowed his challenger to choose his own weapon to fight with. Lucifer had chosen Death, confident that this ultimate weapon would bring him the victory that he so badly wanted. As God pondered the event that was to take place, he put out a call "Who will go for us, who will be our champion?" and his Son Yashua was the first to answer the call "Here I am, send me, I will be your champion on behalf of all your faithful people!"

When the day of the challenge arrived all the hosts of heaven were gathered to witness this great spectacle. There was a certain confidence on the part of Lucifer's supporters, and it has to be said there was a slight nervousness amongst God's supporters. Yashua had invited his opponent to make the first move and so he who had dared to challenge God unleashed his trusted weapon! Yashua succumbed to the power of Death, and for three days Lucifer and all those who followed him revelled in their triumph. Then God said "Wait a minute. Not so fast. Remember, you have had your shot, but I still have to have mine!"

Then God unleashed what he knew to be his own greatest weapon – Life! The earth began to shake; the Temple veil was rent in two and fear came on all who had dared to challenge him. Yashua then victoriously walked forth from his grave – alive, triumphant and glorious! Death had been defeated; it lost its power and all of God's people rose up shouting for joy and began to celebrate the greatest victory creation has ever known!
(Story written by TG)

