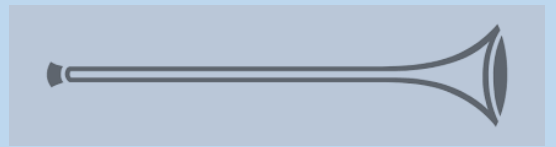




# Wreccsam Clarion



Issue no 16  
February 2024

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

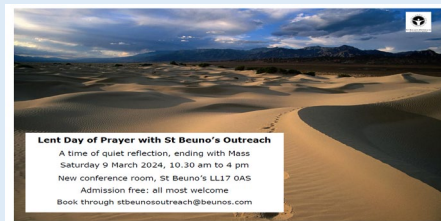


**Bishop Peter** writes about  
**Marriage Week** and vocation  
on **Page 2**

**Details of the Listening Exercise.**  
How can we say “No-one listens” if  
we do not ‘have our say’?

Read ALL the details on **page 5.**

Read, Ponder, Pray, and ACT  
With the **St Beuno’s Outreach Team.**  
The Transfiguration of Our Lord **Page 3**  
An invitation to a Day of Prayer **Page 4**



Lenten Day  
of Prayer at  
St Beuno’s  
March 9<sup>th</sup>  
See **Page 4**

## ESSENTIAL READING

For those preparing the Bidding Prayers  
(Prayers of the Faithful) at Mass.

All on **page 2**

## REQUIRED READING

for everyone else to be guided  
in our thoughts and prayers



## The Gospel Year of MARK

Jesus spent 40 days in the wilderness,  
which we recognise in the 40 days of  
LENT. This penitential period is an  
opportunity for **Almsgiving:**  
**Page 4**

Join the **Stations of the Cross**, every Wednesday  
during LENT, without leaving home...

Details on **Page 4.**

Technology at the service of the Liturgy!  
‘Zoom’ in and find out **MORE!**



Jubilee Year  
2025;  
Pilgrims of Hope  
**Page 5**

Get to know the work of Mrs Sue Copp in  
“**Spotlight**” on **page 6.**

Not the fusty, dusty, ‘blow the cobwebs away’  
image of ARCHIVES, but real and living  
HISTORY of the Diocese



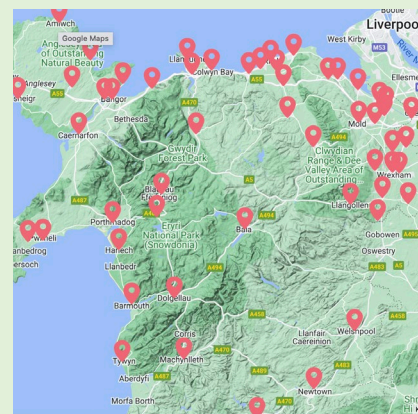
## Around and About in the Diocese Page 7

Details of Events and Invitations

The Mass for the Sick,

The Rite of Election for Catechumens

Also, details of **The Marriage Mass**, for everyone, and to  
celebrate especially this joyful Sacrament, especially those  
enjoying a ‘special anniversary’ this year



Every Red marker is a  
Mass Centre.

Part 2 of the ‘Quiz’ is  
on **Page 9.**

**Can you recognise all  
the churches?**

(answers on **page 5**)

Study this map as the  
background to the  
“Into The Future-3  
Listening Exercise”!

## Calling ALL YOUTH

On **Page 9**, find out more about the  
**Diocesan YOUTH Council**,  
and how **YOU** can be involved

What ‘penance’ is appropriate in Lent? Invite a discussion  
with an introduction on **Page 8**

Volunteer to help with the SVP – Read more on **Page 8**

**Marriage Preparation Course.** All the details of the course  
in Buckley on March 16<sup>th</sup> on **Page 8**

Bishop’s Engagements on **Page 9**



**Bishop Peter** writes:

**I think it was pure coincidence**  
- just a fortnight before the beginning of Marriage Week (7<sup>th</sup> -14<sup>th</sup> February)\* the ONS

(The Office of National Statistics) revealed that the proportion of people in England and Wales who are married or in a civil partnership has fallen below 50 per cent for the first time.

This declining trend was marked by a drop to 49.4% in 2022, according to the latest estimates\*\* from the ONS\*\*\*. The precise reasons, of course, cannot be drawn from the raw statistics, but a number of indicators point to people living more individualistic lives, fearing to make a commitment to anything or to anyone. The consequences of this individualism can be seen across the whole of the life of our society and not least in the life of the Church. It is a not insignificant contributor to the situation, (some would say 'crisis') in which we find ourselves, in the life of the Church in this diocese, and in common with much of Western Europe and beyond.

Nearly fifty years ago there was hardly a parish in the Diocese that did not have one or more local councillors or Trades Union representatives from among their congregation - men and women who took their faith and Catholic Social Teaching into the public theatre with the desire to improve the lives of others by speaking up for justice, human rights and the dignity of human life in all its facets. Rarely were they under a party political banner. Not only has the wind dropped out of the sails of so much voluntary service but also the tide of individualism has swept out to sea the fragile raft of vocation to so many callings.

I write not just of the sacramental and evangelical or gospel vocations, but of those careers and professions that historically involved the taking of an oath or promise before practice. For example, we often ask why we don't have many seminarians, and novices, but

do we ask why there are not enough good Catholic teachers applying to work in (some of) our Catholic schools; or insufficient medical practitioners working in relatively small and in not prestigious specialisms or parts of the country?

If we believe in the virtue of marriage and Catholic family life, we would do more to halt and perhaps reverse the declining marriage rate and the course of individualism upon which society seems to have a desire to wreck itself.

Within the life of the Church this needs to be charted on new and better faith formation for all ages, much of which may need to be of oneself by oneself as well as one's peers and fellow parishioners. If we are to live the mission of the Church and be the missionary disciples we are called to be, we must redouble our efforts to be so formed in our faith that we can say 'yes' or 'I do' to whatever call truly comes from God through the essential silence in our life of prayer and reading of the Bible.

For the majority the vocation to minister Christ's selfless love to another will first and foremost be through marriage and family life, forming the domestic church. It is in recognition of that, that I delight each year in celebrating the Diocesan **Celebration of Marriage** Mass, as I will again this year on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> February. A Mass to which all are invited to affirm their marriage vows and enjoy the prayer of the community and the blessing of the Church.

With every good wish and prayers especially in the forty days before Easter,

+ Peter

\* <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/marriage-week-2024/>

\*\* [latest estimates](#)

\*\*\* reported by the Catholic Union of Great Britain in their weekly bulletin of 27<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

## PRAYER INTENTIONS

### The Pope's Prayer intentions for February:

Let us pray for the sick who are in the final stages of life, and that they and their families receive the necessary medical and human care and accompaniment.

### Prayer Intentions during LENT:

During Lent, we are invited to pray for these intentions:  
Candidates for the Sacraments (especially on Sundays of Lent);  
Women; the Needy and Hungry of the World;  
Penitents and Wanderers.

### The Cycle of Prayer

In the Winter season of Ordinary time, we are invited to pray for these intentions:

Peace on Earth;  
Christian Unity;  
Openness to the Word of God;  
Victims of Human Trafficking and Those Working to Combat It;  
the Sick and Those Who Care for Them;  
The Unemployed.



## 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.



Jesus Mafa, *The Transfiguration* (1973) © <http://www.librairie-emmanuel.fr>

Our image this month comes from the 'Life of Jesus Mafa', a project undertaken in the 1970s to help teach the gospel in Northern Cameroon. Scriptural readings from the Lectionary were interpreted dramatically by Mafa Christian communities, and photographs of their interpretations transcribed as paintings. The result was a catalogue of over 60 images depicting the life of Jesus as an African man. (The collection is now accessible through the [website](http://www.librairie-emmanuel.fr) of Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville).

In this painting of the Transfiguration, Jesus, dressed in dazzling white, appears to be greeting Moses and Elijah like old friends, surrounded by a cloud that makes the whole scene feel ethereal. Peter, James, and John look on in amazement, bewildered by what they are witnessing. The painting invites us to imagine the scene as if we are there present ourselves, and to take encouragement to follow Jesus as we hear the Father's words: *'This is my Son, the Beloved. Listen to him!'*

Try to **set aside** the demands of everyday life for a moment ----- and **focus** on becoming quiet.

**Then read the text** a few times, perhaps imagining yourself going up the mountain with Jesus and the disciples.

What is it like for you to be with Jesus?

Using your **sense of hearing**, focus on all the sounds you notice while you are there. Perhaps you find yourself listening to birds singing, insects buzzing, the slight movement of the trees in the gentle breeze.

As Jesus is revealed as the Son of God, wonderfully transfigured in glory, **listen** to how Peter reacts.

How do you respond to the transfigured Jesus yourself?

Then you hear the voice speaking from the cloud: *'This is my Son, the Beloved, Listen to him.'*

In the **quiet** of your heart, allow yourself to do just that: you **listen** to Jesus.

People often associate Ignatian prayer with praying with our imagination, though we don't always appreciate that this includes making full use of *all* our bodily senses: seeing, smelling, touching, tasting, and of course *listening*.

During this month of February, Bishop Peter is organising several *listening exercises* in different parishes to ascertain people's responses to his document 'Into the Future'. That emphasis on listening makes it a good time for us to use this imaginative way of praying ourselves. We can focus particularly on our sense of hearing as we follow the command of the voice from the cloud at the Transfiguration of Jesus: *'This is my Son, the Beloved. Listen to him.'*

Take a moment to ponder the image of the Transfiguration from Jesus Mafa. Then reflect on the associated text from St Mark (part of the Gospel for the Second Sunday in Lent).

**Jesus took with him Peter and James and John and led them up a high mountain where they could be alone by themselves. There in their presence he was transfigured: his clothes became dazzlingly white, whiter than any earthly bleacher could make them. Elijah appeared to them with Moses; and they were talking with Jesus.**

**Then Peter spoke to Jesus. 'Rabbi', he said, 'it is wonderful for us to be here; so let us make three tents, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.' He did not know what to say; they were so frightened. And a cloud came, covering them in shadow; and there came a voice from the cloud, 'This is my Son, the Beloved. Listen to him'. Then suddenly, when they looked round, they saw no one with them anymore but only Jesus.**

**What** do you hear?

Maybe a conversation between you and Jesus begins. You listen intently to each other, as two friends do when they are together.

**How important** is it to you to really listen to the Lord, and to know that you have been listened to yourself?

**Slowly**, when you are ready, come back to your place of prayer. Perhaps you now hear other sounds that you missed earlier.

In what ways has your prayer changed your appreciation of these?

**Conclude** your prayer with your own words of thanks.

## Gospel Year of Mark



The Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. And he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. And he was with the wild animals, and the angels ministered to him.

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the Gospel."

## Our Call

Whether we gaze with longing into the garden or with fear and trembling into the desert, of this we can be sure – God walked there first! And when we who have sinned and despoiled the garden are challenged now to face the desert, we do not face it alone; Jesus has gone there before us to struggle with every demon that has ever plagued a human heart. Face the desert we must if we would reach the garden, but Jesus has gone there before us.

(James Healy. *National Catholic Reporter*, Kansas April 1990)

## The Season of LENT

### FORTY DAYS - WHO'S COUNTING?

As some may be surprised to learn, Ash Wednesday is not the beginning of Lent, but only the beginning of the Lenten fast.

The liturgical time of Lent begins on the following Sunday, and here the liturgy has a different character. It is more ancient more objective. The structure of the Sunday Mass is loftier and more noble in its splendidly simple architecture. Nothing is said about how a sinner feels, and the question of any possible conflict between the mercy and justice of God is not raised. All is bathed in the same pure light, the light of the wilderness where Christ the Lord fasts in solitude and is tempted by the devil.

The dramatic, medieval rites of Ash Wednesday may perhaps make a stronger and more immediate appeal to our feelings. The Mass of the first Sunday however leads us deeper into the real mystery of Lent, uniting us more profoundly and more directly with the Christ who, praying and fasting in us, will purify us and offer us together with himself to the Father in the glory of his easter victory.

(Thomas Merton. *Seasons of Celebration* ©1965 Abbey of Gethsemani)

### Stations of the Cross - via "Zoom"

**St David's Parish in Mold** will again lead the Stations every Wednesday from 14<sup>th</sup> February, Ash Wednesday until the Wednesday of Holy Week, 27<sup>th</sup> March, at 7pm. (access from 6.50pm). The format will be the same each week, but the prayers and perspective will change. All this from the comfort of your own home... no travel required!

'Zoom' is free, available on PC, laptop, ipad, phone and smart TV. Download the app for free. Either click on the link, below, or enter the Meeting ID, and Passcode. The site will give you the name of your Editor, Mark Philpot. Click 'join'!

It is helpful if you 'mute' yourself, **and** switch OFF video..

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7767387912?pwd=dkovd1RvbTNyMTNFOGIReDRIRmJ6dz09>

Meeting ID: 776 738 7912

Passcode: 066559

### LENTEN ALMS

We are all aware of the plight of the Christians in the Holy Land especially in Palestine and even more of those holed up in Gaza. Amazingly some supplies are getting through to the community of some 600 hundred in the compound of the Holy family Church in Gaza. There are many hundreds more who have lost their livelihoods because of the war in Gaza. You can come to their assistance by your fasting, prayer and almsgiving through the agency of the Pontifical Agency *Aid to the Church in Need (ACN-UK)* <https://acnuk.org/news/holy-land-fresh-aid-gives-hope-for-christians-on-the-breadline/> Registered Charity (England & Wales) No.1097984 and *Friends of the Holy Land* <https://www.friendsoftheholylan.org.uk/> Registered Charity (England & Wales) No. 1202568

Alms should be collected in parishes and presented at the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Maundy Thursday to be sent to Diocesan Central Services (Bishop's House) to be forwarded to the charities.

### St Beuno's Outreach Lent Day of Prayer

Please join us on Saturday 9 March, from 10.30 am to 4 pm in the new conference room at St Beuno's.

This is an opportunity to pray and reflect together in beautiful surroundings. There will be a time of gently guided reflection, plenty of space for private prayer, and an opportunity for sharing in small groups for those who wish. The day will end with Mass.

All are most welcome, and the day is free of charge.

Tea and coffee are provided, but please bring your own lunch.



Lent Day of Prayer with St Beuno's Outreach  
A time of quiet reflection, ending with Mass  
Saturday 9 March 2024, 10.30 am to 4 pm  
New conference room, St Beuno's LL17 G4S  
Admission free: all most welcome  
Book through [stbeunosoutreach@beunos.com](mailto:stbeunosoutreach@beunos.com)

Book your place by emailing  
[stbeunosoutreach@beunos.com](mailto:stbeunosoutreach@beunos.com)





### JUBILEE 2025 – PILGRIMS OF HOPE

This year in preparation of the Jubilee next year Pope Francis has asked the Church to immerse herself afresh in prayer. Among the many resources that are available it is particularly those around the *Our Father* that are designed for use through the weeks of Lent for individual or group use.

Resources can be found on the Bishops' Conference (CBCEW) website: <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/jubilee-2025/> as well as the Vatican websites: <https://www.iubilaeum2025.va/en/giubileo-2025/verso-il-giubileo/2024-anno-della-preghiera.html> and <http://www.evangelizatio.va/content/pcpne/en/giubileo-2025.html>

### INTO THE FUTURE – LISTENING EXERCISE

In Bishop Peter's Pastoral Letter on Advent Sunday he spoke of meetings in the New Year to consider the updated pastoral plan. Dates and venues for those six open meetings are now established,

They are all **Saturdays** as follows:

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> February

10.30am to 12noon –

St. Winefride, **Welshpool**;

2.30pm to 4.00pm –

St. Mary's Cathedral, **Wrexham**;

#### 24<sup>th</sup> February

2.30pm to 4.00pm –

St. Mary's, **Rhyl**;

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> March

10.30am to 12noon –

Our Lady Star of the Sea, **Llandudno**;

2.30pm to 4.00pm –

Most Holy Redeemer, **Porthmadog**;

#### 9<sup>th</sup> March

2.30pm to 4.00pm –

Our Lady of the Rosary, **Buckley**

Please be sure to read 'Into the Future – 3' before attending a meeting or making a submission.

[https://www.rcdwxm.org.uk/files/ugd/0d070d\\_ba440c4896e347feb6b5fc0127eb57a8.pdf](https://www.rcdwxm.org.uk/files/ugd/0d070d_ba440c4896e347feb6b5fc0127eb57a8.pdf)

Each meeting will have the same format:

- Formal and silent prayer;
- Presentation from Bp. Peter;
- opportunity for opinions, comments and suggestions from those present
- Closing Prayer.

**All meetings will take place in the church, as listed.**

The meetings will take place in the respective churches.

You are free to attend any of the meetings as the submissions should be about the overall principles and strategy, not about individual parishes.

Circumstances may dictate action in one part of the Diocese caused by an issue elsewhere

#### **\*Guidelines:**

*Oral contributions at the meetings:*

(maximum 3 minutes, please)

*Written submissions can be made:*

(maximum 250 words please)

*These should be sent in advance to the Diocesan Offices by post or by email [pa@rcdwxm.org.uk](mailto:pa@rcdwxm.org.uk)*

#### **Please Note, also,**

Written submissions should be signed – *anonymous comments cannot be considered.*

Comments should intend to be helpful and constructive - *purely negative responses do not provide guidance for the future.*

**DO, please,** ensure that you read the document before attending a meeting or making a submission. The document is online or you may ask for a print copy from your parish.

Answers to the picture Quiz:

(extra points if you know the church's dedication....)

|                      |                |                 |              |               |
|----------------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------|
| 1 Hawarden           | 7 Barmouth     | 13 Menai Bridge | 19 Rhuddlan  | 25 Saltney    |
| 2 Llandudno Junction | 8 Beaumaris    | 14 Pantasaph    | 20 Rhyl      | 26 Chirk      |
| 3 Llanfairfechan     | 9 Buckley      | 15 Prestatyn    | 21 Ruabon    | 27 Newton     |
| 4 Llanidloes         | 10 Gellilydan  | 16 Porthmadog   | 22 Llangefni | 28 Rossett*   |
| 5 Llanrwst           | 11 Llay        | 17 Pwllheli     | 23 Welshpool | *(now closed) |
| 6 Bala               | 12 Machynlleth | 18 Rhosneigr    | 24 Cathedral |               |



## Working in the Diocesan Archives

*“shining a light  
on a living history”*



**Diocesan Archivist Mrs Sue Copp**

[archives@rcdwxm.org.uk](mailto:archives@rcdwxm.org.uk)

### **A background in Archives**

My introduction to the archive came directly from my predecessor, Kathryn Byrne, whom I knew from the north-east Wales history circuit. I had heard her give talks at Glyndwr University when I was doing a Master's and we kept in touch, but I had never visited her place of work until I found myself researching the history of my own parish church for its centenary celebration.

Kathryn had all the documents I needed ready on the table in the Curial office so my work was quickly done, and I spent the rest of the visit helping her to carry an unfeasibly large consignment of archives from one room to another.

Little did I know then that some years later I would be in the job myself!

I had been working in Flintshire Record Office for 11 years before Kathryn retired and handed over to me. Before that I worked in public and school libraries except for two years when, something completely different, I went into industry, where I learned the arts of panel wiring and fine soldering!

I was delighted to take over as archivist and glad to be in Wrexham again. I work in the Curial Office where archives are stored and most of the work is done. Every time I open the door to start work, I am greeted by no less than seventeen Bishops whose portraits hang on the walls. The earliest is Bishop Philip Michael Ellis who was in post from 1688-1709 when the area was known as the Western District long before the Diocese of Menevia, or Wrexham, was created.

### **In the Archives**

The diocesan archives hold documents from the cathedral, churches, priests, parishioners, religious houses, schools, colleges and societies. There are also photographs, reports, maps, plans, architectural drawings, property and business documents, plus a library that holds diocesan publications and general catholic literature.

The scope and content of the archives perfectly reflect the story of Catholicism in Wales. There are not many documents earlier than 1860 but the rest of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth more than makes up for it. Evidence has survived detailing the activity taking place at that time and of how the catholic faith blossomed and spread, in some parts of Wales for the very first time. Documents from those times tell of the determination of priests and parishioners to build churches in Wales and the arrival of many religious orders from France which helped to make this possible. The records reveal that until these churches were built, Mass was celebrated in houses, village halls, dance halls and above shops. The most remote areas of Wales were covered by The Travelling Mission priests and their surviving documents reveal their difficult and often dangerous work driving miles over mountains often through storms and snow to say Mass for small gatherings in farmhouses.

### **What is involved**

Most of my work in the archives is sorting, cataloguing and storing the documents in archive boxes for their future preservation. Every box is given a unique number to enable easy retrieval and its contents listed and recorded to ensure that the history of the Diocese is preserved for future generations.

The history that is to be found in the diocesan archives is fascinating and very useful, especially if a centenary celebration is planned or sadly, if a church is closed. There is a great deal of interest from beyond the diocese and I receive enquiries from all over the world. Occasionally researchers need to view documents and visits can be arranged by appointment.

### **Examples of Archive 'files'**

|                            |                             |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Ad Clerums                 | Hospital Chaplaincy         |
| Apostolic Delegation       | Liturgy                     |
| Ad Limina                  | Library Catalogue           |
| Bishop's Conference        | Media                       |
| Bishop's House             | Mass Books                  |
| Bishops' Papers            | Negatives                   |
| Bishop's Secretary         | Newspaper Cuttings          |
| Clergy                     | Parishes ( <i>by name</i> ) |
| Cathedral Chapter          | Priests                     |
| Cause of the Forty Martyrs |                             |
| Clergy Meetings            | Patrimony                   |
| Converts                   | Priests Council             |
| Deaneries                  | Photographs                 |
| Deacons                    | Pastoral Meetings           |
| Diocesan Bishops           | Property                    |
| Dimissorial Letters        | Rome                        |
| Diocese of Menevia         | Religious Houses            |
| Diocese of Wrexham         | Societies                   |
| Ecumenism                  | Status Animarium            |
| Eucharistic Congress       | Seminaries                  |
| Education Schools          | Trusts Legacies             |
| Hierarchy                  | Travelling Mission          |

**Interested in Research???** Contact Sue Copp at [archives@rcdwxm.org.uk](mailto:archives@rcdwxm.org.uk)  
Sue will offer help and guidance, as much as she is able!

## Around and About in the Diocese

### CATECHUMENS AND

#### CANDIDATES FOR THE RITE OF RECEPTION

Those who as adults make that very personal choice to become Christian within the Catholic Church are to be encouraged, supported and prayed for by the whole community that elects and welcomes them into the Church. Formally this takes place on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent at the Rite of Election marking the beginning of the final period of preparation before being admitted to the Sacraments of Christian Initiation at the Easter Vigil.

Again this year there will be a celebration on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> May of a Mass for New Christians (*Mystagogia* Mass). An opportunity for those 'new' Catholics in the Diocese of Wrexham to share the faith they have in communion with Bishop Peter, priests, deacons, religious and lay people of the Diocese.

Bishop Peter invites all catechumens and those preparing for Reception into the Catholic Church together with their sponsors and families to these celebrations in the Cathedral. The Rite of Election which forms a crucial part of their preparation will be celebrated within the solemn celebration of *Evening Prayer of the Church* on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> February at 3.00 pm.

#### Marriage & Family Life Commission

##### CELEBRATION OF MARRIED LIFE

Bishop Peter invites all married couples to a celebration Mass on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> February at 12 noon in St. Mary's Cathedral.

Especially welcome will be those who have a significant (10<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, 40<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup>, 60<sup>th</sup>+) anniversary in 2024 and also those engaged couples who are to be married this year.

Even if you are not able to attend, please send names, anniversary and contact details as soon as possible to Jeanie Larkin, Diocesan Marriage and Family Life Coordinator, c/o Bishop's House or direct by e-mail to [mfl@rcdwxm.org.uk](mailto:mfl@rcdwxm.org.uk)

Light Refreshments will be available in St. Mary's Cathedral Hall after the Mass.

#### Marriage Week celebrates the vibrancy of marriage as the basis for family life.

We are convinced that marriage is a brilliant institution that the whole of society should celebrate. Hence Marriage Week is a time to say *"Wake up! Marriage is a great idea"*, and since a healthy marriage is a skill, let's learn some new skills to turn our marriages from good to very good! <https://marriage-week.org.uk/>

### Events and Invitations

#### FEBRUARY

- 7<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> Marriage Week  
'Wake up. Marriage is a great Idea'
- Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> St. Josephine Bakhita, Virgin  
Day of Special Prayer for Victims of Human Trafficking and Those Working to Combat it.
- Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> Diocesan Mass for the Sick and Infirm
- Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> World Day for the Sick  
(Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes)  
Day of Prayer for the Unemployed
- Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> Ash Wednesday
- Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> Diocesan Celebration of Marriage  
"Marriage Mass"
- Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent  
Rite of Election in St. Mary's Cathedral
- Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> CAFOD Lent Fast Day
- Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> Leap Year Day

#### MARCH

- Friday 1<sup>st</sup> Solemnity of St David,  
Patron of Wales,  
Patron of the Diocese of Wrexham  
Women's World Day of Prayer
- Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Diocesan Presbyteral Council
- 8<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> 24 Hours for the Lord.  
"Walking in a new Life"
- Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Diocesan Trustees
- Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> Mass of the Holy Chrism –Cathedral
- Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> Easter Day - the Resurrection of the Lord  
*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](http://www.rcdwxm.org.uk) or ask your priests.*

#### DIOCESAN MASS FOR THE SICK

In recognition of the World Day for the Sick on the feast day of Our Lady of Lourdes, Bishop Peter will celebrate Mass in St. Mary's Cathedral, Wrexham on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> February at 12 noon and invites the sick of the Diocese, all who care for them, and past pilgrims to Lourdes to join him on this special occasion.

The service will include the celebration of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.

It will be helpful if you can arrive in the Cathedral in good time in order that the logistics of anointing a number of faithful can be organised.

Light Refreshments will be available in St. Mary's Cathedral Hall after.

A talkative little boy, being taken to church by his older sister was warned "They won't allow you to talk".  
"Who won't?" he asked. She replied, "The Hushers".

Another little boy was saying his bedtime prayers quietly.  
"I can't hear you, dear", whispered his mother.  
"But I wasn't talking to you" he answered.



## The Discussion Column

“To be, or not to be? That is the question”. Hamlet’s famous question leads us to ask... in Lent... “To DO, or not to DO?” “Whether ‘tis nobler in the mind... to give something up, or to do something extra?”!

A contributor to ‘The Clarion’ writes:

“My daughter, a very orthodox Catholic, and I have a difference of opinion about what are the best kinds of penances in Lent. **She** agrees with the traditional idea of temporarily giving up something one enjoys. **I** feel that this is a wasted opportunity.

“My daughter argues that it strengthens one’s will power as well as makes an offering to God. My choice is to give up something that one should not be consuming, getting into the habit of doing without it during Lent, then continuing without it after Lent.

Or start doing something that you *should* be doing and keep on after Lent.

This regular discussion with my daughter came about again this year and caused me to wonder what were the thoughts of others concerning Lent. Do **YOU** have views about what people could or should be doing? If penance, what sort of penance? If resolutions, what sort of resolutions? Is it time to bring something new to Lent, or are the traditional actions the best?”

One option is for living Lent, given the massive over-consumption that the world is drowning under, to buy nothing at all that isn’t essential. And if we carried *that* on after Lent, what a success!

Another is “to do something extra, something which has often become a part of my everyday life” – an example is ‘Meditation Monday’.

A third is described “Giving up our precious time for others can be penitential, but so often brings unexpected spiritual benefits”. Giving up treats is “an opportunity to give more resources to others”, which is making something negative into something positive.

Of course, there is always the option of **fasting and almsgiving**. These are the traditional actions, and inactions, of Lent, and they still have their place. Maybe there are health benefits to be gained -however it does seem that in modern life most people prefer to make a positive effort to **DO something extra**.

What are **YOUR** preferences? There is no ‘right or wrong’, but suggestions for making this time a particularly spiritual time will help many readers!

### Proverbs to ponder::

“Who fasts, but does no other good, saves his bread, but goes to Hell”. (Italian)

“They who forgive most shall be most forgiven” (English)

“Nature has given to humans one tongue, but two ears, that we may hear from others as much as we speak” (Epictetus)

## MARRIAGE PREPARATION

“Marriage Care” is pleased to offer a ‘Preparing Together’ course for those planning to marry this year. The course will take place at Our Lady of the Rosary Church, Jubilee Road, BUCKLEY. CH7 2BF on SATURDAY 16th MARCH 2023.

This is a full day course: arrive from 9.30 am for a 10am start, and the course will finish at 4pm.

This course is designed to complement the preparation and accompaniment couples receive within their local parish. In addition to the material shared with them about building and sustaining relationships, they will explore the importance and significance of the vows made in Church, before God, family, and friends, in terms of their religious and public commitment to each other. A certificate is available on completion of the course.

Booking is essential and through the Marriage Care website - <https://www.marriagecare.org.uk/>

N.B. A fee is charged and couples from our Diocese benefit from a reduced fee of £110 – please contact Marriage and Family Life at [mfl@rcdwxm.org.uk](mailto:mfl@rcdwxm.org.uk) / 07542 268728 for the discount code. If couples are in a situation where this fee is unaffordable, they can contact the Marriage Care booking service on 0800 389 3801 Mon – Thurs (9 am–6 pm) who will, without judgement, book their place and reduce or waive the fee altogether.

### The SVP needs You!

The September and October 2023 issues of ‘The Clarion’ brought to you the history of the St Vincent De Paul Society. It is a living history, because it continues to this day.

Members of the SVP have been selflessly helping those in need in England and Wales ever since the formation of the first conference in 1844, and its ripple effects are still felt by us to this day, currently through our community support of those experiencing hardship because of the cost-of-living crisis. From a debating and discussion group it developed into a Society of ACTION.

By the end of 1844, there were eight conferences in existence. Today, there are over 1000 Conferences in England and Wales with around 8,500 members. The SVP in England and Wales is part of an extensive, international network and has been carefully nurtured over generations by dedicated Vincentians.

This is the SVP’s story, a wonderfully Christian one. A small band of passionate individuals is joining to organise themselves to take on the world. This is what the SVP tries to do today; this is what the SVP did in this country one hundred and eighty years ago and wishes to continue doing.

If you are interested in joining or would like to learn more about the SVP, contact Katie Spreag, Wrexham’s Membership Support Officer, on 07482284384



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

**BISHOP PETER'S ENGAGEMENTS**

**February**

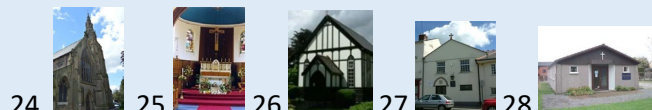
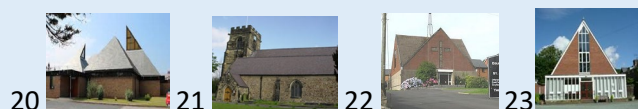
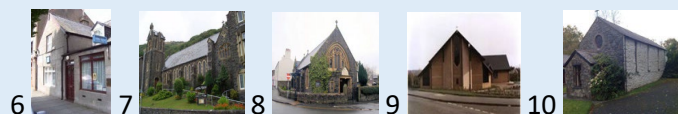
|            |                          |           |
|------------|--------------------------|-----------|
| 03 10.30am | Pastoral Meeting         | Welshpool |
| 2.30pm     | Pastoral Meeting         | Cathedral |
| 10 12noon  | Mass for the Sick        | Cathedral |
| 5.30pm     | DDL Sisters Welcome Mass | Rhyl      |
| 14 12noon  | Ash Wednesday            | Cathedral |
| 17 12noon  | Marriage Mass            | Cathedral |
| 18 3.00pm  | Rite of Election         | Cathedral |
| 22         | Episcopal Ordination     | Plymouth  |
| 24 2.30pm  | Pastoral Meeting         | Rhyl      |
| 27 12noon  | Chapter Mass             | Cathedral |

**March**

|            |                             |                |
|------------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| 01 11.30am | St David Feast Day Mass     | Cathedral      |
| 02 10.30am | Pastoral Meeting            | Llandudno      |
| 2.30pm     | Pastoral Meeting            | Porthmadog     |
| 06 10.00am | Presbyteral Council Meeting | Bishop's House |
| 07 6.30pm  | Youth Commission Meeting    | Colwyn Bay     |
| 09 2.30pm  | Pastoral Meeting            | Buckley        |

**Picture Quiz – Part 2.**

**Name the Churches**



Clue: You will find all these churches, and the picture, on the Diocesan website, under 'Parishes'

**WANTED :**

**Young people aged 16 + to form  
a Diocesan Youth Council**

The Diocesan Youth Commission is looking to set up a Diocesan Youth Council to feed into the meetings of the Commission. The Council will consist of young people from all areas of the Diocese aged 16+ who would meet via Zoom prior to the commission meetings.

Their ideas, suggestions and comments will then be taken by a representative to the commission meeting.

Parish Priests have been asked to encourage their young people to take part in this and to pass on email addresses to the Curial Office.

The first meeting will be on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> February by zoom.

**Dates of Youth events for your diary 2024**

Youth day in Rhyl 29<sup>th</sup> June.

This will include speakers, fun and lunch.

Youth Mass 23<sup>rd</sup> November 12 noon in Colwyn Bay including lunch.

Further details to follow.

**The origin of 'Lent'?**

It is suggested that 'Lent' originates from the Saxon word for March 'lencten monath', because during this month the days noticeably lengthen.

In the Christian era, the chief part of the great fast (before Easter) from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday falls in March, and so it received the name Lencten-faesten', or Lent.

The fast of 36 days was introduced in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, but it did not become fixed at 40 days until the early 7<sup>th</sup> century, thus corresponding with Our Lord's fast in the wilderness.

**Doing God's will**

"Can you tell me very simply", asked a devout lady, "what your idea of consecration is?"

Holding out a blank piece of paper the pastor replied "It is to sign your name at the bottom of this blank sheet, and let God fill it in as He wills"

