

Pope Leo XIV closes St. Peter's Holy Door, concluding Jubilee of Hope

Pope Leo XIV on Tuesday closed the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica, bringing the ordinary holy year to an end — a time of grace that invited Catholics to conversion, reconciliation, and hope.

The pontiff processed toward the Holy Door as the antiphon “O clavis David” was sung. Reaching the threshold, he knelt before the door and remained for a few minutes in silent prayer. He then rose and, at 9:41 a.m., pushed shut the two large bronze doors — a gesture that visibly marked the end of the jubilee season.

“With thankful hearts we now prepare to close this Holy Door, crossed by a multitude of faithful, certain that the Good Shepherd always keeps the door of his heart open to welcome us whenever we feel weary and oppressed,” Leo XIV said in an address before the concluding gesture that ended the ecclesial event, ordinarily held every 25 years to offer the faithful the possibility of obtaining a plenary indulgence.

With these words, Leo XIV emphasized that even though the jubilee has ended, God’s mercy remains ever open to believers.

Before closing the doors, the Holy Father pronounced in Latin the formula prescribed by the rite, following a practice established in 1975 and later simplified by St. John Paul II during the Jubilee of the Year 2000.

In keeping with the simplified celebration, the public rite did not include the portion involving the construction of a brick wall and was limited to the closing of the bronze doors. The masonry work itself will be carried out later, privately, about 10 days after this public rite.

The act will be overseen by the Office of Liturgical Celebrations of the Supreme Pontiff. The so-called “sampietrini” — personnel of the Fabric of St. Peter, including carpenters, cabinetmakers, and electricians who normally handle basilica maintenance — will build the brick wall inside the basilica to definitively seal the Holy Door.

During this private rite — without cameras or journalists — the traditional metal capsule (“capsis”) will be inserted into the wall. It will contain the official act of closure, coins minted during the jubilee year, and the keys of the Holy Door as a material and symbolic testimony of the holy year that, as the pope noted, has ended on the calendar but not in the spiritual life of the Church.

Leo XIV then recited the prayer of thanksgiving for the ordinary holy year, proclaiming: “This Holy Door is closed, but the door of your mercy is not closed.” ... To read more: [Pope Leo XIV closes St. Peter's Holy Door, concluding Jubilee of Hope](#) | Catholic News Agency



Anointed Ones



Jesus presents himself for baptism in today’s Gospel not because He is a sinner, but to fulfill the word of God proclaimed by His prophets. He must be baptized to reveal that He is the Christ (“anointed one”)—the Spirit-endowed Servant promised by Isaiah in today’s First Reading.

His baptism marks the start of a new world, a new creation. As Isaiah prophesied, the Spirit descends upon Jesus like a dove—as the Spirit hovered over the face of the deep in the beginning (see Genesis 1:2).

As it was in the beginning, at the Jordan also the majestic voice of the Lord thunders above the waters. The Father opens the heavens and declares Jesus to be His “beloved son.”

God had long prepared the Israelites for His coming, as Peter preaches in today’s Second Reading. Jesus was anticipated in the “beloved son” given to Abraham (see Genesis 22:2, 12, 26), and in the calling of Israel as His “first-born son” (see Exodus 4:22–23). Jesus is the divine son begotten by God, the everlasting heir promised to King David (see Psalm 2:7; 2 Samuel 7:14).

He is “a covenant of the people [Israel]” and “a light to the nations,” Isaiah says. By the new covenant made in His blood (see 1 Corinthians 11:25), God has gathered the lost sheep of Israel together with whoever fears Him in every nation.

Christ has become the source from which God pours out His Spirit on Israelites and Gentiles alike (see Acts 10:45). In Baptism, all are anointed with that same Spirit, made beloved sons and daughters of God. Indeed, we are Christians—literally “anointed ones.”

We are the “sons of God” in today’s Psalm—called to give glory to His name in His temple. Let us pray that we remain faithful to our calling as His children, that our Father might call us what he calls His Son—“my beloved . . . in whom I am well pleased.”

Scott Hahn



English Martyrs
Vale of White Horse
Pastoral Area

PARISHES OF
THE ENGLISH MARTYRS, Didcot
ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST, Wallingford

www.didcotandwallingfordcatholicchurches.org
Office email: didcot@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

(Office Hours Tuesday–Friday 9am to 2pm) Telephone: 01235812338

15 Manor Crescent, Didcot OX11 7AJ

Fr Dominic Adeiza’s email: adelaide@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Safeguarding email: safeguarding.didwal@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

SVP contact: 07516 701917



THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD YEAR A

Entrance Antiphon:

After the Lord was baptised, the heavens were opened, and the Spirit descended upon him like a dove, and the voice of the Father thundered: This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.

First Reading: Isaiah 42: 1-4, 6-7

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 29

The LORD will bless his people with peace.

Second Reading: Acts 10:34-38

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia.

The heavens were opened and the voice of the Father thundered: ‘This is my beloved Son; listen to him’.

Alleluia.

Gospel: Matthew 3:13-17

Communion Antiphon: Jn 1:32, 34

Behold the One of whom John said: I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God.

SATURDAY 10th January

9:30 am **NO MASS**

4:30 pm Adoration before Vigil Mass St John Wallingford

5:00 pm Vigil Mass St John Wallingford

5:50 pm Adoration before Vigil Mass English Martyrs Didcot

6:30 pm Vigil Mass English Martyrs Didcot ... Janina Krokowska RIP (J Lazarus)

SUNDAY 11th January ... The Baptism of the Lord

9:00 am Mass English Martyrs Didcot

11:00 am Mass St John Wallingford

MONDAY 12th January ... St Aelred ... NO MASS

TUESDAY 13th January ... St Hilary ... NO MASS

WEDNESDAY 14th January

11:00 am Funeral ... Anne O’ Brien RIP ... English Martyrs Didcot

THURSDAY 15th January ... NO MASS

FRIDAY 16th January ... NO MASS

SATURDAY 17th January ... St Anthony of Egypt

9:30 am **NO MASS**

5:00 pm Vigil Mass St John Wallingford

6:30 pm Vigil Mass English Martyrs Didcot

SUNDAY 18th January

9:00 am Mass English Martyrs Didcot

11:00 am Mass St John Wallingford

In your prayers, please remember: Margaret O'Conner, Jenny Evans, Mary Guinan, Ann Tomline, Joan Walker, Joan Russell, Joan Turner, Nina Oakes, Jacob Oakes, Pat McLoughlin, Barry Molloy, Annie Furlong, Canon Peter Turbitt and all the sick and housebound.



DEATH/FUNERAL NOTICE

Anne O'Brien RIP ... Funeral Service at 11am, Wednesday 14th January, Didcot.



St. Amand's Celebration Fundraiser
St. Amand's Catholic Primary School is running our annual Celebration Fundraiser at the historic Hendred House on 6th February. Tickets are £35pp and include food, welcome drink, raffle, auction, cash bar and a Heads or Tails game. To get your Celebration Fundraiser tickets or become a Benefactor [complete this form](#).



We are also now registered for *Easy Fundraising*. Do your normal online shopping, and every time you shop, a donation is made to the Friends of St. Amand's. Get fundraising for FREE and [visit this link](#) to register.

Seeker Saturdays

Our Diocesan Vocations Promotion Team invites those discerning a calling to the priesthood, diaconate or religious life to join them for the next Seeker Saturday on 17th January. Seeker Saturdays take place from 11am-3pm, at Sacred Heart Church, Fareham, PO16 0NQ. Why not sign up for this month's Seeker Saturday on 17th January? If you are discerning if the Lord is calling you to the priesthood, diaconate or religious life, then spending time with like-minded people can be really beneficial to any vocational journey. Our time together includes prayer, discussion, Mass, Adoration and lunch too. Future Seeker Saturday dates for your 2026 diary are: 28th February, 21st March, 25th April, 16th May and 13th June.



Praying with Pope Leo

In addition to his monthly Prayer Intention, Pope Leo is launching a new initiative called 'Pray with the Pope' <https://www.popesprayer.va/praywiththepope/>. 'Pray with the Pope' is a global initiative of the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network where the Holy Father shares his monthly prayer intention, an invitation to pray and mobilize for the challenges facing humanity and the mission of the Church, through The Pope Video and The Pope Audio. Simple and accessible, it helps anyone, anywhere to take a moment to pray with the Pope and stay connected to the Church's mission.



Come and work in our Catholic schools!

Are you a Catholic currently teaching in a non-Catholic school? Have you considered applying for a post in one of our schools but are unsure how they are different and whether your application would be welcomed? Find out the answers to these questions and any others you may have about working in a Catholic school by attending our online webinar, 'Come to work in our Catholic schools' being held on Tuesday 13th January 2026 at 7pm. The webinar will be led by Catherine Hobbs, Diocesan Director for Education and Robert Dare, Diocesan Schools Support Officer, and will last approximately one hour. Please register your interest in attending by clicking here <https://staging.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/caso/events-booking/>.



Advertisement for Family Home Cleaner

We have just moved to Ladygrove and require a helper (approx 2 - 3 hour job once per week) to tidy a small home. If anyone is interested please contact Prof.Mme.Beravale@aol.co.uk.

Mass Time

There will be **NO WEEKDAY Masses** in both English Martyrs Didcot and St John Wallingford in the **next two weeks**. Saturday morning mass at 9:30am in Didcot will also be CANCELLED.

Due to Canon Peter's illness, we are making arrangements for our Saturday vigil masses in both churches and Sunday mass in Wallingford in the coming weeks. Please refer to our parish website and our Facebook page for updated information. If a mass will have to be cancelled, email will be sent to registered parishioners who had given consents to receive our email. Let's keep Canon Peter in our prayers.

Peace Sunday 2026

Peace Sunday will be on **Sunday 18th January**. The Bishops' Conference encourages us all to use the day to reflect on the Pope's message for the World Day of Peace on the 1st January. Following the release of Pope Leo's World Day of Peace message, we are encouraged to continue working with others to build a more peaceful world. If you would like to make a donation for Peace Sunday, you can access their website www.paxchristi.org.uk/product-category/peace-sunday-appeal or scan the QR code provided.



Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity falls on 18th to 25th January 2026. Christians from Anglican, Baptist, Methodist and Roman Catholic Churches pray together in the [Week of Christian Unity](#). Churches Together in Didcot and District has been coordinating churches in and around Didcot for prayers and events in this week in our churches. **English Martyrs Didcot** are happy to host the 'Day 7 event' on **Saturday 24th January** in our parish at **5:00pm**, followed by refreshments in our Tearoom. Please come and join us in our prayers for Christian Unity.



Recruitment: Headteacher – Christ the King Catholic Primary School

The Governing Body of Christ the King Catholic Primary School is seeking to appoint a practising Catholic to take up the role of Headteacher starting September 2026. For more information, please access the school website at <https://www.christthekingreading.co.uk/staff-vacancies>. Please contact bursar@christtheking.reading.sch.uk for applications. The closing date of application is 30th January.



More Holy Spirit

An All-New Conference with an opportunity for everyone to receive Individual Prophetic Ministry on 17th January 2026 at Chertsey Hall, Heriot Rd, Chertsey, KT16 9DR. For more information, contact corlumenchristi@gmail.com. For signing up, visit <https://corelumenchristi.churchsuite.com/events/k6d48mot>.



Friends of the Holy Land seek Volunteer Ambassadors

Could you help Friends of the Holy Land (FHL) who are currently recruiting Volunteer Ambassadors? Can you offer us a few hours each month? Are you concerned about the situation in the Holy Land and want to do something practical to help? Are you willing to speak on behalf of your fellow Christians in the Holy Land? Do you have contacts with groups and individuals locally and across your diocese? What you can expect from FHL: Support and training in the role from the Advocacy and Engagement Manager; fees of £250 per parish appeal completed; ongoing mentoring and being part of a growing network of people who are passionate about making a difference in the lives of Christians who are struggling. For a detailed role description please contact the team by email office@friendsoftheholylad.org.uk. Find out more about the work and mission of [Friends of the Holy Land](#).

Parish Safeguarding

Our Safety Officer for all adults and children safeguarding issues is Stefania Harford. Please contact Stefania via the parish office on 01235 812338. If there is no response and in an emergency, dial 999.