

Bishop for Interreligious Dialogue welcomes Vatican message to Muslims for Ramadan

Bishop Patrick McKinney, the Lead Bishop for Interreligious Dialogue for the Bishops' Conference, has welcomed a Vatican message to Muslims on the occasion of the month of Ramadan and for the feast of Id al-Fitr.

Followers of both religions find themselves fasting and praying at this time: "I am so pleased that, due to a convergence of the calendars for Lent and Ramadan, we find that Catholics and Muslims are both engaged in fasting at this time," said Bishop McKinney. "We each, in our own way, look upon fasting as a way of fostering self-discipline, a deeper reliance on God, and a practical concern for the poor and those most in need. May our fasting bear much fruit in the living out our lives of faith."



Cardinal George Jacob Koovakad, prefect of the Dicastery for Interreligious Dialogue, sent a message to Muslims around the world just before Ramadan started. Christians and Muslims, he wrote, seek to keep their "gaze fixed upon the invisible Light who is God — the Almighty, the Most Merciful, the only Just One — who 'rules the peoples with fairness' (Ps 96:10)."

Such a believer strives, the Cardinal wrote, to live according to God's commandments: "Christians and Muslims, together with all people of good will — are called to imagine and to open new paths by which life may be renewed. This renewal is made possible through a creativity nourished by prayer, the discipline of fasting that clears our inner vision, and concrete acts of charity. 'Do not be overcome by evil,' the Apostle Paul exhorts us, 'but overcome evil with good' (Rom 12:21)."

Full Message

Dear Muslim brothers and sisters,

It is with great joy that I address you on the occasion of the month of Ramadan, which culminates in the Feast of the Breaking of the Fast, Id al-Fitr. This important annual observance offers me a welcome opportunity to express my closeness, solidarity and respect for you, believers in God, "who is one, living and subsistent, merciful and almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth, who has also spoken to humanity" (Second Vatican Council, Declaration Nostra Aetate, 28 October 1965, 3).

This year, through a providential convergence of calendars, Christians observe this period of fasting and devotion alongside you during the holy season of Lent, which leads the Church toward the celebration of Easter. During this spiritually intense period, we seek to follow God's will more faithfully. This shared journey allows us to acknowledge our inherent fragility and to confront the trials that weigh upon our hearts.

When we suffer trials — whether personal, familial or institutional — we often believe that understanding their causes will reveal a clear path forward ... To read more: [Bishop for Interreligious Dialogue welcomes Vatican message to Muslims for Ramadan - Catholic Bishops' Conference](#)

Listen to Him



Today's Gospel portrays Jesus as a new and greater Moses.

Moses also took three companions up a mountain and on the seventh day was overshadowed by the shining cloud of God's presence. He too spoke with God, and his face and clothing were made radiant in the encounter (see Exodus 24, 34).

But in today's Lenten Liturgy, the Church wants us to look back past Moses. Indeed, we are asked to contemplate what today's Epistle calls God's "design . . . from before time began."

With His promises to Abram in today's First Reading, God formed the people through whom He would reveal Himself and bestow His blessings on all humanity.

He later elevated these promises to eternal covenants and changed Abram's name to Abraham, promising that he would be the father of a host of nations (see Genesis 17:5). In remembrance of His covenant with Abraham, He raised up Moses (see Exodus 2:24; 3:8) and later swore an everlasting kingdom to David's sons (see Jeremiah 33:26).

In Jesus' transfiguration today, He is revealed as the One through whom God fulfills His divine plan from of old.

Not only a new Moses, Jesus is also the "beloved son" promised to Abraham and again to David (see Genesis 22:15-18; Psalm 2:7; Matthew 1:1).

Moses foretold a prophet like him to whom Israel would listen (see Deuteronomy 18:15, 18), and Isaiah foretold an anointed servant in whom God would be well pleased (see Isaiah 42:1). Jesus is this prophet and this servant, as the Voice on the mountain tells us today.

By faith we have been made children of the covenant with Abraham (see Galatians 3:7-9; Acts 3:25). He calls us, too, to a holy life, to follow His Son to the heavenly homeland He has promised. We know, as we sing in today's Psalm, that we who hope in Him will be delivered from death.

So like our father in faith, we go forth as the Lord directs us: "Listen to Him!"

Scott Hahn



English Martyrs
Vale of White Horse
Pastoral Area

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SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT YEAR A — WEEK 2

Entrance Antiphon:

Of you my heart has spoken: Seek his face.
It is your face, O Lord, that I seek;
hide not your face from me.

First Reading: Genesis 12:1-4a

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 33

May your merciful love be upon us,
as we hope in you, O LORD.

Second Reading: 2 Timothy 1:8b-10

Gospel Acclamation:

Glory to you, O Christ, Wisdom of God the Father.

From a bright cloud, the Father's voice was heard:
'This is my beloved Son, listen to him'.

Glory to you, O Christ, Wisdom of God the Father.

Gospel: Matthew 17:1-9

Communion Antiphon: Mt 17:5

This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.

SATURDAY 28th February

9:30 am Mass English Martyrs Didcot ... **Confession after Mass** ... Canon Peter

4:30 pm Adoration and Confession before Vigil Mass St John Wallingford

5:00 pm Vigil Mass St John Wallingford ... Helen Quinn's Intention (Bridie Quinn)

5:50 pm Adoration before Vigil Mass English Martyrs Didcot

6:30 pm Vigil Mass English Martyrs Didcot ... Brenda Mayee's Intention (Bridie Quinn)

SUNDAY 1st March ... SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

9:00 am Mass English Martyrs Didcot ... Martha's and Gay's Recovery

11:00 am Mass St John Wallingford ... Canon Peter

2:00 pm Baptism ... Isabella Bennett ... English Martyrs Didcot

MONDAY 2nd March ... NO MASS

TUESDAY 3rd March ... St Signal of Alderney

6:30 am Mass English Martyrs Didcot ... Canon Peter

11:30 am Stations of the Cross St John Wallingford

12:00 noon Mass St John Wallingford ... Parishioners of Wallingford

WEDNESDAY 4th March ... St Casimir

9:30 am Mass English Martyrs Didcot ... Laura Nalin Falavina & Jess Nalin's Intention

THURSDAY 5th March

6:30 am Mass English Martyrs Didcot ... C Yopez Family's Intention

9:30 am Mass St John Wallingford ... Kevin Keeley RIP (Helen & Paul Fletcher)

FRIDAY 6th March

9:30 am Mass English Martyrs Didcot ... Dr Geoffrey Ogbuagu RIP (Patrick & Nnedi Olajide)

6:00 pm Stations of the Cross English Martyrs Didcot

SATURDAY 7th March ... Ss Perpetua & Felicity

9:30 am Mass English Martyrs Didcot ... **Confession after Mass**

4:30 pm Adoration and Confession 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

SUNDAY 8th March ... THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

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 Turner, Nina Oakes, Jacob Oakes, Pat McLoughlin, Barry Molloy, Annie Furlong, Canon Peter Turbitt, Charles Hunt and all the sick and housebound.



Baptism

We rejoice with the parents and godparents of Olutomilola Oloyede, who through the sacrament of Baptism, has become a member of the body of Christ last Sunday, and the parents of Isabella Bernett, who will become another new member of us through her baptism this Sunday. In your prayers, remember Olutomilola Oloyede and Isabella Bernett. We invoke God's blessings on them as they grow.



Updated and Extended Pastoral Programme at Douai

Fr Peter Bowe OSB shares the updated and expanded Douai Abbey Pastoral Programme for the coming months. The next sessions coming up are: Saturday 7th March: Day of Reflection: Cave – Refectory – Road: A gentle, contemplative day led by Barbara Priest exploring our Lenten pilgrimage & its three monastic elements: the solitude of our cave, the hospitality of our table, and our journey of faith. Saturday 28th March: Awakening to the Mystery of God in the Scriptures, in our environment and each other led by Fr Peter Bowe OSB & Martin Webb, to look at how our awareness of the Divine Mystery may grow, enriched over time - by the Scriptures, what is about us and through one another. How might we be more open to the Presence of God now? You can find more information and the complete programme of events for the abbey's Pastoral programme on their [website](#).



Oxford Pro-Life Volunteering Roles

The Oxford Pro-Life Community connects, supports and promotes individuals and groups in Oxford and surrounding areas who uphold pro-life values (the respect of the inviolable right to life and all human beings, born and unborn) through meet-ups, knowledge-sharing events, networking and related activities. The community aims at promoting their values in all Catholic and non-Catholic churches in and around Oxford and host monthly social events. They are looking for volunteers to fill in their core committee positions such as publicity officer and ordinary committee member. If you are interested, please email ox.prolife@gmail.com or WhatsApp <https://wa.me/447923875885> to apply. Applicants will be voted on at an extraordinary general meeting on 8th March 12:30pm to 2pm in Headington by members.



Grace – Living in God's Transforming Friendship

A Study Day with the Dominican Friars at Blackfriars, Oxford. Get insight and inspiration from expert Dominican Friars into the role of God's grace in our lives as Christians. Join us at Blackfriars in the heart of Oxford for a study day for lay people, designed to strengthen your faith and understanding (online attendance also available: see below). Fr Nicholas Crowe OP (Prior Provincial, Province of England) and Fr Toby Lees OP (Chaplain of Radio Maria, England) will be your guides on this exploration of the Christian faith. This day will be followed by two online sessions on the following Monday evenings (23 & 30 March), 7.30pm UK time, to consolidate and further develop your understanding of this theme. For more information: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/grace-living-in-gods-transforming-friendship-tickets-1982423194139>



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 Saturday 28th February. Seeker Saturdays take place from 11am-3pm, at Sacred Heart Church, Fareham, PO16 ONQ. Why not sign up for the next Seeker Saturday on 28th February? 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: 21st March, 25th April, 16th May and 13th June.



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.

Registration For All Parishioners — Act NOW!

If you have not yet registered with our new online Parishioner Registration that has started this year, please REGISTER NOW! Gift Aid will be administered via the new system by April. We need to stay in touch with you on the new system. The online registration process is simple and quick. For adults parishioners [click here](#) to register. To register children in your family, [click here](#). Or you may simply scan the QR code which will take you directly to the online registration form. (Links and QR Codes can also be accessed from our [parish website](#)).



Weekly Newsletter will be emailed to you if you have given us your consents to receive newsletters by email in your registration in the new platform. As members of the parish, it is your responsibility to be registered and allow us to stay in touch with you and administer your pastoral needs. If you have problems in your online registration, please contact the [Parish Office](#) for support. Thank you.

Lent 2026 and Almsgiving

As Lent unfolds, let's not forget to give to those in need in our community. Please bring food donation to English Martyrs Didcot and St John Wallingford. Your donation will be delivered to the local Food Bank. Food donations should have 3 months Best Before dates. Thank you.



SVP AND CAFOD WORK EXPERIENCE OPPORTUNITY

The St Vincent de Paul Society and CAFOD are working together to offer a week of free residential work experience for 20 young adults in England and Wales. The experience will run from 21 – 26 June in London. Candidates must be aged 18-25 years old and priority will be given to those in their first or second year at university. Applications close on 6 April. For more information, please contact KeziaH@svp.org.uk or scan the QR code provided.



Freelance Web Designer for SPUC

Society for the Protection of Unborn Children are recruiting a freelance web designer for work on the design of a new campaigning web tool that will sit within SPUCs existing website. You will collaborate closely with the web developers, creating clear and intuitive designs. We encourage applications from a diverse range of designers including students and individuals with a passion for design but no formal industry experience. Duration: 2-4 weeks; Possibility for extension and long-term freelance work. Location: Remote. Salary: Competitive Industry Rate. For more information and to apply, please [click here](#). The deadline for applications is on the 8th of March 2026.

We Dare to Ask – A Lent Course at English Martyrs Didcot

At English Martyrs Didcot, we are following the [We Dare to Ask](#) – the Lent resource prepared by Director of Mission at Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, in a Lent-only weekly gathering on **Wednesdays 4th, 11th and 18th March**. Join us in the Tearoom on Wednesday at 7:30pm. Please contact [Nick Spencer 07870 505520](mailto:Nick.Spencer@emdidcot.org.uk) if you would like further information.

World Day of Prayer Service

The World Day of Prayer service this year is on **Friday 6th March**. The prayers are written by the women of Nigeria. The Wallingford group of churches service this year will be held at St Agatha's Church in Brightwell-cum-Sotwell at 3.00pm on 6th March. All are welcome to attend - men & women. The theme is "I will give you rest, come". Refreshments will be available after the service. For any queries please contact Cecilia Wheeler, ceswheeler@yahoo.co.uk.



Parking for Sunday Masses in Didcot

Due to the current wet weather that we are experiencing, our car park ground has consistently become muddy and difficult to park on. We would like to encourage parishioners to park at Didcot Girls' School Car Park when you come to mass on Sunday in Didcot. The School Car Park is opened for our use on Sunday mornings between 8:30am to 11am. There are about 30 parking spaces available in the parking area on the left of the entrance driveway. Please do not park in the area directly in front of the school office (entrance right). Thank you.