

## The Roots of the Euthanasia Culture



The assisted suicide bill (Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill) is back, "thanks" to Lauren Edwards, the Labour MP for Rochester and Strood, who reintroduced it on June 14th. While we wait for the first vote in the House of Commons – called the Second Reading – to take place on September 11th, 2026, it is worth asking ourselves what are the roots of this euthanasia culture that seeks to invade Europe. In addition to England and Wales, countries like Italy, Finland, Cyprus, Ireland, and France are also debating assisted suicide and euthanasia. These topics have not arrived in parliaments by accident.

This is an ideology that started long ago, gradually creeping in until it altered the mindset and legislation of part of society. (See Grégor Puppink, *La promotion de l'euthanasie au XXe siècle / The Promotion of Euthanasia in the 20th Century*, a historical investigation to understand the origins and thought of euthanasia movements).

### From Eugenics to the "Right to Die"

The euthanasia movement was born out of the eugenics movement. The first organization dedicated to the legalization of euthanasia, the *Voluntary Euthanasia Legalisation Society* (VELS), was founded in 1935 in the United Kingdom. A sad record. America followed in 1938 with the *National Society for the Legalization of Euthanasia*. Numerous members of these associations came from the eugenics movement, which believed it was man's responsibility to "guard the gates of existence"—both the beginning and the end of life—through abortion and euthanasia.

As a supposedly "compassionate" act, euthanasia was envisioned for the incurably and mentally ill, "degenerates of all kinds," the elderly with dementia, those suffering from "mental deficiencies," disabled newborns, "monsters," "idiots," and the "criminally insane". In general, it was meant for anyone considered "incapable of enjoying life or serving any useful purpose". Forced euthanasia, albeit "humanely" administered, was suggested for "anti-social elements" who represented an economic burden to society. Euthanasia movements proposed the use of gas chambers and promoted the "right" to assisted suicide for sick people who had become "useless" and a burden to their loved ones. Birth control and abortion were also part of the offered package.

Because this position was too shocking—even though it remains the ultimate goal of mortiferous societies ... To read more: [The Roots of the Euthanasia Culture](#) [Source: Portsmouth Diocese e-News]

## God Chose the Weak to Shame the Strong



The two names belong together, like eggs and bacon, or strawberries and cream: Peter and Paul were made for each other. And yet, they are so different: the bluff, straight-talking fisherman, the complex, subtle Pharisee. It comes as no surprise to learn they did not always see eye to eye. Yet again, they are the two great pillars of the one Church of Christ.

Peter is the porter, the keeper of the keys. So often the first to speak, his confession of faith is the fount of all enduring Christian dogma. When required to feed the flock of Christ, he is made guarantor of the sacraments, and especially the Eucharist, the bread of God. And when commanded to tend the sheep, he becomes the source of the Church's Law, the stable framework in which every Catholic is free to live a truly Christian life. Peter is a rock, a place of fixity, firm ground.

Paul is different. Paul is a charismatic teacher. The Apostle has a quick and mobile mind, always seeking to see more. He is hard to follow. And, as Peter recognized, he wrote some things hard to understand. Paul is not a rock; he is living water or a flame of fire, always on the move. Whether travelling round the churches, or being caught up to the third heaven, he is ever straining forward, never thinking he has reached the end of the road.


The Church always needs a Peter, always needs a Paul. They live in a creative tension, live out a dynamic unity. Here is the mystery of the Church, which contains the mystery of the Divine life, something which shatters the illusory consistency of any merely human construction.

Bro Duncan Smith



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

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### SS PETER & PAUL

#### Entrance Antiphon:

These are the ones who, living in the flesh, planted the Church with their blood; they drank the chalice of the Lord and became the friends of God.

**First Reading:** Apostles 12:1-11

**Responsorial Psalm:** Ps 34

From all my terrors the Lord set me free.

**Second Reading:** 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 17-18

#### Gospel Acclamation:

**Alleluia, alleluia.**

You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

**Alleluia.**

**Gospel:** Matthew 16:13-19

**Communion Antiphon:** Mt 16:16, 18  
Peter said to Jesus: You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus replied: You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church.

#### SATURDAY 27th June ... St Cyril of Alexandria

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 ... Dr Wilf & Liz Eaton Thanksgiving (Anke Watson)  
5:50 pm Adoration before Vigil Mass English Martyrs Didcot  
6:30 pm Vigil Mass English Martyrs Didcot

#### SUNDAY 28th June ... Ss PETER & PAUL

9:00 am Mass English Martyrs Didcot ... Bill & Carmel Sheehan's Intention (Annie Furlong)  
11:00 am Mass St John Wallingford ... Kevin Doherty Good Estate  
2:00 pm Baptism Gwendolyn Soriano ... English Martyrs Didcot

#### MONDAY 29th June ... NO MASS

#### TUESDAY 30th June ... First Martyrs of the Church of Rome

\*\*NO MASS\*\*

#### WEDNESDAY 1st July ... St Oliver Plunkett

9:30 am Mass English Martyrs Didcot ... Piaskowski Family's Intention (Monika Piaskowski)

#### THURSDAY 2nd July

9:30am Mass St John Wallingford ... Kevin Doherty Good Estate

#### FRIDAY 3rd July ... ST THOMAS

9:30 am Mass English Martyrs Didcot ... Ethel Newynskyj's Intention (Brian McNamee)

#### SATURDAY 4th July ... St Elizabeth of Portugal

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

#### SUNDAY 5th July

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 Gwendolyn Soriano, who through the sacrament of Baptism, will become a member of the body of Christ this Sunday. In your prayers, remember Gwendolyn Soriano. We invoke God's blessings on her as she grows.



## Diocesan Pilgrimage Tours to Lourdes, Turin and Assisi

The two diocesan pilgrimages this summer will be led by Bishop Philip. Tour to Lourdes will be from **Monday 6th July until Friday 10th July**. It will give participants the opportunity to pray for the Church, for Vocations to the priesthood, for the world, for peace, for the sick of our Diocese and all visitors and pilgrims to the Sanctuary. To book a place, please complete the [Booking Form](#). For email enquiry, please [click here](#).



The pilgrimage tour to Turin (northern Italy) and Assisi (central Italy) will be from **Monday 20th July until Sunday 26th July**. [Click here](#) for more details and a booking form or contact [Canon PJ Smith](#).

## Didcot Festival of Cultures

Didcot Festival of Cultures will be on **Saturday 11th July in Cornerstone Arts Centre from 10am to 3pm. Free entry**. The CTDD (Churches Together for Didcot & District) will have a table in the gallery to showcase how we celebrate our cultural differences in churches and communities in the area, with a small display of English Martyrs Pentecost Celebration images from last year. Go and support them on 11th July. If you are also interested in helping to man the CTDD table and socialise with others from churches in our area, please let the Parish Office know.



## Blessed Hugh Faringdon Evening Talk: St John Henry Newman

The next evening talk at Blessed Hugh Faringdon Parish Hall will be **Friday 10th July 7.45pm**. The speaker Parul Shrimpton, a graduate of Balliol College, Oxford, has taught at Magdalen College School, Oxford for 40 years with Newman's education ideas and practice in his research and publications. The theme of the talk is "knowledge is one thing, virtue is another". Fish and chips £15 per person at 7pm. Please email to book your place by 6th July.



## St Birinus Catholic Music Festival

The St Birinus Festival brings together outstanding musicians, scholars, and communities for a celebration of sacred music in the beautiful setting of Dorchester-on-Thames. The 2026 St Birinus Festival will take place **9th-12th July** this year in Dorchester upon Thames - at Dorchester Abbey & St Birinus Church. This is a Catholic sacred music festival with concerts & services - the only Catholic music festival run in England (maybe even in Europe). For tickets and bookings, visit the website [thedaveyconsort.co.uk](http://thedaveyconsort.co.uk)



## WEBELIEVE | Festival of Catholic Life

**Friday 24–Monday 27 July 2026 | St Mary's College, Oscott, Birmingham**

WeBelieve Festival brings the Church together in England and Wales. It is an unmissable opportunity to discover the traditions and charisms that flow through the Church, to experience the joy of community, and to encounter personally the Lord Jesus, our salvation. Join us from 24–27 July 2026 at the historic and beautiful setting of St Mary's College, Oscott, for a feast of the True, the Good and the Beautiful. [Book your tickets here](#).



## 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.

## Parish Collection for Aid to Church in Need

With the help of Brian Doyle and Carolyn Fishwick who took care of the accounting, and many others who had helped in making this happen, we are proud to announce that a total of £1554.30 has been collected from our parishioners to be donated to Aid to the Church in Need in Fr Dominic's name. We hope that our contribution will help dioceses in other parts of the world in getting much needed resources. Thank you all for your donations and support.



## Didcot & Wallingford Enquirers' Group

Interested in finding out more about the Catholic Church? Maybe interested in becoming a Catholic? Or maybe you're baptised but never received First Holy Communion or Confirmation? Why not come along to our Enquirers' Group, starting Wednesday 15 July, 7.30pm at English Martyrs Didcot Tearoom? Meetings over the summer are planned for 15 July, 5 August, 17 August. Meetings will be very informal: bring your questions; we will provide the tea and biscuits! Any queries, please contact the parish office or speak with Angela Gray, Carolyn Fishwick, Jude Ajakaiye or Nick Spencer. Please download the [RCIA form](#) from our website. Printed copies are also available in both churches now.

## Dr Wilf Eaton and Liz Eaton are MBEs

Dr Wilf Eaton and Liz Eaton, our parishioners, who, for many years, raised funds, travelled to Kenya in support and care of Kenyan children using their platform of Kenya Children Centres (KCC), have been awarded MBEs on His Majesty the King's Birthday Honour List.

Ian Faulkner, a member of the board of Trustees who broke the good news, wrote that, "this prestigious honour recognises more than twenty years of dedicated search for vulnerable children and families in Kenya. Through KCC's work with abandoned babies, teenage mothers' residential care, counselling, education support and feeding programmes, thousands of lives have been transformed.

Everyone connected with KCC will know how richly deserved this recognition is. Wilf and Liz have devoted countless hours, energy and personal commitment to building an organisation that brings hope and opportunity to some of the most vulnerable people in the communities we serve.

## Live Streaming Preparation for Masses in Didcot

We would like to let you know that we are now preparing for live streaming of all our masses here in English Martyrs Didcot. With the technical help from Vince Rosso and the support from Fr Dominic and the Parish Pastoral Committee, we are in the process of setting up our equipment for live streaming. We will share our live streaming platform with you through our weekly newsletters, website and Facebook when it is ready. In the meantime, Vince will continue to broadcast Sunday masses in Didcot via "Facebook Live" which can be viewed on [English Martyrs Catholic Church Didcot Facebook page](#).



## Sharing of Faith in Sickness from a Parishioner

*"Prayers aren't always answered by way of what we ask but answered in the way we need ... I have been in increasing back and leg pain for 18 months, the best 3 months was so severe no pain killers were working. I was sleeping 90 minutes at a time and no appetite, so losing weight ... I knew something was wrong with me.*

*Although I prayed every day, on this day I asked the LORD to help me find out what is wrong with me, to get the best help and advice for me to help myself. The next day I had a seizure ... I was rushed into hospital and had many tests. It revealed I was seriously low on phosphate, so my body had been stealing it from my muscles and bones, causing all my pain. I am not cured yet but I have a great doctor now who is speaking with specialists on the best route forward.*

*If I had not had the seizure (that day after I had prayed), it could have caused coma and death ... The LORD answered my prayers in the way I needed ... I'm thankful to the LORD for giving me a seizure and putting me in hospital."*

~ May God bless him and be with him in his illness. May his strong faith rewards him in his recovery.

[Careers - Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth](#): Current job openings across the Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth.