

## Pope: The Olympic Games are an 'unmissable opportunity' to foster peace

Pope Francis, in a message to the Archbishop of Paris ahead of the Olympics, has heralded the Games as an opportunity to break down prejudices and bring friendship where there is hatred.

"The Olympic Games are, by their very nature, about peace, not war," the Holy Father wrote to Archbishop Laurent Ulrich. "I hope that the Paris Olympics will be an unmissable opportunity for all those who come from around the world to discover and appreciate each other, to break down prejudices, to foster esteem where there is contempt and mistrust, and friendship where there is hatred."



The Pope also expressed his belief that sport can unite and encourage dialogue:

"Sport is a universal language that transcends frontiers, languages, races, nationalities and religions; it has the capacity to unite people, to encourage dialogue and mutual acceptance; it stimulates the surpassing of oneself, forms the spirit of sacrifice, fosters loyalty in interpersonal relations; it invites people to recognise their own limits and the value of others."

The Paris Games, that will take place from 26 July to 11 August, will see the local Christian communities open the doors of their churches, schools and homes to support and offer hospitality to athletes and visitors alike.

"Let them open the doors of their hearts, bearing witness to the Christ who dwells within them and who communicates his joy to them, through the gratuitousness and generosity of their hospitality to all," wrote Pope Francis. "I greatly appreciate the fact that you have not forgotten the most vulnerable, especially those in very precarious situations, and that access to the celebration has been made easier for them."

Looking at the Olympic Games as an opportunity to uphold a spirit of 'truce' amidst the global disharmony we are living through, the Holy Father said:

"In these troubled times, when world peace is under serious threat, it is my fervent wish that everyone will take this truce to heart, in the hope of resolving conflicts and restoring harmony. May God have mercy on us! May He enlighten the consciences of those in power to the grave responsibilities incumbent upon them, may He grant the peacemakers success in their endeavours, and may He bless them."

The Pope concluded his message by imparting his blessing and entrusting the Olympics to Saint Genevieve and Saint Denis, Patrons of Paris, and to Our Lady of the Assumption, Patroness of France. Read the full letter on [vatican.va](https://www.vatican.va)....*Culled from https://www.cbcew.org.uk*

## One Flock

As the Twelve return from their first missionary journey in today's Gospel, our readings continue to reflect on the authority and mission of the Church.

Jeremiah says in the First Reading that Israel's leaders, through godlessness and fanciful teachings, had misled and scattered God's people. He promises God will send a shepherd, a king and son of David, to gather the lost sheep and appoint for them new shepherds (see Ezekiel 34:23).

The crowd gathering on the green grass (see Mark 6:39) in today's Gospel is the start of the remnant that Jeremiah promised would be brought back to the meadow of Israel. The people seem to sense that Jesus is the Lord, the good shepherd (see John 10:11), the king they've been waiting for (see Hosea 3:1-5).

Jesus is moved to pity, seeing them as sheep without a shepherd. This phrase was used by Moses to describe Israel's need for a shepherd to succeed him (see Numbers 27:17). And as Moses appointed Joshua, Jesus appointed the Twelve to continue shepherding His people on earth.

Jesus had said there were other sheep who did not belong to Israel's fold but would hear His voice and be joined to the one flock of the one shepherd (see John 10:16).

In God's plan, the Church is to seek out first the lost sheep of the house of Israel and then to bring



all nations into the fold (see Acts 13:36; Romans 1:16).

Paul, too, in today's Epistle, sees the Church as a new creation, in which those nations who were once far off from God are joined as "one new person" with the children of Israel.

As we sing in today's Psalm, through the Church, the Lord, our good shepherd, still leads people to the verdant pastures of the kingdom, to the restful waters of baptism; He still anoints with the oil of confirmation, and spreads the Eucharistic table before all people, filling their cups to overflowing.

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## 16TH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME YEAR B (IV)

**Entrance Antiphon** Ps 53:6, 8

See, I have God for my help. The Lord sustains my soul. I will sacrifice to you with willing heart, and praise your name, O Lord, for it is good.

**First Reading:** Prophet Jeremiah 23:1-6

**Responsorial Psalm:** Ps 22

The Lord is my shepherd:  
there is nothing I shall want.

**Second Reading:** Ephesians 2:13-18

**Gospel Acclamation:** Jn 6:63,68

**Alleluia, alleluia!!**

The sheep that belong to me listen to my voice, says the Lord, I know them and they follow me. **Alleluia!**

**Gospel:** Mark 6:30-34

**Communion Antiphon:** Ps 110:4-5

The Lord, the gracious, the merciful, has made a memorial of his wonders; he gives food to those who fear him.

### SATURDAY 20th July ... St Apollinaris

9:30 am Mass at English Martyrs, Didcot ... Teresa Rozario RIP (Rodrick Fly)  
4:30 pm Adoration & Confessions will take place prior to the Vigil Mass at St John's Wallingford  
5:00 pm Vigil Mass St John's ... Emmanuel Abiodun Tinubu RIP (Wale Tinubu)  
5:50 pm Adoration before Vigil Mass at English Martyrs, Didcot  
6:30 pm Vigil Mass English Martyrs, Didcot ... Emmanuel Abiodun Tinubu RIP (Wale Tinubu)

### SUNDAY 21th July ... 16th Sunday in Ordinary Time

9:00 am Mass English Martyrs, Didcot ... Clive O. Ede RIP (Mrs Ede)  
11:00 noon Mass St John's Wallingford ... Clive O. Ede RIP (Mrs Ede)

### MONDAY 22nd July ... NO MASS ... St. Mary Magdalene

### TUESDAY 23rd July ... St. Bridget of Sweden

12:00 noon ... Adoration before mass in St John's Wallingford

### WEDNESDAY 24th July ... St Sharbel Makhlef

9:30 am at English Martyrs, Didcot ... Thanksgiving Wedding Anniversary (Kim & Douglas)

### THURSDAY 25th July ... St James

9:30 am Mass at St John's Wallingford

### FRIDAY 26th July ... Ss Joachim & Anne

9:30 am at English Martyrs, Didcot ... Francis Almeida (Mary Almeida)  
7:00 pm at English Martyrs, Didcot ... Mrs Louisa Ime Ubong (RIP) Memorial Mass

### SATURDAY 27th July ... Our Lady

9:30 am Mass at English Martyrs, Didcot  
4:30 pm Adoration & Confessions will take place prior to the Vigil Mass at St John's Wallingford  
5:00 pm Vigil Mass St John's ... Maureen & Noel Clifford — Thanksgiving  
5:50 pm Adoration before Vigil Mass at English Martyrs, Didcot  
6:30 pm Vigil Mass English Martyrs, Didcot ... John Lythgoe RIP

### SUNDAY 28th July ... 16th Sunday in Ordinary Time

9:00 am Mass English Martyrs, Didcot ... Chinedu Ekekwe and Family (Joy Ekekwe)  
11:00 noon Mass St John's Wallingford ...

In your prayers, please remember: Jenny Evans, Mary Guinan, Ann Tomline, Joan Walker, Joan Russell, Joan Turner, Nina Oakes, Jacob Oakes, Pat McLoughlin, Barry Molloy, David Woodley, Ann Furlong and all the sick and housebound of our churches.



### MEMORIAL MASS NOTICE

Mrs Louisa Ime Ubong (74)...Memorial Mass at the English Martyrs, Didcot, July 26th @ 7.p.m



### Mercy for Life Africa

Isaac and Nathaniel Kershaw are planning on travelling to Uganda, *Mercy for Life Africa* in Kampala to help in the school and orphanage next February 2025. You might remember Joseph going there in 2023. The children and the carers in the orphanage experienced our shared humanity and concerns. Please consider supporting our two boys nearer the time. Please help yourself with the flyer and give to family and friends. Use the bar QR code.



### Used Laptops or Educational Devices Needed For Children

Do you have unwanted used laptop in fairly good condition? Do you have Amazon Fire 7 or any other device that is of no importance to you but other children can use? Father Dominic is collecting. If you wish to give them way, we can arrange to wipe them clean of any of your data, re-program or re-condition them for children in need. They are sure to go to good homes and safe hands. Please speak to or send an email to Father Dominic ... [dadeiza@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:dadeiza@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk).



### Weekday Evening Masses to Begin September

The Liturgy Group met and decided on an extra weekday mass to be celebrated in the evening in the English Martyrs Church, Didcot, as nowhere in the pastoral area are masses celebrated weekday evenings. This is to meet the spiritual needs of working groups who are unable to attend the daily masses in the mornings. This additional weekday mass will be celebrated at 6:00 pm on Wednesday, beginning September 4th 2024. This will be reviewed.



### Pastoral Area Team to Visit

You will recall the diocese did an extensive consultation leading up to a 10 Year Plan document titled, *You Will Be My Witnesses*. This is to help determine the future of the parishes, pastoral area, the resources available, vocations, human capital and our spiritual growth. This on-going consultations includes Bishop Philip's visit to parishes, pastoral areas and diocesan institutions. We have had parish consultation and our thoughts and concerns shared with the diocese.

Our priests in the Pastoral Area met at the weekend. A team from the Pastoral Area addressed the priests. This team will be visiting to share thoughts with us at a date to be announced. Please plan to be in attendance.

### Inviting You to the Ordination

Bishop Philip invites you to ordinations. He says, "it is with great joy that we look forward to the ordination of two new deacons for our Diocese. I wish to invite you to join us for the ordination Masses at the Cathedral. Please pray for Stephen Patterson and Zacharias Parambi who will be ordained to the diaconate on Saturday 27th July 2024 at 11am in the Cathedral. (If you are attending the Ordination and intend to drive to Portsmouth, please note that parking will be at St Edmund's School).



### Taking your Prayers with me to Lourdes

Bishop Philip wrote to everyone in the diocese that "Be assured that I constantly keep the people and work of the Diocese in my prayers but I am often asked to pray for people's personal intentions when I go on pilgrimage or visit Holy Places which is why I have arranged with our Lourdes team to help me do this on our Diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes. If you would like me to offer a prayer for your intention at the Grotto in Lourdes this July please email your petition in confidence to [lourdespetition@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:lourdespetition@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk). At this address you will also be able to find out how to donate to the Lourdes fund and make a donation that will enable a candle to be lit at Lourdes for your intention.



### Fanning the Flame Event Returns

For our young people the ever popular Fanning the Flame event returns to St Cassian's Centre, Kintbury [www.fanningtheflame.co.uk](http://www.fanningtheflame.co.uk). KINTBURY 19th - 23rd AUGUST FOR AGES 11-21

The camp is run by the Dominican Sisters of St. Joseph and an experienced team of volunteers who have been running FTF events for over 20 years.

The Celebrate Trust are returning to a national event CELEBRATE JOY 22-24 September in Birmingham. They are planning a weekend that you will want to bring your friends and family to, where you will be refreshed in the love and joy of God!



### Education Bishop announces Jubilee date for schools

Bishop Marcus Stock, Chair of the Catholic Education Service (CES), has written to diocesan schools commissions informing them that Friday 24 January will be the launch day for schools to mark the year of Jubilee in 2025.

On that date, Catholic schools and colleges can come together to celebrate the launch of the Jubilee. They are also encouraged to make a 'Jubilee Pledge', for the common good, to advance justice and harmony, and to refresh and renew their mission statements. In his letter Bishop Stock writes: "The theme of Jubilee 2025 is 'Hope', the hope that comes from knowing we are loved by God, the hope we can bring to those in most need, and the hope we can bring to our common home, the earth.

"There will be opportunities for the whole school community to experience the joy of sharing their faith in prayer and worship, and take action together as pilgrims of hope "in service to God's kingdom of love, justice and peace."

He also refers in the letter to a forthcoming framework for schools to celebrate the Jubilee year alongside local diocesan plans.

The framework is being produced by the CES, CAFOD, and the Caritas Social Action Network (CSAN) with support from Cymfed, the youth ministry federation. The aim is to enable the Catholic education sector to mark the Holy Year together as a significant and memorable moment in the lives of children and young people.



### Next Evening Benediction

The second monthly Evening Benediction will be Sunday, July 28th at 6p.m, here in Didcot. The practice of Benediction has a long history of rich silent reverence and humble petitions offered to the Lord. We shall pray the psalms, meditate and sing songs in adoration to the exposed Jesus in the Holy Sacrament on the altar. Come and let us pray.



### The Nuncio, Archbishop Miguel Maury Buendia To Visit

Bishop Philip Egan cordially invites you to a mass of thanksgiving to be celebrated by the Apostolic Nuncio to Great Britain, Archbishop Miguel Maury Buendia, September 6th, 2024 at 12.30pm, in the Cathedral of St John the Evangelist, Portsmouth. Reception will follow in the Cathedral Discovery Centre. To book ahead, email [cathedralevents@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:cathedralevents@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk). Please be aware that the car parking at the Cathedral has changed and they are not able to reserve spaces.

### Catholic Retreats and Pilgrimages

The summer holidays are a good opportunity to spend some days with fellow Catholics, growing in your faith and deepening your relationship with God. There are several to look out for in this short outline.

New Dawn 5-9 August [www.newdawn.org](http://www.newdawn.org)

It's all about renewal. Join with hundreds of believers for five days of prayer, worship, community and inspiration. Be a part of the renewal of the faith here in England.

New Dawn in the Church in the National Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham, Walsingham, Norfolk. Camping and residential options. Children's and youth streams also.

In addition, this year, New Dawn will have a Pericardium Relic of Blessed Carlo Acutis coming from Assisi to Walsingham for New Dawn 2024. Monsignor Anthony Figueiredo, STD, will give an inspirational talk on Blessed Carlo and offer veneration of his relic on Wednesday 7th August.

### Youth 2000 Summer Festival

The annual Youth 2000 Summer Festival will take place from Friday 23rd August — Monday 26th August 2024 in the beautiful surroundings of Ampleforth Abbey, North Yorkshire.

This festival is an opportunity for young people (aged 16-35) from across the UK to grow in their relationship with God, form friendships and be inspired to live out their faith! The programme will include input from incredible speakers, a wonderful variety of workshops, and loads of opportunities to be with Jesus and encounter His love. Tickets (which include food and accommodation) can be purchased from [www.youth2000.org/events](http://www.youth2000.org/events). Tickets are also available for priests, religious, families and groups. If you have any questions, please email [events@youth2000.org](mailto:events@youth2000.org).



### Are You Considering a Vocation to the Priesthood?

'Adoremus', which you will have read about elsewhere in this issue, is the National Eucharistic Congress which will be held on Saturday 14th September. However, on the following day, Sunday 15th September, 10am-5.30pm, the Bishops' Conference is hosting a national discernment event called 'Invocation at Adoremus', also at St Mary's College, Oscott (Birmingham).

This is a fantastic opportunity for any discerners to gather with the seminarians and meet others from right across the country. There will be workshops, keynote speakers, Adoration, opportunities to speak to people to discern their vocation. Please get in touch with our Diocesan Vocations Promotion Team if you would like to be considered as a delegate to attend this free event at [vocations@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:vocations@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

