

Bishops in Wales issue statement ahead of Senedd assisted suicide vote

As the Senedd prepares to debate and vote on whether to give legislative consent to Westminster's

Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill, we wish to express our deep concern about the



proposal to legalise assisted suicide and the serious implications this would have for Wales.

If enacted, this Bill would introduce assisted suicide into law and represent a profound change in how society responds to those who are terminally ill. In our view, it would place many vulnerable people at greater risk. International experience shows that where assisted suicide is legalised, eligibility criteria tend to expand over time, the number of deaths increases, and subtle but real pressure is placed on people who are elderly, disabled, or who fear becoming a burden on others.

Wales has a long and proud tradition of compassion and of valuing the dignity of every human life. That tradition is reflected in the way our communities, health services, and voluntary organisations seek to care for those who are suffering or approaching the end of life. True compassion does not mean ending a life. It means accompanying those who suffer, easing their pain, supporting families, and ensuring that no one feels abandoned, burdensome, or without worth.

The Catholic community in Wales, through its parishes, schools, chaplaincies, and charitable work, is deeply committed to supporting people at every stage of life — particularly those who are ill or dying.

We believe that the right response to suffering is not to hasten death, but to strengthen palliative and end-of-life care so that every person can live their final days with dignity, comfort, and peace.

We therefore urge Members of the Senedd, as they consider this Legislative Consent Motion, to withhold consent for this Bill and to continue focusing on policies that protect the vulnerable and uphold the value of life until its natural end. Given the very serious nature of this moment, and the changes it would bring to our society, we invite Catholics and all people of goodwill to pray and reflect carefully.

On Monday 26 January we invite those who can across Wales, to observe a day of fasting, to be in solidarity with those who are most vulnerable to the proposed Bill, and that those intent upon passing it, may undergo a change of heart. Let us all make our voices heard by engaging respectfully with our elected representatives ahead of this important decision for Wales. Source: [Bishops in Wales issue statement ahead of Senedd assisted suicide vote - Catholic Bishops' Conference](#)

Perfect Offering

Jesus speaks through the prophet Isaiah in today's First Reading.

He tells us of the mission given to Him by the Father from the womb: "You are My servant," He said to Me."

Servant and Son, our Lord was sent to lead a new exodus—to raise up the exiled tribes of Israel, to gather and restore them to God. More than that, He was to be a light to the nations, that God's salvation may reach to the ends of the earth (see Acts 13:46–47).

Before the first exodus, a lamb was offered in sacrifice and its blood painted on the Israelites' door posts. The blood of the lamb identified their homes and the Lord "passed over" these in executing judgment on the Egyptians (see Exodus 12:1–23, 27).

In the new exodus, Jesus is the "Lamb of God," as John beholds Him in the Gospel today (see 1 Corinthians 5:7; 1 Peter 1:18–19). Our Lord sings of this in today's Psalm. He has come, He says, to offer His body to do the will of God (see Hebrews 10:3–13).

The sacrifices, oblations, holocausts, and sin-offerings given after the first exodus had no power to take away sins (see Hebrews 10:4). They were meant not to save but to teach (see Galatians 3:24). In offering these sacrifices, the people were to learn self-sacrifice—that they were made for worship, to offer themselves freely to God and to delight in His will.

Only Jesus could make that perfect offering of Himself. And through His sacrifice, He has given us ears open to obedience and made it possible for us to hear the Father's call to holiness, as Paul says in today's Epistle.

He has made us children of God, baptized in the blood of the Lamb (see Revelation 7:14). And we are to join our sacrifice to His, to offer our bodies—our lives—as living sacrifices in the spiritual worship of the Mass (see Romans 12:1).



Scott Hahn



English Martyrs
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2ND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME YEAR A

Entrance Antiphon:

All the earth shall bow down before you, O God, and shall sing to you, shall sing to your name, O Most High!

First Reading: Isaiah 49:3, 5-6

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 40

Behold, I have come, Lord, to do your will.

Second Reading: Corinthians 1:1-3

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia.

The Word was made flesh and lived among us; to all who did accept him he gave power to become children of God
Alleluia.

Gospel: John 1:29-34

Communion Antiphon: Ps 22:5

You have prepared a table before me, and how precious is the chalice that quenches my thirst.

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 ... Wedding Anniversary Thanksgiving (Leo & Gith McGoohan)

SUNDAY 18th January

9:00 am Mass English Martyrs Didcot ... Nwandu & Joy Ekekwe's Birthday Thanksgiving (Joy Ekekwe)

11:00 am Mass St John Wallingford

MONDAY 19th January ... St Wulstan ... NO MASS

TUESDAY 20th January ... St Fabian ... NO MASS

WEDNESDAY 21st January ... St Agnes ... NO MASS

THURSDAY 22nd January ... St Vincent ... NO MASS

FRIDAY 23rd January ... NO MASS

SATURDAY 24th January ... St Frances de Sales

9:30 am ****NO MASS****

5:00 pm Vigil Mass St John Wallingford (to be confirmed)

5:00 pm Prayer Meeting for Christian Unity ... English Martyrs Didcot

6:30 pm Vigil Mass English Martyrs Didcot (to be confirmed)

SUNDAY 25th 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.



Peace Sunday 2026

Peace Sunday is this Sunday. 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 as provided.



Lourdes by Coach Feb 2026 Portsmouth Diocese

Join our pilgrimage to Lourdes travelling overnight by luxury coach from 9 to 14 February 2026. It has always been a beautiful and deeply spiritual experience, soaking in the Spirit of Jesus as we travel to honour Our Blessed Mother. Leaving Slough and Ealing Broadway on 9 Feb 2026 and departing Lourdes on 13 February for a visit to the Shrine of the Miraculous Medal in Rue de Bac, Paris on 14 February morning and arriving later in London on 14 February 2026. Full board, exciting festival devotional program, experience the Blessed Sacrament Procession of the Sick, the Candlelight Marian Rosary Procession and the International Mass on the Feast Day, followed by Stations, Confessions and Adoration with Hour of Mercy. Travel, full board and program cost £590. Call Millie Fernandez on 07957594646 for more info.

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.



Oxford Pro-Life Coffee Social

Oxford Pro-Life Coffee Social. Saturday 24th January 2pm at Colombia Coffee Roasters, Summer-town (267 Banbury Road, OX2 7HT). Come along to relax with like-minded people and keep connected with the pro-life community in Oxford. Newcomers are especially welcome! Just turn up, and why not bring a friend? Visit <https://oxfordprolife.org.uk/> for more info.

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@friendsoftheholylan.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.

Mass Time

There will be ****NO WEEKDAY Masses**** in English Martyrs Didcot and St John Wallingford this week 19th to 23rd January. Saturday morning mass at 9:30am in Didcot is also CANCELLED. Due to Canon Peter's illness, we are still making arrangements for our Saturday 24th vigil masses in both Didcot and Wallingford. Please refer to our [parish website](#) and [Facebook page](#) for announcements about Saturday masses. 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. Sunday masses on 25th will be as usual as we welcome Fr Dominic back with us.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity will be on 18th to 25th January 2026 – Octave of St. Peter and St. Paul. 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 for prayers and events in this week.



English Martyrs Didcot will be hosting the 'Day 7 event' on **Saturday 24th January** in our parish at **5:00pm**. We will be welcoming Christians from different churches in Didcot and surrounding areas and lead the service and prayers. We need helpers who can help in reading prayers and reflections, and in the Refreshment that comes after the prayer service. Please contact the Parish Office or Anthony Brown if you can help. We look forward to seeing you next Saturday at **English Martyrs Didcot**.

World Leprosy Day

Sunday 25 January marks World Leprosy Day, which aims to raise awareness of a disease that many people think no longer exists. Each year 200,000 people are diagnosed with leprosy and there are millions more who are living with the damaging consequences of delayed leprosy treatment because of the stigma that still surrounds the disease. [St Francis Leprosy Guild \(SFLG\)](#), the UK's only Catholic leprosy charity, has been caring for people with leprosy for over 130 years. Through shared values and faith, we encourage our community to support SFLG's vital work and keep people with leprosy in your prayers. Click [here](https://app.donorfy.com/form/8XCQIB4NS1/26WLD) (<https://app.donorfy.com/form/8XCQIB4NS1/26WLD>) to donate. Any donation, large or small, takes us a step closer to a leprosy free world. Thank you.



Online Gift Card Fraud

Gift card or voucher fraud is an increasingly common way of tricking victims into purchasing gift cards and sharing their details, leading to financial loss. Please be aware that there have been scam messages circulating which appear to come from clergy or diocesan officers, asking people to buy gift cards or provide financial help urgently. **The Diocese and its clergy will never ask for money, gift cards, vouchers, or personal details by email, text message, or social media.** If you receive a message of this kind, do not respond and do not act on any request. Please report it to your parish office or to the Diocese communications team so that we can alert others. Thank you for your vigilance and for helping to protect our parish communities.

Recruitment: Headteacher – Christ the King Catholic Primary School

The Governing Body of Christ the King Catholic Primary School is seeking to appoint a 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.

