

Support a narrative that “builds rather than destroys,” says Latin Patriarch as we pray for an end to the war in Gaza

As people around the world hold their collective breath at the prospect of an end to the war in Gaza, the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, His Beatitude Cardinal Pierbattista

Pizzaballa, has released a message of hope and profound Christian witness to the people of his diocese – a territory that covers Palestine and Israel (excluding the Golan Heights), as well as Jordan and Cyprus.

Patriarch Pizzaballa approaches the 21-point framework for peace presented by US President Donald Trump with cautious optimism, but stresses that, as Catholics, we must have the courage to be bridgebuilders:

“The lack of clarity about future prospects, which are still to be defined, also contributes to the sense of disorientation and increases feelings of distrust,” he writes. “But it is precisely here that, as Church, we are called to speak a word of hope, to have the courage to offer a narrative that opens horizons and builds rather than destroys, both in the language we use and in the gestures we make.”

He also says that we “must not delude ourselves” but be pleased that something new and potentially positive is on the horizon:

“We await the moment to rejoice for the families of the hostages, who will finally be able to embrace their loved ones. We hope the same for Palestinian families, who will be able to embrace those returning from prison. We rejoice above all for the end of hostilities, which we hope will not be temporary and will bring relief to the inhabitants of Gaza.

“We rejoice for all of us, because the possible end of this horrible war, which now seems very close, will finally mark a new beginning for everyone – not only Israelis and Palestinians, but also the whole world.”

Writing not to make a political statement or to provide a strategic analysis of events, the Patriarch presents a spiritual vision to anchor us in the Gospel:

“Together with Jesus, as a Christian community, we want to gather the many tears of these two years: the tears of those who have lost relatives or friends who were killed or kidnapped, those who have lost their homes, jobs, countries, or lives – innocent victims of a conflict whose end is not yet in sight.”

Source: [Support a narrative that “builds rather than destroys,” says Latin Patriarch as we pray for an end to the war in Gaza - Catholic Bishops’ Conference](#)



Returning Thanks

A foreign leper is cleansed and in thanksgiving returns to offer homage to the God of Israel. We hear this same story in both the

First Reading and Gospel today.

There were many lepers in Israel in Elisha’s time, but only Naaman the Syrian trusted in God’s Word and was cleansed (see Luke 5:12–14).

Today’s Gospel likewise implies that most of the ten lepers healed by Jesus were Israelites—but only a foreigner, the Samaritan, returned.

In a dramatic way, we’re being shown today how faith has been made the way to salvation, the road by which all nations will join themselves to the Lord, becoming His servants, gathered with the Israelites into one chosen people of God, the Church (see Isaiah 56:3–8).

Today’s Psalm also looks forward to the day when all peoples will see what Naaman sees—that there is no God in all the earth except the God of Israel.

We see this day arriving in today’s Gospel. The Samaritan leper is the only person in the New Testament who personally thanks Jesus. The Greek word used to describe his “giving thanks” is the word we translate as “Eucharist.”

And these lepers today reveal to us the inner dimensions of the Eucharist and sacramental life.

We, too have been healed by our faith in Jesus. As Naaman’s flesh is made again like that of a little child, our souls have been cleansed of sin in the waters of Baptism. We experience this cleansing again and again in the Sacrament of Penance—as we repent our sins, beg and receive mercy from our Master, Jesus.

We return to glorify God in each Mass, to offer ourselves in sacrifice—falling on our knees before our Lord, giving thanks for our salvation.

In this Eucharist, we remember “Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, a descendant of David,” Israel’s covenant king. And we pray, as Paul does in today’s Epistle, to persevere in this faith—that we too may live and reign with Him in eternal glory.

Scott Hahn



English Martyrs
Vale of White Horse
Pastoral Area

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28TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME YEAR C

Entrance Antiphon:

If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand? But with you is found forgiveness, O God of Israel.

First Reading: 2 Kings 5:14-17

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 98

The LORD has shown his salvation to the nations.

Second Reading: Timothy 2:8-13

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia.

In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Alleluia.

Gospel: Luke 17:11-19

Communion Antiphon Ps 33:11

The rich suffer want and go hungry, but those who seek the Lord lack no blessing.

SATURDAY 11th October ... St John XXIII

9:30 am NO MASS

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

5:00 pm Vigil Mass St John Wallingford ... Catholic Education

5:50 pm Adoration before Vigil Mass English Martyrs Didcot

6:30 pm Vigil Mass English Martyrs Didcot ... Eleanor Wells RIP (June Wells)

SUNDAY 12th October

9:00 am Mass English Martyrs Didcot ... Josh & Laura Gidding’s Wedding Thanksgiving (Gay & Ian)

11:00 am Mass St John Wallingford ... Palliative Care Workers

MONDAY 13th October ... NO MASS ... St Edward the Confessor

TUESDAY 14th October ... St Callistus I

12:00 noon Mass St John Wallingford ... Vocations

WEDNESDAY 15th October ... St Teresa of Avila

9:30 am Mass English Martyrs Didcot ... Donald Welch RIP

THURSDAY 16th October ... St Hedwig

9:30 am Mass St John Wallingford ... Violet Hedges & Holy Souls RIP

FRIDAY 17th October ... St Ignatius of Antioch

9:30 am Mass English Martyrs Didcot ... Ronald Almeida RIP (Mary Almeida)

SATURDAY 18th October ... St Luke

9:30 am Mass English Martyrs Didcot ... Iain McCartney RIP (P. McGettigan) ... Confession after Mass

12:00 noon Baptism English Martyrs Didcot ... Dominic & Alexandra Anduska

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 19th October

9:00 am Mass English Martyrs Didcot ... Holy Souls (Douglas & Kim)

11:00 am Mass St John Wallingford

2:00 pm Baptism St John Wallingford ... Sienna Quinn

In your prayers, please remember: Margaret O'Connor, Anne O'Brien, Jenny Evans, Mary Guinan, Ann Tomline, Joan Walker, Joan Russell, Joan Turner, Nina Oakes, Jacob Oakes, Pat McLoughlin, Barry Molloy, Annie Furlong, Laura Falavina, Ann Johns and all the sick and housebound.



Baptism

We rejoice with the parents and godparents of Dominic Anduska, Alexandra Anduska, and Sienna Quinn who through the sacrament of Baptism, will be made members of the body of Christ next weekend. In your prayers, remember Dominic Anduska, Alexandra Anduska, and Sienna Quinn. We invoke God's blessings on them as they grow.



Next Sunday is World Mission Sunday

Next Sunday, the Holy Father invites all Catholics to support Missio – his charity for world mission – through a special collection. This day of prayer, solidarity and giving unites Catholics worldwide to share the Good News of God's love which has the power to transform lives and heal our world. To donate, use the Missio envelopes, call 020 7821 9755 (office hours) or visit missio.org.uk to give a gift, set up a Direct Debit and Gift Aid your donation if possible.



Could You be a Member of our Safeguarding Committee?

The Diocese of Portsmouth is seeking professional lay members to join our Safeguarding Committee. Are you passionate about ensuring our church spaces are safe places for all those who use them? Can you make a contribution to ensuring the safety of children and adults at risk within our church communities? Do you have professional expertise in safeguarding and a commitment to the values of the Catholic Church? Building on our existing membership, you will support the Bishop and Trustee Board in matters relating to safeguarding and risk management.

What we are looking for: a committed lay professional with experience of safeguarding in the field of adults and/or children's social care; a collaborative approach to safeguarding and confidence to contribute to discussions; an understanding of governance, risk and accountability; respect for the mission and teachings of the Catholic Church. What you will do: provide independent scrutiny and professional insight; help develop and implement safeguarding policy and practice across the Diocese; support the work of the Diocese safeguarding team in meeting the national safeguarding standards; and attend Committee meetings (five times a year) either in person or online.

If you wish to apply, please send a copy of your Curriculum Vitae with an accompanying letter outlining how your skills, experience, and personal qualities fit with the role, and your motivation for, by applying [here](#), marking your message for the attention of Anne Marie Eden. All shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend an interview.



Pope Leo: Pray the Rosary for Peace!

Pope Leo XIV is inviting all the faithful to join in praying the Rosary every day during October to invoke God's gift of peace. In this way, Catholics across the globe will unite to pray the Rosary for peace in war-torn lands, especially during the month of October, which the Church dedicates to the Holy Rosary. He announced that he himself will join the faithful in Rome in St. Peter's Square on 11th October, at 6 pm. "I invite everyone, each day of the month, to pray the Rosary for peace — personally, in the family, and in community," he said. The Pope also invited Vatican employees to pray the Rosary daily in St. Peter's Basilica at 7 pm throughout October. The Rosary for Peace will be held during the Jubilee of Marian Spirituality, which takes place on 11th/12th October.



CAFOD Family Fast Day Appeal this Harvest

Please donate to our Family Fast Day parish collection to share God's abundant gifts with our global neighbours as they find lasting solutions to poverty and climate challenges. Your generosity offers "signs of hope" in this Jubilee Year, helping build more water tanks in communities like Waré's in Ethiopia where women have to walk for hours to get water. Use the CAFOD envelope in church, donate online at cafod.org.uk/envelope or call 0303 303 3030. You can also text CAFOD to 70560 to donate £10.



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.

Confirmation Preparation Class 2025-26

Our Confirmation Preparation Classes would soon begin. We are now open for application for young people in our parish aged 13 and above. To do this, parents can download, print and complete the Confirmation Form from [here](#) or visit the parish website at <https://www.didcotandwallingfordcatholicchurches.org/forms>.

We are looking for enthusiastic mentors or teachers who would accompany these young people in their preparation. Please contact the [Parish Office](#) or [Fr Dominic](#) to express your interest. You have nothing to worry about. Training sessions would be arranged. You don't have to do all the sessions on your own.

Bishop Philip Egan is mostly likely to come to our parish of the English Martyrs, Didcot, 2026 to confer the sacrament. Please hurry, and register.



NIGHT of LIGHT Party @ English Martyrs — 31st October

A family event to celebrate All the Saints! Prizes for the Best Saints Costumes! Games and crafts too! Come and join us on **Friday evening 31st October from 5:30pm to 7:30pm**. We welcome children and families in Didcot AND Wallingford to join us in celebrating the original All Hallows Eve here at English Martyrs Didcot.

Children please come dressed as your favourite Saint or in white. This will be a fun night of games and sweet treats. The youth members of the St Vincent de Paul group will be running the event and look forward to celebrating with the younger children and families of the parish. Parents helpers are most welcome. Please register your interest after our Sunday masses with Amelia. For enquiries, please contact Amelia Gomes via the Parish Office. We welcome donations for this activity. You are most welcome to bring and share a plate for the evening. Thank you.



English Martyrs Gospel Reading Group October Meeting

The Small Group is meeting on Tuesday 14th and 28th October at 7:30pm in the Tearoom to read and reflect on the coming Sunday's Gospel. Please come and join us. Contact Nick Spencer at 07870 505520.

Parish Fire Awareness Training

A General Fire Awareness Training for all the stewards in English Martyrs Didcot and St John Wallingford will happen at English Martyrs Didcot on Friday morning 7th November. We have a few spaces for anyone in our parish who is interested in joining us in our training. Please let the Parish Office know if you are interested. Thank you.

Parish Safeguarding Training

This is a reminder that the Parish Safeguarding Training is going to happen on Saturday 25th October from 10am to 1pm. This is a face-to-face training session organised for anyone with a safeguarding role in our parish and our neighbouring parishes in the Oxfordshire Pastoral Area. The training module is valid for three years on completion. If you have not registered yet, please contact the Parish Office now. Thank you.

First Holy Communion Preparation Class 2025-26

The First Holy Communion Preparation Class is now open for application for children in our parish who are currently in Primary School Years 4 to 6. Parents can download and print the [First Holy Communion Form](#) from the parish website. Please follow the instructions to complete the form and submit the completed form to the Parish Office with a photocopy of your child's Baptism Certificate. The deadline of application is 7th November. The classes will begin in the fourth week of November. If you and your family are not yet our Registered Parishioners, please make sure you also complete our [Parishioner Registration Form](#), which is downloadable from our parish website, and return the form to the office. Please contact the Parish Office if you have any questions.



Prayer of the Faithful (Bidding Prayers)

Our bidding prayers each Sunday are written by a team of parishioners. If you feel called to serve the parish by taking a turn 7 or 8 times a year in writing the Prayer of the Faithful, please speak with Carolyn Fishwick or contact the parish office. Training and guidance are available, and the team supports one another in prayers.