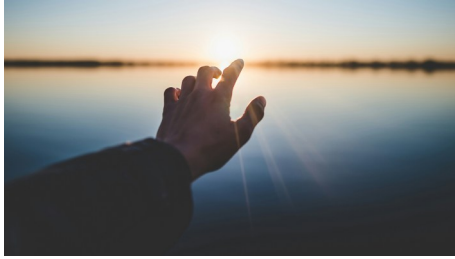


## Pope Francis: Hope is a gift and duty for every Christian



The Jubilee of 2025, a holy year that I wanted to dedicate to the theme “Pilgrims of Hope”, is a propitious occasion to reflect on this fundamental and decisive Christian virtue – especially in times like the ones we are living, in which the third world war being fought “piecemeal” that is unfolding before our eyes can lead us to assume attitudes of gloomy discouragement and ill-concealed cynicism.

Hope, on the other hand, is a gift and a task for every Christian. It is a gift because it is God who offers it to us. Hoping, in fact, is not a mere act of optimism, like when we sometimes hope to pass an exam at university (“Let’s hope we make it”) or when we hope for good weather for the trip out of town on a Sunday in the spring (“Let’s hope for good weather”). No, hoping is waiting for something that has already been given to us: salvation in God’s eternal and infinite love. That love, that salvation that gives flavour to our lives and that constitutes the hinge on which the world remains standing, despite all the wickedness and nefariousness caused by our sins as men and women. To hope, then, is to welcome this gift that God offers us every day. To hope is to savour the wonder of being loved, sought, desired by a God who has not shut Himself away in His impenetrable heavens but has made Himself flesh and blood, history and days, to share our lot.

Hope is also a task that Christians have a duty to cultivate and put to good use for the sake of all their brothers and sisters. The task is to remain faithful to the gift received, as rightly pointed out by Madeleine Delbr el, a 20th-century French woman who was able to bring the Gospel to the geographical and existential peripheries of mid-century Paris, marked by de-Christianisation. Madeleine Delbr el wrote: “The place that Christian hope assigns us is that narrow ridge, that borderline at which our vocation requires that we choose, every day and every hour, to be faithful to God’s faithfulness to us”. God is faithful to us; our task is to respond to this faithfulness. But take care: it is not we who generate this faithfulness; it is a gift from God that works in us if we allow ourselves to be moulded by His power of love, the Holy Spirit Who acts as a breath of inspiration in our hearts. It is up to us, then, to invoke this gift: “Lord, grant me to be faithful to you in hope!”

I said that hoping is a gift from God and a task for Christians. And to live hope requires a “mysticism with open eyes”... For more, visit: [vaticannews.va](http://vaticannews.va). (An excerpt from <https://www.cbcew.org.uk>)

## A Royal Truth

What’s the truth Jesus comes to bear witness to in this last Gospel of the Church’s year?

It’s the truth that in Jesus God keeps the promise He made to David of an everlasting kingdom, of an heir who would be His Son, “the first born, highest of the kings of the earth” (see 2 Samuel 7:12–16; Psalm 89:27–38).



Today’s Second Reading, taken from the Book of Revelation, quotes these promises and celebrates Jesus as “the faithful witness.” The reading harkens back to Isaiah’s prophecy that the Messiah would “witness to the peoples” that God is renewing His “everlasting covenant” with David (see Isaiah 55:3–5).

But as Jesus tells Pilate, there’s far more going on here than the restoration of a temporal monarchy. In the Revelation reading, Jesus calls Himself “the Alpha and the Omega,” the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. He’s applying to Himself a description that God uses to describe Himself in the Old Testament—the first and the last, the One who calls forth all generations (see Isaiah 41:4; 44:6; 48:12).

“He has made the world,” today’s Psalm cries, and His dominion is over all creation (see also John 1:3; Colossians 1:16–17). In the vision of Daniel we hear in today’s First Reading, He comes on “the clouds of heaven”—another sign of His divinity—to be given “glory and kingship” forever over all nations and peoples.

Christ is King and His kingdom, while not of this world, exists in this world in the Church. We are a royal people. We know we have been loved by Him and freed by His blood and transformed into “a kingdom, priests for his God and Father” (see also Exodus 19:6; 1 Peter 2:9).

As a priestly people, we share in His sacrifice and in His witness to God’s everlasting covenant. We belong to His truth and listen to His voice, waiting for Him to come again amid the clouds.

Scott Hann



English Martyrs  
Vale of White Horse  
Pastoral Area

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

[www.didcotandwallingfordcatholicchurches.org](http://www.didcotandwallingfordcatholicchurches.org)

Office email: [didcot@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:didcot@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)  
(Parish Office Hours Tuesday–Friday 9am to 1pm)

Telephone: 01235 812338  
15 Manor Crescent, Didcot OX11 7AJ

Fr Dominic Adeiza email: [dadeiza@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:dadeiza@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

## OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, KING OF THE UNIVERSE YEAR B

**Entrance Antiphon** Rv 5:12, 1:6

How worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and divinity, and wisdom and strength and honour. To him belong glory and power for ever and ever.

**First Reading:** Daniel 7:13-14

**Responsorial Psalm:** Ps 92

The Lord is King, with majesty enrobed.

**Second Reading:** Apocalypse 1:5-8

**Gospel Acclamation:** Mk 11:9, 10

**Alleluia, alleluia!!**

Blessings on him who comes in the name of the Lord!  
Blessings on the coming kingdom of our father David!  
**Alleluia!**

**Gospel:** John 18:33-37

**Communion Antiphon:** Ps 28:10-11

The Lord sits as King for ever. The Lord will bless his people with peace.

### SATURDAY 23rd November

9:30 am NO MASS

4:30 pm Adoration & Confessions 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 ... Deceased members of Julie’s family (Julie Lazarus)

### SUNDAY 24th November ... Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe

9:00 am Mass English Martyrs Didcot ... The safe travel of Annamma (Soniya Mathew)

11:00 am Mass St John Wallingford

### MONDAY 25th November ... NO MASS

12:00 noon English Martyrs Didcot ... Requiem Mass for John Atkinson

### TUESDAY 26th November

12:00 noon Adoration before mass St John Wallingford

### WEDNESDAY 27th November

9:30 am Mass English Martyrs Didcot ... Holy souls (Douglas & Kim)

6:00 pm Mass English Martyrs Didcot ... Holy souls (Douglas & Kim)

### THURSDAY 28th November

9:30 am Mass St John Wallingford

### FRIDAY 29th November

9:30 am Mass English Martyrs Didcot

### SATURDAY 30th November ... Feast of St Andrew

9:30 am Mass English Martyrs & Confession in Didcot

4:30 pm Adoration & Confessions before Vigil Mass St John Wallingford ... Thanksgiving for 61st wedding anniversary (a lovely couple)

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 1st December ... First Sunday of Advent

9:00 am Mass English Martyrs Didcot

11:00 am Mass St John 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.



### DEATH/FUNERAL NOTICE

**John Atkinson (91) RIP...** Requiem Mass @ 12noon, Nov 25th, Didcot

RIP

Rest in peace

### Baptism

**W**e rejoice with the parents and godparents of Jennifer Marie Read who through the sacrament of Baptism, will be made a member of the body of Christ next weekend. In your prayers, remember Jennifer Marie. We invoke God's blessings on her as she grows.



### Bishop Philip Invites Individuals Getting Married in 2025 to a St. Valentine's Day Breakfast

**B**ishop Philip writes, "Are you getting married sometime in 2025 - either in a church in our diocese or in a church elsewhere, maybe even abroad? If you are: CONGRATULATIONS! Please be assured of my prayers and best wishes. I hope all your preparations and all the arrangements for the big day are going well.

I write because I want to meet you. I want to give you a special blessing here at the Cathedral in Portsmouth. I want to invite you and all the engaged couples of our Diocese getting married in 2025, to a St. Valentine's Day Breakfast. It will be on Saturday 8th February 2025 at 9.15 am (prompt) in the Cathedral Centre (Catholic Cathedral, Bishop Crispian Way, PO1 3HG).

After breakfast and a chance to meet, I have asked one of our newly-married couples to tell us about their experience. I hope it will be informative, but also entertaining! We'll then go into the Cathedral for a short Service of Blessing, in which each couple will be blessed, individually and I'll also bless your engagement rings. (It doesn't matter whether you are a Catholic or not: everyone is welcome). We should finish and get away by 11.45 am.

I really hope you can be there for this unique occasion. I look forward to meeting you! Please let Mrs Kirsten McGuire know whether you can make it by completing the form attached and either email it to her at [kmcguire@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:kmcguire@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk) or drop it in the post.

God bless you. I will offer Holy Mass for you all on St Valentine's Day. Please visit the parish website to download the Form.



### Sacristans Needed

**W**e urgently need volunteers as Sacristans in The English Martyrs, Didcot. This role is open to your availability only. It is for those who can offer their free time as they wish. A rota enables you come in and go as fits your routine. The role of the sacristan in the Catholic Church includes the following duties: Preparing for Mass: Setting up the altar, arranging liturgical items, and laying out vestments for the clergy. Caring for sacred vessels: Cleaning and maintaining items like the chalice and paten. Assisting with ceremonies: Helping with the ringing of bells and other tasks during Mass when no altar server is available. Key to the Church and Sacristy will be made available. Training and support is available. Please, if you are interested send an email to [Chris Stemp\\_c\\_stemp@outlook.com](mailto:Chris Stemp_c_stemp@outlook.com).

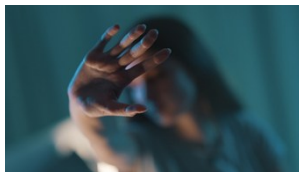
### End Violence Against Women and Girls..... "shame must change sides."

**T**he Caritas Social Action Network and the National Board of Catholic Women have issued a statement on the need to act with determination, urgency and create a world that is safe for all women and girls.

25 November marks the international day for ending violence against women and girls. The day is observed annually and begins a 16-day period to raise awareness of the global scourge of violence against women and girls. Globally, a third of women have been subjected to physical or sexual abuse. Ending violence against women and girls involves challenging deeply rooted cultural attitudes. In the words of Gisele Pelicot, speaking recently in court in France about the horrific violations orchestrated by her husband; "shame must change sides." This is a challenge which lies deeply at the heart of Catholic Social Teaching.

Pope Francis has spoken about violence against women and girls on many occasions, issuing a call to all Catholics to use our power to bring about this cultural change. "It is our duty, the responsibility of each person, to give a voice to our voiceless sisters... It is necessary to act immediately, at all levels with determination, urgency and courage."

As Catholics, we are preparing for the Jubilee year as pilgrims of Hope. Let us enter these 16 days with that Hope, so that we can indeed act with determination, urgency and create a world that is safe for all women and girls.



### Evening Benediction Suspended

**T**he monthly Evening Benediction at 6p.m. is suspended for now due to weather condition and failing numbers. The Benediction/Vespers is suspended until further notice. Thanks to those of you who come to adore and pray during the Sunday.



### Christmas concert 15 December at English Martyrs Didcot

**D**idcot Community Gospel Choir and Didcot Girls Chamber Choir are co-organising a Christmas concert for the first time at English Martyrs Didcot. The Program includes traditional gospel songs as well as some Christmas music. The proceeds from this concert will be donated to The Cornermen, the charity that support men's mental health. Please come and support this meaningful activity.

Date: 15th December 2024 Time: 5:00pm

Venue: English Martyrs Church Didcot

Ticket price: £10 (Please scan the QR code or contact [didcotgospel@gmail.com](mailto:didcotgospel@gmail.com) for ticket selling information.)



### Catholic Bishops of England, Wales, and Scotland unite in compassionate action to oppose Bill on assisted suicide

**T**he Catholic Bishops of England, Wales and Scotland have issued a statement on Assisted Suicide ahead of the Second Reading of the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill. In it, the bishops explain exactly what 'compassion' means at the end of life – caring for and accompanying people, particularly during times of suffering.

"People who are suffering need to know they are loved and valued. They need compassionate care, not assistance to end their lives," say the bishops. "Palliative care, with expert pain relief, and good human, spiritual, and pastoral support, is the right and best way to care for people towards the end of life."



### Collection of used Christmas Cards for Children's Liturgy artwork

**C**hildren in the Liturgy Class will be making Christmas Cards starting this week. If you have any used religious Christmas cards, we would be very grateful for them to be used for the children to make new cards. Please leave them to Jacquie at English Martyrs or Gay at St John's. The cards will be ready and on sale after mass from next week (1st Dec) at English Martyrs and St John's. If you wish to purchase any cards, please remember to bring cash with you. All proceeds in aid of the Kershaw boys trip to Uganda.



### Flower Arrangers

**W**ould you like to join our enthusiastic teams of Flower Arrangers at either English Martyrs Didcot or St John Wallingford? No experience is necessary and help is available if required. This usually requires a flower arrangement every 4 to 6 weeks. Please contact Camilla King at English Martyrs by email at [kingaandb@gmail.com](mailto:kingaandb@gmail.com), or Gay Bosley at St John by email at [gayboley66@gmail.com](mailto:gayboley66@gmail.com).



### Next Seniors' Lunch is December 12th

**O**ur next Seniors' Lunch is December 12th, here in the Tea Room. Being the last in the year, it will be wonderful if you consider inviting someone you know is in need of friendship, warm meal and an atmosphere of love and laughter. Please put names down on our noticeboards to enable our ever-caring team to make early preparations. This is also to thank all those who have been supporting this wonderful initiative. Happy Christmas to all. We regret that Anna Talbot will not be with us again. She will be missed.



### Collection of Missio envelopes

**I**f you have red box / Missio envelopes donation to be made, please bring them back when you attend mass next week. We will collect and send them to Missio. Thank you.



### 6 Shrine Churches Named in the Diocese for the Jubilee Year

**B**ishop Philip has named and designated 6 Churches across the diocese to mark and celebrate the Jubilee and invites all to visits. Each Diocese is permitted to establish 'Shrine Churches' where the faithful can go on pilgrimage, attend Mass and receive the Sacrament of Penance, and at the same time gain a Plenary Indulgence under the usual conditions.

For our Diocese of Portsmouth, the following Shrine Churches have been designated: St. John's Cathedral in Portsmouth, St. James's Reading, Sacred Heart Bournemouth, St. Edmund's Southampton (pictured), St. Thomas's in St. Helier, Jersey and St. Joseph's in St. Peter Port, Guernsey.

