

Archbishop: The world is very noisy but we must listen for God's call

In his pastoral message for Good Shepherd Sunday, the Chair of the National Office for Vocation, Archbishop Malcolm McMahon, has affirmed the value of being a good listener in order to hear



God's call to holiness. "One of our modern problems is that our world is very noisy, and it is often difficult to hear our own voices and

thoughts in the surrounding din, let alone the words of others," he writes. "One situation that can occur is we find ourselves on set paths in life, and it is not easy to change direction even if we want to do just that. Commitment to our families and other responsibilities block our ears and we just carry on as before."

Good Shepherd Sunday is the day chosen for 'Vocations Sunday' and is celebrated this year on Sunday, 21 April.

Saint John Henry Newman teaches that God has a definite purpose for each and every one of us, but Archbishop McMahon is keen to highlight the huge value of priests, nuns and monks to the Church:

"There is no doubt that the church needs priests to celebrate the Eucharist and other sacraments, and Religious to offer a living witness to the values of the Kingdom of God. Without them, we would be a very impoverished Church."

But how can we work out whether God is calling us to a particular vocation? The Archbishop of Liverpool suggests women and men should ask whether their vocational journey is likely to end in contentment:

"One simple test is whether following a particular path in life gives us joy. If we are happy and content, or at least think we will be, then it is worth giving it a try. I am not saying that we should be deliriously happy all the time but there should be an underlying knowledge that we have chosen the right path in response to God's call."

Archbishop McMahon is quick to point out that although discerning a vocation involves a leap of faith, it is not a leap into the unknown:

"Just as there are risks in getting married, no matter how much we prepare for it, so there are risks in offering yourself for priesthood and religious life. In all cases we have examples of happy and fulfilled people living their vocation."

Quoting Pope Francis, he proposes two pillars of Catholic life that can help people interpret God's call – serving others and spending time before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

"Adoration is a special kind of prayer which helps us shirk off everything except that one person who is important to us – Jesus Christ. Pope Francis' second point was to steer us towards service of others. In serving others, giving ourselves to other people in response to different needs, we undoubtedly find Jesus.

The Day the Lord Made

Jesus in today's Gospel teaches His apostles how to interpret the Scriptures.

He tells them that all the Scriptures of what we now call the Old Testament refer to Him. He says that all the promises found in the Old Testament have been fulfilled in His Passion, death, and Resurrection. And He tells them that these Scriptures foretell the mission of the Church—to preach forgiveness of sins to all the nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

In today's First Reading and Epistle, we see the beginnings of that mission. And we see the apostles interpreting the Scriptures as Jesus taught them to.

God has brought to fulfilment what He announced beforehand in all the prophets, Peter preaches. His sermon is shot through with Old Testament images. He evokes Moses and the Exodus, in which

God revealed himself as the ancestral God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (see Exodus 3:6, 15). He identifies Jesus as Isaiah's suffering servant who has been glorified (see Isaiah 52:13).

John, too, describes Jesus in Old Testament terms. Alluding to how Israel's priests offered blood sacrifices to atone for the people's sins (see Leviticus 16; Hebrews 9–10), he says that Jesus intercedes for us before God (see Romans 8:34), and that His



blood is a sacrificial expiation for the sins of the world (see 1 John 1:7).

Notice that in all three readings, the Scriptures are interpreted to serve and advance the Church's mission—to reveal the truth about Jesus, to bring people to repentance, the wiping away of sins, and the perfection of their love for God.

This is how we, too, should hear the Scriptures. Not to know more "about" Jesus, but to truly know Him personally, and to know His plan for our lives.

In the Scriptures, the light of His face shines upon us, as we sing in today's Psalm. We know the wonders He has done throughout history. And we have the confidence to call to Him, and to know that He hears and answers.

Scott Hahn



English Martyrs
Vale of White Horse
Pastoral Area

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

www.didcotandwallingfordcatholicchurches.org

Office email: office@didcotandwallingfordcatholicchurches.org
(Parish Office Hours Tuesday—Friday 9am to 1pm approximately)

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

Fr Dominic Adeiza email: dadeiza@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER (WK 3)

Entrance Antiphon Ps 65:1-2

Cry out with joy to God, all the earth; O sing to the glory of his name. O render him glorious praise, alleluia.

First Reading: Acts of the Apostles 3:13-15, 17-19

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 4

Lift up the light of your face on us, O Lord.

Second Reading: First Letter of Saint John 2:1-5a

Gospel Acclamation: Jn 10:14

Alleluia, alleluia!!

Lord Jesus, explain the Scriptures to us. Make our hearts burn within us as you talk to us.

Alleluia!

Gospel: Luke 24:35-48

Communion Antiphon: Lk 24:35

The disciples recognised the Lord Jesus in the breaking of the bread, alleluia.

SATURDAY 13th April of Easter

9:30am. Mass at English Martyrs, Didcot....

4:30pm Adoration & Confessions will take place prior to the Vigil Mass at St John's Wallingford

5:00pm Vigil Mass St John's

5:50pm Adoration before Vigil Mass at English Martyrs, Didcot...

6:30pm Vigil Mass English Martyrs, Didcot....

SUNDAY 14th AprilThird Sunday of Easter (Divine Mercy Sunday)

9:00am Mass English Martyrs, Didcot—Raymond Traynor RIP (Anne-Marie Kershaw)

11:00noon Mass St John's Wallingford

MONDAY 15th April of EasterNO MASS

TUESDAY 16th April of Easter

12noon...Adoration before St John's Wallingford....

WEDNESDAY 17th April of Easter.....

9:30am at English Martyrs, Didcot.....Simone Stone RIP

THURSDAY 18th April of Easter.....

9:30am Mass at St John's Wallingford.....Simone Stone RIP

FRIDAY 19th April Octave of Easter.....

9:30am at English Martyrs, Didcot.. Elizabeth Constance White RIP

SATURDAY 20th April of Easter

9:30am. Mass at English Martyrs, Didcot....

4:30pm Adoration & Confessions will take place prior to the Vigil Mass at St John's Wallingford

5:00pm Vigil Mass St John's

5:50pm Adoration before Vigil Mass at English Martyrs, Didcot...

6:30pm Vigil Mass English Martyrs, Didcot....

SUNDAY 21st AprilFourth Sunday of Easter

9:00am Mass English Martyrs, Didcot—

11:00noon 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.



Missio and APF Red Boxes

The APF in England and Wales works with the Mill Hill Missionary Society – the only major missionary society formed in England. Mill Hill missionaries go to the most remote places in the world to show the love of Christ to those in need, both spiritually and materially.

There are Red Boxes in over 200,000 homes. They have helped raise millions of pounds for the missionary Church. Thank you so much for being part of this great movement of faith in action. Kindly return the Red Boxes or hand them to the welcomers when you come for mass.



A Day of Recollection at Littlemore

Come join us for a special day of renewal, recollection and quiet meditation at Littlemore, Saturday May 11am, from 10am to 4pm. If you have questions or you need more information, kindly speak with Chris Stemp. This recollection is fresh after some years. Please read the posters as you come into the church and book a date to ease planning.



GiftAid Envelops Now Available

The new Gift Aid envelope boxes for the coming tax year are now available and ready for collection at the entrance of Church. A huge thank you to all those who have returned their Gift Aid Declaration Forms. If you know a parishioner and wish to collect theirs, pass on, kindly help. If you are a taxpayer and you give to the Church, we applaud you. You can claim back 25p every time on every £1 you give when you sign the giftaid form. You have nothing to lose. Please collect a form for yourself and a friend. You can reach the parish Finance Administrator via email if you need clarifications...accounts.didwal@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk.



Bishops' Spring 2024 Plenary and Retreat at Buckfast Abbey

The Catholic Bishops' of England and Wales are meeting at Buckfast Abbey in the Diocese of Plymouth for their spring meeting (12-19 April 2024).

The majority of this time will be spent together in prayerful retreat – the first time in five years the Bishops have had this opportunity.

They will be guided in their retreat by Bishop Erik Varden, who is a Norwegian Trappist monk and Bishop of Trondheim. Bishop Varden served as Abbot of Mount Saint Bernard's Abbey in Leicestershire from April 2015 to September 2019.

As a consequence, the plenary sessions are restricted to the afternoon of Friday 12 and Saturday 13 April. Resolutions and outcomes will be released on the Bishops' return – week commencing 22 April.



Bishops' Conference department welcomes Vatican declaration on Human Dignity

Two bishop members of the Department for Social Justice at the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales have welcomed the Vatican declaration on human dignity Dignitas infinita released by the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith on Monday, 8 April 2024. Department Chair, Bishop Richard Moth, and Lead Bishop for Life Issues, Bishop John Sherrington assert that the promotion and defence of human dignity lie at the heart of the mission of the Catholic Church in England and Wales. For full statement or text, visit <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/>

Parish Pastoral Council Meeting

Our second Parish Pastoral Council meeting this year is scheduled for April 17th at 7pm in St John's Wallingford Tea Room. If you have suggestions or areas of concern you wish the council to discuss, kindly speak to a council member, Father Dominic, leave a note through the letter box or send an email to the parish office, office@didcotandwallingfordcatholicchurches.org. This will be treated with confidentiality.

Senior Lunch Fund Raise

This is to express gratitude to all, especially our team who since last year have faithfully offered catering and other logistics towards every senior lunch that have brought so much joy, socialization and friendship to our seniors. These efforts have in the last couple of months enabled the team raise some money to replace drinking glasses and tea mugs in the Tea Room. We thank all the seniors who have contributed to this initiative. The next Senior Lunch is May 16th at 12noon.

Closer to Christ Campaign Update



Thank you to those of you who have already made your decision, returned your pledge form and supported this extremely important endeavour. Here in the Parishes of English Martyrs and St. John the Evangelist, our aim is to raise £90,000 in pledges to fund:

- Our priests, from those in training at the seminary, to those who have served us over the last five or six decades and now retired.
- Our parish which will retain over £30,000 of the monies raised, once we reach our goal, to go toward supporting any local projects we wish to carry out.

Already we have secured **£40,763** in pledges from only 13 families, approximately 8% of our congregation. You should have received a pack in the post recently, if not there is a pledge form overleaf. All pledges are welcome – any length, any amount.

Results to date

✓ **£90,000**

Goal

£ **£40,763**

Pledged to Date

📦 **13**

Pledges Received

👉 **£3,136**

Average Pledge

👤 **81%**

Pledges Eligible for Gift Aid

Please Consider Your Support

We are blessed to have a Diocese filled with caring, active, and committed parishioners. If you have not yet made your decision, we kindly ask you to consider three things:

- Read the information booklet. If you have not received one, please pick one up from the back of the church today
- Accept a call from one of the team. We want to ensure everyone has an opportunity to ask questions where necessary
- Consider making a contribution at a level that is right for you. **We need 27 families to contribute £1 a day for the next five years to reach our goal.** Could you be one of them?

Your decision today can help ensure our parish can thrive and our clergy are provided with adequate support for years to come. By completing the form overleaf, your contribution will make a difference!

Please note, a pledge can be for any amount, spread over a time period that suits you. Note also that your payments can start at any time, this pledge simply acts as a promise. Please tick the Gift Aid box if applicable to you so we can benefit from the additional 25%.

Your participation matters - every gift counts, no matter how big or small!



Once you have completed your pledge form please bring it to Mass with you or post it to:

Closer to Christ Campaign Office

St Edmund House

Bishop Crispian Way

Portsmouth

PO1 3QA