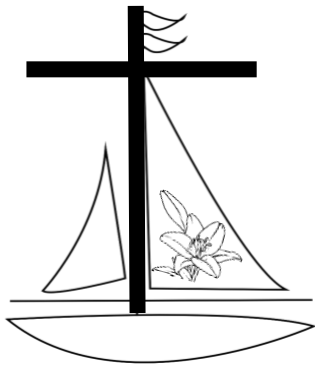




Parish of Holy Cross, Our Lady & Saint Paul

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21st September 2025 – 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

CYCLE OF CATECHESIS – JUBILEE 2025. JESUS CHRIST OUR HOPE II. THE LIFE OF JESUS. THE ENCOUNTERS 1. NICODEMUS. “YOU MUST BE BORN FROM ABOVE” (JN 3:7b)

However, the Gospel tells us that Nicodemus does not immediately understand what Jesus is saying to him. And so we see that there are many misunderstandings in this dialogue, and also a lot of irony, which is a characteristic of the evangelist John. Nicodemus does not understand what Jesus is telling him because he continues to think with his own logic and categories. He is a man with a well-defined personality; he has a public role, he is one of the leaders of the Jews. But probably something no longer adds up for him. Nicodemus senses that something no longer works in his life. He feels the need to change, but he does not know where to begin.

This happens to all of us in some phases of life. If we do not accept to change, if we close ourselves up in inflexibility, in habits or our ways of thinking, we risk dying. Life resides in the capacity to change to find a new way to love. Indeed, Jesus speaks to Nicodemus of a *new birth*, which is not only possible, but even necessary at certain moments in our journey. To tell the truth, the expression used in the text is already ambivalent in itself, because *anōthen* (ἀνωθεν) can be translated as either “from above” or “again”. Slowly, Nicodemus will understand that these two meanings go together: if we allow the Holy Spirit to generate new life in us, we will be born again. We will rediscover that life, which was perhaps fading in us.

I have chosen to begin with Nicodemus also because he is a man who, with his very life, shows that this change is possible. Nicodemus is able to do it: in the end he will be among those who go to Pilate to ask for the body of Jesus (cf. Jn 19:39)! Nicodemus has finally *come to the light*, he is reborn, and he no longer needs to stay in the night. Changes sometimes frighten us. On the one hand they attract us, at times we desire them, but on the other we would prefer to remain in comfort. Therefore the Spirit encourages us to face these fears. Jesus reminds Nicodemus – who is a teacher in Israel – that even the Israelites were afraid when they were walking in the desert. And they focused so much on their worries that at a certain point those fears took the form of venomous snakes (cf. Nm 21:4-9). In order to be freed, they had to look at the copper serpent that Moses had placed on a pole, that is, they had to look up and stand before the object that represented their fears. Only by looking into the face of that which frightens us can we begin to be set free. Nicodemus, like all of us, can look at the Crucified One: the One who defeated death, the root of all our fears. Let us also lift our gaze to the One they pierced, let us also be met by Jesus. In Him we find the hope to face the changes in our lives and be born again.

POPE’S PRAYER INTENTION FOR SEPTEMBER 2025

For our relationship with all of creation – Let us pray that, inspired by Saint Francis, we might, experience our interdependence with all creatures who are loved by God and worthy of respect.

OUR PARISH VISION & MISSION

We are a warm & welcoming community of faith rooted in the love of God revealed to us in Jesus Christ. Belonging is at the heart of what we do as members of the body of Christ. We believe worship is not just found in prayer; it's something expressed in everything we do.

MASSES FOR THE WEEK				
Sunday	TWENTY FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	9:30am	Ian Christley R.I.P.	SP
		11am	People of the Parish	OL
Tea & Coffee are served after both Sunday Masses				
Monday	Ferial	10am	REQUIEM MASS LAURENCE LONG	OL
Access to Our Lady's for weekday Mass is through the entrance to the right side of the church				
Tuesday	Saint Pius of Pietrelcina	9:30am	Robert & Jean Barr R.I.P.	OL
Tea & Coffee are served in the Saint Joseph chapel after Mass on Tuesday mornings. Everyone is welcome!				
Wednesday	Our Lady of Walsingham			
Thursday	Ferial			
Friday	Ferial	9:30am	Sr Mary Brennan R.I.P.	SP
Saturday	Saint Vincent De Paul			
Sunday	TWENTY SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	9:30am	Ian Christley R.I.P.	SP
		11am	People of the Parish	OL

SAINT JOSEPH LAMP

The lamp burns for Frank Morris R.I.P. (Birthday) at Our Lady's and Pope Leo XIV at Saint Paul's. Envelopes for intentions are at the back of each church. A £5 donation is requested.

<i>PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS</i>	
<i><u>Those who are sick</u></i>	
<i>Samuel Adodo, Lily Baker, Laurence Barron, Christopher Browne, Gerard Carey, Pat Cockran, Anna Coughlan, Teresa Denye, Chloe & Irene Fortune, Colin James, Clare McElroy, Canon Philip Moor, Steven Sales, Frances Scarisbrick, Deacon Terry Simms, Philip Smith, Eileen & Julia Ward, Sarah Williams & Pat Wise.</i>	
<i><u>Those who have died</u></i>	
<i>Frances Fitzgerald, Susan Jones & Larry Long</i>	

PARISH

RED MISSIO BOX TO BE COLLECTED – Please contact Angela on 07864336321 to arrange a pickup or alternatively please leave in the Church.

SHREWSBURY LOURDES HOSPITALITY AGM will take place TODAY at 2pm in the Parish Centre at Saint Hugh and Saint John Manchester Road, West Timperley, WA14 5NB. (Access to the main car park is via St Hugh's Close WA14 5HL) All hospitality members are invited to attend.

2026 DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES – After a successful & prayerful pilgrimage this year the dates for next year are out now, *SAVE THE DATE!*

By air: Friday 31st July – Thursday 6th August / *By coach:* Thursday 30th July – Friday 7th August.

Youth pilgrimage: Wednesday 29th July – Friday 7th August

EVANGELII GAUDIUM SUNDAY (formerly Home Mission Sunday) – gives us the opportunity to reflect on the great mandate we have been given by the Risen Lord to evangelise the whole world. “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations,” the Lord commissions, as we hear in Matthew 28:19. We are encouraged to pray for our parish community, that we will become intentionally missionary in our life and witness, especially in our own area here in the North end of Birkenhead. It is appropriate that the church will be open this day not just for Mass but also for the Heritage Open Days as well!

PAUSE FOR HOPE – An ecumenical service for anyone in anyway affected by cancer. Sunday 19th October at 3:30pm in Saint Michael & All Angels church, Woodchurch. www.pauseforhope.org.uk

FRIDAY MORNING FAITH REFLECTION – our Friday morning faith reflection sessions will begin again this week after Mass on Friday morning in the community room at Saint Paul's. Why not come for a brew, a short video & time to sit & chat about aspects of our faith & what they mean?

CAFOD: RESPONSE IN GAZA – Your donations to Gaza since the start of the conflict have been a vital lifeline. Right now, CAFOD's partner, Caritas Jerusalem, is delivering essential medical treatment to displaced people and providing medicines to treat chronic illnesses. As Cardinal Pizzaballa (Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem) says, “Christ is not absent from Gaza. He is there - crucified in the wounded, buried under rubble, and yet present in every act of mercy, every candle in the darkness, every hand extended to the suffering.”

BENEDICTION IN HONOUR OF SAINT THERESE OF LISIEUX – Saturday 28th September at 3pm in Birkenhead Carmelite Monastery.

ANOINTING & HEALING SERVICE – Friday 3rd October at 7pm at Saint John's Church, New Ferry.

JUBILEE ICON will be visiting Our Lady & Saint Edwards school from Wednesday 1st October until Monday 6th October. During that time, it will be on display in Our Lady's church. Each class will have the opportunity to come & pray with it as will parishioners over the weekend.

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE RETREAT DAY – Saturday 11th October, 9:30am–4pm in the Parish room at Shrewsbury Cathedral. For more information or to register please contact monika.golembiewska@dioceseofshrewsbury.org

ROSARY RETREAT DAY AND JUBILEE PILGRIMAGE – Bishop Mark Davies will lead this Jubilee Pilgrimage at the Eucharistic Shrine in Saint Joseph's church, Stockport on Saturday 25th October. The Rosary Retreat will begin at 9.30am with reflections and the praying of the Mysteries of the Rosary scriptural meditations. Holy Mass will be celebrated by Bishop Mark at 11am who will renew the entrustment of the Diocese to Our Lady especially entrusting in this shrine dedicated to Eucharistic Adoration and intercession for the sanctification of priests and new and generous priestly vocations all vocations to the Priesthood. The day will conclude with a Eucharistic Procession and Solemn Benediction at 3.30pm. Please bring a packed lunch.

MARRIAGE HELP – Retrouvaille is not counselling or group therapy but it's a marriage support programme which helps couples to rediscover trust, hope and healing for their marriage. For further details please visit www.retrouvaille.org.uk or telephone 07887 296983.

ASSISTED DYING BILL is now progressing through the House of Lords, please read Archbishop John Sherrington's statement & also write to members of the House of Lords.

JUBILEE FOR CATECHISTS WITH BISHOP MARK DAVIES – also with the Dominican Sisters of Saint Joseph and Natalie Orefice, Diocesan Director of Evangelisation and Catechesis. On Saturday 15th November at Saint Joseph's Eucharistic Shrine, Tatton Street, Stockport SK1 1EJ. Book your free place here: <https://bit.ly/Jubilee-for-Catechists>

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY (SVP) – BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT – In September, the SVP will be running another series of its successful programme called “**At a Loss**” It is designed to provide support for people who are grieving because of the death of a loved one. The seven-session programme aims to provide a safe space for people who have experienced a bereavement recently or in the past. Sessions are guided by trained facilitators, to help people to explore steps to promote the path to recovery. If you feel this programme would be helpful to you or someone you know, please contact us, in confidence, on telephone 07894 240 469 or by emailing recovery.hamsvp@gmail.com or speak to an SVP member.

STRONGER TOGETHER COMMUNITY GROUP empowers members to address daily life challenges in a supportive environment. *Tuesday mornings (9:30am–12pm)* in Saint Joseph's parish centre, North Road. The group is facilitated by Caritas Diocese of Shrewsbury.

A&K COMMUNITY HUB – for information about the activities that are held at the Hub, 310 Park Road North, during the week & also the availability to hire it for family occasions, please contact Laura on 0151 458 5562 or Laura.akcommunity@gmail.com.

EASY FUNDRAISING As you are shopping online, don't forget to use Easy Fundraising even for car, home or travel insurance! ***Our latest payout is £38.33.*** Thank you to everyone who has used it.

PARISH FINANCES

14th September 2025

Offertory – £374.10 cash); £17.50 (Standing Orders)

£12 (Card/Contactless/Web); Zambia/Caritas £12

Thank you for your continuing generosity.

To donate online,
please scan the
QR code.



STANDING ORDERS – You can set one up through your online banking or via the form which is available from the parish office. If you are a UK taxpayer, please gift aid these payments.

BONUS BALL SCHEME – The winning number in the draw held on Saturday 13th September was 10 & congratulations to the winner from Our Lady's. If you would like to join the next payment of £5 will be due on 4th October for draws commencing on 11th October 2025. A list of available numbers is at the back of each church.

CHARITY

WIRRAL FOODBANK – Thank you for your continued support. Donations can be left in the sacristy at Saint Paul's or outside the Saint Joseph chapel in Our Lady's.

STAMPS & GLASSES - These are donated to the RNIB to support their work with those suffering sight loss. There is a box at the back of each church for any used stamps or glasses you have.

USED TABLET BLISTER PACKS can be donated at each church to support the Marie Curie charity.