

Parish of Holy Cross, Our Lady & Saint Paul

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18th January 2026 – Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

CYCLE OF CATECHESIS - JUBILEE 2025. JESUS CHRIST OUR HOPE. II. THE LIFE OF JESUS. THE HEALINGS. 9. BARTIMAEUS. "TAKE COURAGE; GET UP, HE IS CALLING YOU."

The cry of Bartimaeus, in the Gospel of Mark – “Jesus, son of David, have pity on me!” (v. 47) – has become a very well-known prayer in the Eastern tradition, which we too can use: “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have pity on me, a sinner”.

Bartimaeus is blind, but paradoxically he sees better than the others, and he recognizes who Jesus is! Before his cry, Jesus stops and has him called (cf. 49), because there is no cry that God does not hear, even when we are not aware we are addressing him (cf. *Ex* 2:23). It seems strange that, in front of a blind man, Jesus does not go immediately to him; but, if we think about it, it is the way to reactivate Bartimaeus’ life: He spurs him to get up again, He trusts in his ability to walk. That man can get up on his feet again, he can rise from the throes of death. But in order to do this, he must perform a very meaningful gesture: he must throw away his cloak (cf. v. 50)!

For a beggar, the cloak is everything: it is his safety, it is his house, it is the defence that protects him. Even the law protected the beggar’s cloak, and imposed that it be returned in the evening if taken as a pledge (cf. *Ex* 22:25). And yet, many times, it is precisely our apparent securities that stand in our way – what we have put on to defend ourselves and which instead prevent us from walking. To go to Jesus and let himself be healed, Bartimaeus must show himself to Him in all his vulnerability. This is the fundamental step in any journey of healing.

Even the question that Jesus asks him seems strange: “What do you want me to do for you?” (v.51). But, in reality, it is not given that we want to be healed from our ailments; at times we prefer to stay still so as not to take responsibility. Bartimaeus’ reply is profound: he uses the verb *anablepein*, which can mean “to see again”, but which we can also translate as “to look up”. Indeed, Bartimaeus does not want only to see again; he wants to regain his dignity! To look up, we must raise our heads. At times people are stuck because life has humiliated them, and they just want to find their worth again.

What saves Bartimaeus, and each one of us, is faith. Jesus heals us so that we can become free. He does not invite Bartimaeus to follow him, but tells him to go, to set out on his way (cf. v.52). However, Mark concludes the story by saying that Bartimaeus began to follow Jesus: he freely chose to follow him, He who is the Way!

Dear brothers and sisters, let us trustfully bring our ailments before Jesus, and also those of our loved ones; let us bring the pain of those who feel lost and without a way out. Let us cry out for them too, and we will be certain that the Lord will hear us and stop.

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 WEEK				
Sunday	THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD	9:30am	People of the Parish	SP
		11am	Rosaleen (Ros) Meyerson R.I.P.	OL
Tea & Coffee are served after both Sunday Masses				
Monday	Ferial			
Access to Our Lady's for weekday Mass is through the entrance to the right side of the church				
Tuesday	Ferial	9:30am	Billy Boylan R.I.P.	OL
Tea & Coffee are served in the Saint Joseph chapel after Mass on Tuesday morning. Everyone is welcome!				
Wednesday	Saint Agnes			
Thursday	Ferial			
Friday	Ferial			
Saturday	Saint Francis De Sales			
Sunday	THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	9:30am	People of the Parish	SP
		11am	Pauline Lynch R.I.P.	OL

SAINT JOSEPH LAMP

The lamp burns for the intentions *Rob Creer R.I.P.* at Our Lady's and *Christian Unity* at Saint Paul's. Envelopes for intentions are at the back of each church. A £5 donation is requested.

POPE'S PRAYER INTENTION FOR JANUARY 2026

For prayer with the Word of God. Let us pray that praying with the Word of God be nourishment for our lives and a source of hope in our communities, helping us to build a more fraternal and missionary Church.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

Those who are sick

Stuart & Jackie, Samuel Adodo, Lily Baker, Christopher Browne, Gerard Carey, Pat Cockran, Anna Coughlan, Teresa Denye, Chloe & Irene Fortune, Colin James, Clare McElroy, Fr Philip McGovern, Canon Philip Moor, Joe Roper, Helen Ryan, Deacon Terry Simms, Philip Smith, Eileen & Julia Ward, Sarah Williams & Pat Wise.

Those who have died

Desmond Astley, Carmella Bartkiw, Vincent Duggan, David Gower, Mary Rose & Steven Sales.

JOB VACANCY: HOUSEKEEPER AT SAINT ANNE'S PRESBYTERY, ROCK FERRY

12 hours per week @ £13.45 per hour. Applications should be sent to Pauline McCulloch, email recruitment@dioceseofshrewsbury.org by Friday 20th February. For more information, please follow the link [Latest Vacancies - Diocese](#)

JOB VACANCIES WITH THE SHREWSBURY YOUTH MISSION TEAM

Vacancies have arisen with SYMT for a Programme Coordinator, Youth Mission Team Member & admin assistant. All the details can be found on the Diocesan website <https://www.dioceseofshrewsbury.org/latest-vacancies/> If you are interested, please send your CV to Pauline McCulloch recruitment@dioceseofshrewsbury.org, closing date: Friday 23rd January 2026.

JOB VACANCY: CHAPLAIN AT UPTON HALL SCHOOL

3 days per week term time only. We are seeking to appoint a Catholic School Chaplain to play a leading role in the spiritual development of the school community, make links with parishes and able to work alongside the governors, priests and staff in enabling the students of Upton Hall School to continue on their spiritual journey through active experience of their spirituality. Closing date is Monday 2nd February 2026.

PARISH

RETIRED PRIESTS FUND – the annual Collection for the Retired Priests' Fund will take place at both Masses **NEXT SUNDAY**. With your help, we can build up the Fund to help meet the future needs of our sick and retired priests. If you wish to Gift Aid your donation, please make your donation Online at www.dioceseofshrewsbury.org/retired-priests-fund

I AM MARK – A daring new staging of the Gospel of Mark, performed by Stefan Smart & directed by Lisa Gilmour. One Man, One Chair, One incredible true story! TODAY Sunday 18th January 5pm at Christ the King church, Beckwith st. Tickets cost £5. Contact vicar.bpp@gmail.com or 0151 653 6092

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN CHESHIRE – A Service to mark the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity at Chester Cathedral, TODAY Sunday 18 January at 5pm. The Guest Speaker will be Bishop Kenneth Nowakowski, Bishop of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of the Holy Family of London. This service brings together believers from many traditions to pray for peace, justice and deeper unity in our communities and our world. The service will also feature the Chester Taizé Choir. Refreshments will be served after the service.

WE DARE TO ASK – A five-week Lenten course suitable for personal, group or family use. Across five sessions you are asked to reflect on the baptismal vocation, preparing us for the renewal of our baptismal promises at Easter. The booklets can be ordered by emailing aec@rcaos.org the deadline is tomorrow 19th January 2026.

WORLD LEPROSY DAY, SUNDAY 25th JANUARY 2026 is a time to pray for and stand in solidarity with people affected by leprosy around the world and to remember the work of the John Bradburne Memorial Society. John devoted his life to caring for those with leprosy at the Mutemwa Leprosy Care Centre in Zimbabwe. Please keep the people of Mutemwa in your prayers and consider supporting this vital work through prayer, awareness, or donation. www.johnbradburne.com, Tel: 07979 187498, Post: JBMS, PO Box 32, Leominster, Herefordshire, HR6 0YB, Email: info@johnbradburne.com

A&K COMMUNITY HUB AFTERNOON TEA PARTY – this free of charge event for pensioners with live entertainment is to be held on Wednesday 28th January from 12:30 until 3pm at 310 Park Road North, Birkenhead. For information about this & other activities that are held at the Hub during the week & also availability to hire it for family occasions, please contact Laura on 0151 458 5562 or Lauara.akcommunity@gmail.com

CARITAS – If you know someone in need of assistance, please contact Trish Spencer, Deputy CEO of Caritas Diocese of Shrewsbury at Wheatland Lane, Wallasey, CH44 7ED Tel: 0151 652 1281, email: info@caritasshrewsbury.org.uk


PIETY STALL – A selection of cards for all occasions is available to buy at each church. Looking for alternative gifts? To families & friends? Why not look at our parish branded merchandise (pens £1, Mugs £6, bundle deal of one mug and two pens £7) or World Gifts from CAFOD? <https://worldgifts.cafod.org.uk/collections/all>

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR CLEANING OUR LADY'S CHURCH – If you can help with the monthly cleaning a sign up sheet is available in the porch to add your name for the next date: Saturday 7th February 2026.

PARISHIONERS WHO ARE HOUSEBOUND – If you know of anyone who wishes to receive Holy Communion at home, please ask them to contact the Parish Office or help them to do so.

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.

PRACTICAL, CHARITABLE SUPPORT FOR LIFE – “Life Charity has been my safe haven during my stormy seas.” To keep up to date with news from the UK's only charity focused on real-time, practical support to enable women to continue their pregnancy in deeply challenging situations, visit: www.lifecharity.org.uk/join-us-on-social.

<u>PARISH FINANCES</u>	
<u>Sunday 11th January 2026</u>	
Offertory – £502.77 (Cash); £17.50 (Standing Orders) £20 (Card/Contactless/Web); Zambia/Caritas £13.	
<i>Thank you for your continuing generosity.</i>	
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 winner on Saturday 10th January was no. 9; congratulations to the winner. If you would like to join, the next payment is now due for draw's commencing on 24th January 2026. A list of available numbers is at the back of each church.

CHARITY

WIRRAL FOODBANK – Thank you to everyone who has supported Wirral Foodbank's Reverse Advent calendar, it really does make a difference. Please do continue your support over Christmas and into the New Year, donations can be left outside the Saint Joseph chapel at Our Lady's or in the sacristy at Saint Paul's.

If you have collected the items for the reverse advent calendar, please leave them this week either 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 TO SUPPORT THE MARIE CURIE CHARITY – can be donated at each church but please ensure that you do not include any other items.