

Parish of Holy Cross, Our Lady & Saint Paul

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2nd March 2025 – Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

CYCLE OF CATECHESIS. THE SPIRIT AND THE BRIDE. THE HOLY SPIRIT GUIDES THE PEOPLE OF GOD TOWARDS JESUS OUR HOPE 12. "THE SPIRIT INTERCEDES FOR US". THE HOLY SPIRIT AND CHRISTIAN PRAYER

The sanctifying action of the Holy Spirit, in addition to the Word of God and the Sacraments, is expressed in prayer, and it is to this that we wish to dedicate today's reflection: prayer. The Holy Spirit is both the subject and object of Christian prayer. That is, he is the One who gives prayer and he is the One who is given by prayer. We pray to receive the Holy Spirit, and we receive the Holy Spirit in order to truly pray, that is, as children of God, not as slaves. Let us think a little about this: pray as children of God, not as slaves. One should always pray with freedom. "Today I have to pray for this, this and this, because I promised this, this and this. Otherwise, I will go to hell". No, that is not prayer! Prayer is free. You pray when the Spirit helps you to pray. You pray when you feel the need to pray in your heart, and when you do not feel anything, stop and ask yourself: "Why do I not feel like praying? What is happening in my life?". But spontaneity in prayer is what always helps us the most. This means praying as sons and daughters, not as slaves.

First of all, we must pray to receive the Holy Spirit. In this regard, Jesus has a very precise word in the Gospel: "If you then, who are wicked, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit" to those who ask him?" (Lk 11:13). Everyone, each one of us, knows how to give good gifts to little children, whether they are our children, our grandchildren or our friends. The little ones always receive good gifts from us. And will the Father not give the Spirit to us? This gives us courage and we can move forward. In the New Testament, we see the Holy Spirit always descend during prayer. He descends upon Jesus in the baptism in the Jordan, while he "was praying" (Lk 3:21), and he descends at Pentecost upon the disciples, while they "devoted themselves with one accord to prayer" (Acts 1:14).

It is the only "power" we have over the Spirit of God. The power of prayer: He cannot resist prayer. We pray, and he comes. On Mount Carmel, the false prophets of Baal – remember that passage from the Bible – were frantic about invoking fire from heaven on their sacrifice, but nothing happened because they were idolators. They worshipped a god that does not exist. Elijah began to pray, and the fire descended and consumed the offering (cf. 1 Kings 18:20-38). The Church follows this example faithfully: Every time she turns to the Holy Spirit, she implores, "Come, Come". Come! And she does this especially at Mass, so that he may descend like dew and sanctify the bread and wine for the Eucharistic sacrifice.

But there is another aspect, which is the most important and encouraging for us: the Holy Spirit is he who gives us true prayer. Saint Paul affirms this: “the Spirit comes to the aid of our weakness because we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit itself intercedes with inexpressible groanings. And the one who searches hearts knows the intention of the Spirit, because it intercedes for the holy ones according to God’s will” (cf. *Rom* 8:26-27).

MASSES FOR THE WEEK				
Sunday	EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	9:30am People of the Parish	SP	
		11am Lorraine Pereira (Birthday)	OL	
<i>Tea & Coffee are served after both Sunday Masses</i>				
Monday	<i>Ferial</i>	9am Catherine & William O’Mahoney R.I.P.	OL	
<i>Access to Our Lady’s for weekday Mass is through the entrance to the right side of the church</i>				
Tuesday	<i>Ferial</i>	9:30am Kathleen Runciman (Healing)	OL	
Tea & Coffee are served in the Saint Joseph chapel after Mass on Tuesday mornings. Everyone is welcome!				
Wednesday	ASH WEDNESDAY	9:30am People of the Parish	SP	
		9:30am The Bate Family	OL	
Thursday	<i>Thursday after Ash Wednesday</i>			
Friday	<i>Friday after Ash Wednesday</i>	10am Alice & Arthur Cooke R.I.P.	SP	
Saturday	<i>Saturday after Ash Wednesday</i>			
Sunday	FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT	9:30am People of the Parish	SP	
		11am Patricia Clayton R.I.P.	OL	

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.

SAINT JOSEPH LAMP

The lamp burns for *Raymond Michael Stevens (Healing)* at Our Lady’s and *Sr Mary Brennan* at Saint Paul’s. Envelopes for intentions are at the back of each church. A £5 donation is requested.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS
<u>Those who are sick</u>
<i>Samuel Adodo, Lily Baker, Christopher Browne, Anna Coughlan, Teresa Denye, Chloe & Irene Fortune, Clare McElroy, Canon Philip Moor, Frank Morris, Michael Murphy, Philip Smith, Eileen & Julia Ward.</i>
<u>Those who have died</u>
<i>Judith Christley, Joe Croft, Josefa Alves Garcia & John McGagh.</i>

POPE'S PRAYER INTENTION FOR MARCH 2025

For families in crisis. Let us pray that broken families might discover the cure for their wounds through forgiveness, rediscovering each other's gifts, even in their differences.

PARISH

CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING: AN INTRODUCTION is an online course for all staff and volunteers in parishes provided by the Caritas Social Action Network. The programme will be spread over five Tuesdays in March & April beginning THIS WEEK. The course will be delivered online via zoom and is aimed at parishioners who are not so familiar with Catholic Social Teaching, or who would welcome a refresh. We will also be hearing from CSAN members who work on the front line of poverty and exclusion, bringing our theoretical discussions to life. The course fee is £95 for all five sessions, which includes a copy of Raymond Friel's book, *Catholic Social Teaching: An Introduction for Schools, Parishes, and Charities*. For more information or to register, please contact the course administrator, Bernadette, at bernadette.durcan@csan.org.uk

JOB VACANCY FOR DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF SCHOOLS - The Diocese of Shrewsbury is seeking to appoint a Deputy Director of Schools. The role is an inspiring, rewarding and fulfilling position. The successful candidate will join a dedicated and committed team at a significant time for the education sector, for Catholic education nationally, and for the schools and colleges across our own Diocese as we look to serve Bishop Mark and the mission of our Church with Christ as the foundation of our entire educational enterprise. **Closing date: 10th March 2025.** For more information, please visit <https://www.tes.com/jobs/vacancy/deputy-director-of-schools-birkenhead-2171685>

2025 JUBILEE PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES - bookings for the pilgrimage are now open. The brochure and booking forms are available to download from the Pilgrimage website www.shrewsburypilgrimage.co.uk

CAFOD'S BIG LENT WALK IN THE JUBILEE YEAR - You are invited to join CAFOD's Big Lent Walk and journey together with Catholics in England, Wales and Scotland as Pilgrims of Hope in this Jubilee Year - walking 200km over 40 days during Lent. Journey to one of the churches or shrines designated as places of pilgrimage in our diocese as part of your Big Lent Walk. Every £1 you raise will support communities like Lokho's in Kenya, experiencing the worst impact of the climate crisis, to rebuild their lives in hope. Sign up here: <https://walk.cafod.org.uk/>

CAFOD FAMILY FAST DAY - will be held on Friday 14th March and our donations this Lent will help mums in Africa to grow food in harsh climates, building safety nets for their families. Envelopes are available at the back of church, or you can donate by virtual envelope online at <https://cafod.org.uk/fundraise/parishes/virtual-envelope>

A NIGHT AT THE MUSICALS - Friday 4th April, 7.30pm in Saint Michael & All Angels. A Night at the Musicals" performed by the Warrington Male Voice Choir. We invite you to join us on what we are sure will be a thoroughly enjoyable evening. Tickets price £8.00 are available from Saint Philip Neri Parish Office at Saint Joseph's 652 5767 or via contacting Deacon Gerard Boyle 07742659728. We will arrange for the tickets to be delivered to the parish office for you to collect.

WHOLEHEARTED MONTHLY is a new online mission series starting in March on the second Tuesday of each month, 7:00pm - 9:00pm. What is wholehearted monthly? Think community

organising rally meets immersive spiritual laboratory. It's for anyone committed to a vibrant friendship between "Church" and "World" – and a desire for both to flourish. Each month, testimony from local innovators, input from a renowned guest speaker, and wisdom-sharing in networks around Gospel justice, inclusion, evangelism, and growth. Hosted by The Methodist Church in Britain and open to all. Please book in advance. <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/wholehearted-monthly-tickets-1082366650789?aff=evangelism>

Speakers will be:


- ❖ Tuesday 11th March – Nadia Bolz-Weber is a best-selling author, public theologian and pastor, and is the founder and church planter of House for All Sinners and Saints.
- ❖ Tuesday 8th April – Rowan Williams is a theologian, poet and former Archbishop of Canterbury, and is author of fifty books on literature, politics, and being Christian.
- ❖ Tuesday 13 May – Chine McDonald is a writer, broadcaster and author, and is Director of Theos, the religion and society think tank.

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.

CATENIANS – The Birkenhead circle meets each month at Prenton Golf club to enjoy each other's company & to support one another & our families. Membership is open to Catholic men who are aged 18 & over. If you would like to know more, please contact p.davenport.123@btinternet.com.

KNIGHTS OF SAINT COLUMBA – the order believes in charity, unity & fraternity, over many years they have helped priests, parishes & our Catholic schools & many projects internationally. Membership is open to Catholic men who are aged 18 & over. Please contact Tony Connolly on 07950 392193.

EASY FUNDRAISING – thanks to your generosity in using Easy Fundraising, *our latest payout is £47.04*. As you are shopping online, don't forget to use the Easy Fundraising donation reminder so that the parish can collect even more free donations as you shop!

<p><u>PARISH FINANCES</u></p> <p><u>16th February 2025</u></p> <p>Offertory £440.47 (cash); £17.50 (Standing Orders); £10 (card/contactless); Zambia/Eye Fund/Caritas £12</p> <p><i>Thank you for your continuing generosity.</i></p>	<p>To donate online, please scan the QR code.</p> 
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STANDING ORDERS – You can set a standing order 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 – Congratulations to winner in the draw held on Saturday 22nd February with no.5. If you would like to join, please see a helper at the back of either church for available numbers to buy.

CHARITY

WIRRAL FOODBANK – Thank you for your continued support. Donations can be left at the back of 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.

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