

# HIGH TIDE



MAY 2026

# ST PAUL'S & FLEET

Worship • Parish life • Contact



## SUNDAY WORSHIP TIMES

### ST PAUL'S

- 9.45am Morning Prayer  
10.30am High Mass  
5.00pm Evensong & Benediction  
(4.00pm in winter time)

### FLEET

- 9.00am Low Mass with hymns  
*2nd Sunday of the month*

Daily services and special services are listed on our website or please get in touch.

*All are very welcome.*



### CLERGY

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Fr Tony Ball *Assistant Priest*  
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Fr James Baker *Assistant Priest*  
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### PASTORAL CARE

If you are ill, housebound, in hospital, or would like Holy Communion, Confession, or Anointing, please contact the Vicar. We are always happy to visit.

A priest is available for Confession or spiritual direction after each service or by appointment.



### CHURCHWARDENS

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### VISIT OUR WEBSITE

- Service times
- Photos
- News & events



[stpaulsweymouth.org](http://stpaulsweymouth.org)



### PARISH OFFICE & HALL

With enquiries about the parish or hiring the hall, please contact us.

📞 07356 256800

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### CONNECT WITH US



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*Many thanks to all who have contributed to this issue of the Parish Magazine. The next Magazine will be published on **Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> May**. Please send all articles, information, and news you wish to be published by Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> May.*

Front cover: “Coronation of the Virgin” by Catarino da Marco di Venezia  
1362-1390; Gallerie dell’Accademia, Venice (Italy)



**D**eary Beloved,

I am very pleased to commend to your attention the renewed Parish Magazine. I hope this new format will mean better readability and easier engagement. The work is not completely finished yet and some adjustment might still be necessary, so I encourage you to share your feedback and ideas.

The articles, where possible, are illustrated with images to capture attention and they are divided into categories of hopefully much wider interest. After my letter to you, indeed, there is the “Parish voices” section. I chose 1 Thess 5:11 to accompany it: *“Encourage one another and build up each other.”* A parish is always a family and no family can function without sharing and without showing interest in each other. The various and varied gifts we receive — spiritual knowledge, life experience, gardening, cooking, artistic sensibility, etc. — are there not only to enrich our own life but firstly to build up the Body of Christ. I very much hope then that more and more of you will contribute with an article, or with a few words, or perhaps a poem or joke you came across, a photo, or by sharing the wonders you encounter during your travels and holidays. It is a well-known philosophical principle that we cannot love what we do not know. Through sharing and showing interest let us then get to know each other so we can grow in our Christian love for each other.

Our Lord was very clear that it is not only with bread that man lives... but it doesn't mean we don't need bread too. So another category of articles is “Loaves and fishes” with the motto from Psalm 104 about the joy and gladness that bread, oil and wine brings to the human heart. The Lord Jesus repeatedly used the image of a feast to describe heaven. Good food and generous hospitality are very much cherished in our parishes, both at St Paul's and at Fleet. Many of you are great cooks and/or refined consumers of good food. :) Why not to

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share with others what brings joy to you. What a simple way to connect, to build relationships, to strengthen that fraternal Christian bond between us without which our witness will never be authentic.

Under the category of “The beauty of holiness” we will explore treasures from Christian art and history. These are often witnesses of our ancestors’ faith and still stand to encourage us. How wonderful a God our God must be if he inspires so much beauty!

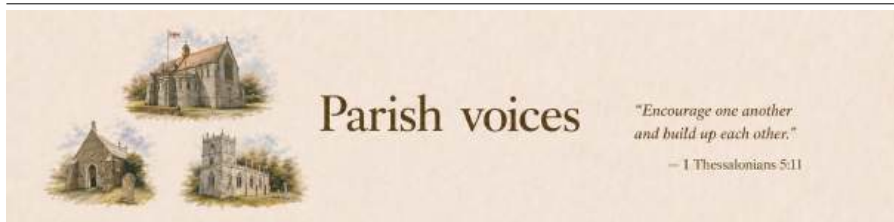
I could go on about all the other categories — worship, Scripture, Saints & Christian spirituality — but I hope you are, if not convinced, then at least inclined towards reading the Parish Magazine. I am always happy to bring into it good and solid Christian teaching. I hope your contribution will bring much more colour to it, serious and lighthearted alike.

Before I finish my letter to you I wanted to ask you to save a date into your diaries: our May Devotion Day on the 16<sup>th</sup> of May. The format will be that of the last year: worship, celebration and fellowship. We start the day with Holy Rosary at 10am followed by High Mass at 11am in honour of Our Lady with well-known and well-loved Walsingham hymns. Everyone is invited and encouraged to stay for a wonderful buffet lunch in the Parish Hall and the day will then end with Procession and Benediction at 2.45pm.

A beautiful day which this year will be even more special as it will also be the day of Gill Tankard’s funeral. Her Family and I agreed that since devotion to Our Lady of Walsingham was so important to Gill, it will be a fitting way to say our prayerful goodbyes to her on this day. The 11am Mass, offered for the repose of her soul, will indeed be followed by her funeral rites, just before lunch. At lunch we will raise a glass (preferably her favourite, Gin & Tonic) in thanksgiving for the time we were able to spend with her and for the gifts God bestowed on us through her (not least her brownies!). May she continue to do in heaven what so willingly she did on earth: pray for her parish(es) and priests and make sure all things are being done properly...

Assuring you of my prayers, I am,  
ever yours in Christ,

*Fr. Gregory*



## **Adoption**

*Irene Leader writes:*

**W**e are Kings and Priests, born into the family of God (Rev 1:6). Think how a child born into Royalty is raised. They know their identity; they know who they are.

Legal adoption, of course, is not how we come into the body of Christ. We are born anew by “water and the Spirit” (Jn 3:5) into the body of Christ; that is through the Sacrament of Baptism when the Holy Spirit is poured into our hearts with Its sanctifying grace, and with the virtues of faith, hope, and charity. We are truly given a new spirit, a new heart – we become a new creation. Knowing and keeping the (new) Law is part of this. In this act of pouring out of the Holy Spirit we are adopted as sons into God’s family, with all the privileges and resources of this position.

In Judaic law a natural son could be sent away or disinherited by the father; however, with an adopted child the situation was different. The act of adoption offered a secure and irrevocable position so disinheritance could not happen. With God we can always expect the best, and He makes you His best by giving His Son for you. Our adoption comes through faith in Jesus and through the empowering work of Holy Spirit in the sacramental act of Baptism (Eph 1:4-5).

James 2:10 speaks of keeping the Law. Man was not made to be subject to the Law. Rather, the Law was given to serve us and we keep it because it is precious to us. The Law is the Mosaic Law (given to Moses by God: Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy).

Often Scripture talks about and condemns the legalistic approach to the Law. What is condemned here is, of course, not the Law given by God but all the systems of human prescriptions and interpretation

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surrounding the Law. These are all like fence-laws put in place to make sure The Law is kept. While the intention was good, sadly these human systems surrounding the Law became as (or often even more) important as The Divine Law itself.

We all know examples of fence-laws from everyday situations. For example, if the Law is simply ‘do not tread on the grass,’ people will soon put up another sign to say, ‘stay 4ft from the verge’. To make sure that everyone does, soon another sign will be added, saying, ‘do not walk on the pavement this side.’ All to make sure you don’t tread on the grass...

We teach a child rules and regulations with explanations which are age-appropriate. When they are teenagers and don’t want all the rules and regulations, then often all we can do is to let them suffer the consequences of their bad decisions for their own good (tempering the consequences, of course, where necessary). Many think about reaching adulthood as an expansion of privileges. However, to God, reaching Christian adulthood, means accepting responsibility.

Adoption, especially in the Bible, is always more than simply becoming part of a family. Adoption also means, for example, that the father transfers the family business to the adopted son so the son legally becomes the heir of everything pertaining to the family business. Adoption is not self-serving.

While not part of God’s revelation, Jewish and Christian spiritual writers have always delighted in the symbolic interpretation of Hebrew letters due to their curious and unique form. The 13<sup>th</sup> letter of the Hebrew alphabet is Mem, representing water, of which there are two: open and closed. The open Mem is the symbol of God’s word poured out on all. The closed Mem, on the other hand, symbolises me and my relationship with God. In this relationship God’s word comes alive in my mind and heart. Truth unfolds in a closed Mem relationship: it is the truth for the point at which I am in my life. The moment I choose to follow it, it comes alive to me. This is the grace of God. This grace is always very personal in the sense that its revelation and unfolding is tailored to me, takes me into account, and might be meaningless to somebody else.





Only through Jesus do we become heirs by adoption (Galatians 4:1-7). The Bible uses an example from human Royal families of its time. While an heir was underage, he was no different from a slave. The heir was under a guardian until a time appointed by the father. He was legally the heir but was not regarded or looked at as a King.

We think of a child by numerical age: they pass to adulthood on reaching a certain (usually 18 or 21) age. In the Bible, the transition from child to heir is not by age but by character, so to say. A person, in order to be considered adult, must act, function, and think like one. As the heir goes through training in warfare, law, economics, etc., he is not allowed to ascend the throne until after all there is to be learned is indeed learned. This biblical example from antiquity shows clearly the paradox of such heir. He lives in the realm of royalty already, and he is, in fact, the heir, but he is not yet ruling the kingdom.

The same is true of us. While we tend to think of authority in legal terms (what I am allowed to do) or as a position (of power, or respect, etc), it is more scriptural to think about it in terms of responsibility because authority and responsibility go together. They cannot be separated.

Jesus did not do away with the Law as such (Mt 5:17), not even with the Old Testament Law during his earthly ministry. Instead, he gave us the New Law which serves as a tutor, steward, or guardian to prepare us for grace: it establishes values and understanding. This New Law is a lifetime of small decisions made for God; it is putting into practice our sonship and adoption, keeping God's commands and holding fast our testimony about Jesus. This, often, calls for patient endurance on the part of the people of God. However, of course, it is the grace of God that gives us the power to be able to live and function in this New Law, as a son.

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## The Call


*Caron Yardley writes:*

Many years ago I found myself living in a women's homeless refuge. There were others who, like myself, were waiting to be housed and had our own rooms while a number of rooms were kept empty and 'ready' for emergencies who only stayed for one or two days. There was a lot of coming and going.

Once there was a young lady in her early twenties who came into the house in the middle of the night and who no one seemed to know, as she kept to herself. She only crept out of her room in the middle of the night to eat and do her washing, and stayed hidden the rest of the time. We didn't even know her name.

Anyway, it was a Friday night when I was awoken by incessant banging and shouting on the front door. My room was above the front door so I was always the one who got to answer it, and so I did. It was the Police asking if a Kryztina lived there and what room she was in. I did not know the name but suggested the room on the top floor where this young lady was as they were adamant they had the right address. I let them in and showed them to the room in question. The Police kept knocking and had no answer and were getting a little anxious. Then one of them looked under the door as there was a wide gap and confirmed someone was in there. They shouted some more and then asked me where the landlord was and how to contact them.

I provided the information and given how late it was there was no immediate answering of the phone. Eventually they got through and asked the landlord if they could ram the door to get to Kryztina. Reluctantly the landlord agreed and they began the process of organising the ram to be brought to the house. I was asked to tell the other women to stay inside their doorways and to keep the landings and stairwells free, and so I did. The ramming equipment arrived at the house fairly quickly and so the process started. It took quite a few attempts until the door frame gave way first, and then they could enter the room and attend to an unconscious Kryztina on her bed.




She had indeed taken her own life. The two Policemen started CPR and at that point I was asked to go out into the street to flag the Ambulance down, and so I did. They arrived very promptly but were blocked at the end of the road by a car that refused to move. I ran over to the car and told them what was going on and to please let the Ambulance through. They moved on with a lot of cursing and moaning. I guided the Ambulance to where they needed to go as I had left the front door open for them and followed them into the house after I had walked back up the street, dealing with heavy asthma in the cold, wet, night air that night. The Ambulance took control of the scene and Kryztina was taken by them to hospital in an emergency chair - the stairwell was too narrow for anything else.

The next day we were all upset by this incident. Kryztina had been resuscitated and none of us knew if she'd be alright or return or anything!

Come Sunday and I had just returned from church and was the only one in the house. Again, the banging on the front door had me dashing downstairs to answer it. It was two Ambulance attendants. They asked me if I lived there and if I or anyone else would be around for the next 24 hours. I confirmed and then Kryztina was brought out of the Ambulance and into the house. I noticed that she just walked on ahead like a zombie, in a daze, head down, one small heavy step at a time, quiet and distant. I checked with the Ambulance attendants if she was okay and if there was anything we could do – and they said just to “keep an eye on her”. Given we'd never spoken before, and as she'd kept to herself and clearly wanted it that way, I pondered how it was going to be possible to do so without coming across as ‘interfering’.

Anyway, I followed on behind her and as she passed my room there was this overwhelming moment of something that filled me. And it was also at this exact moment that ‘it’ happened. An unexplainable feeling, calling, stirring, force, compelling and overcoming me in an instant. It was a ripple through my entire body. It felt like love, a very powerful strong love like no other. It was urging and guiding me to do something. I don't recall any thoughts in that moment because it was an infinitesimal instant of time. I didn't



ignore it. Therefore, I didn't have time to make a choice or decision of 'should I or shouldn't I' because if I had chosen to ignore the moment then the opportunity would have passed. The moment would have passed for, as well all know, when 'thinking' takes over and we start overthinking and debating the fors and againts, the do's and don'ts, the advantages and disadvantages etc. both the moment and the opportunity are lost.

I totally surrendered in that moment and did what I was compelled to do. On reflection I can recall that the feeling compelling me was nice and so energising and 'different'. Different from any other feeling I had ever had in my life. And unexplainable too. So, what did this invisible force compel me to do? In that instant of compulsion and surrender I called out Kryztina's name. She stopped, lifted her head and turned to face me, surprised I knew her name.

She was so sad it was palpable. That compelling force guided me over to her and I took her in my arms like a mother, held her close and told her I loved her and thanked God that she was still alive and with us. That's all. That was all that this compelling force wanted me to do. Nothing else. No other words and no other actions. Just this.

We stayed in this embrace for a little while before she headed off to her room upstairs and I into mine, watching her as she went up, and offering my help if she needed any. For the rest of the day and night we saw nothing of her and I hoped and prayed she was okay. But the next morning I was surprised to find her downstairs in the kitchen talking with the other women in the house ... happy, almost, and fine and normal.

What a transformation. I was filled with joy at seeing this. When she saw me her face lit up. I joined in with the small talk until the other women left one by one and it was just the two of us. Kryztina told me that I had saved her life and wanted to thank me. I immediately denied any credit in saving her life and told her point-blank that it was the Police who saved her and resuscitated her and the Ambulance who stabilised her. But she kept moving her head side to side in denial. "*No*", she said, "*you saved my life yesterday*".


At this I was confused and so I asked "How?" She went on to tell me that she had every intention of taking her life again, but not

telling anyone and doing it in such a way that she'd only be found when it was days too late. But, that the moment I had taken her in my arms and cuddled her was what stopped her from doing so. In her mind, it was that instant that had saved her life and gave her the will to continue to live.

I was speechless and astounded and a bit confused, but she went on to tell me why. She went on to tell me that she had grown up in Romania and was kidnapped when she was about 7 years old and taken to South America where she had become a sex slave for countless men. She had been trafficked from place to place by being drugged until she was unconscious, placed in a box and shipped to another place. She didn't even know what country she was in as she was never told where she was going, she just knew that when they put her in a box that she would be changing countries again. She went on to tell me her life story and of all the tragic things that had happened in her short life as a small child, teen and now young adult ... who also struggled with MS.

All she ever knew in her life was abuse. She told me that my cuddling her and telling her she was loved made her feel like that little girl she once was who was loved and protected by her mother all those years before she was kidnapped. As she unfolded her story and her feelings to me, I stood motionless and speechless. A lump was in my throat preventing me from speaking, tears had welled in my eyes and I just felt so desperately sad for her. I could only take her in my arms again and tell her that I meant everything ... and she said that she knew I did.

As it turned out she had been one of many young women and children who had been found and rescued from a child sex trafficking ring who had all been given safe refuge at various places across the UK where a room was available. Kryztina ended up where I was living at that time. However, she had to move on by the next day, to another location far away. She didn't want to go, she wanted to connect with me but the officials caring for these poor souls had other plans for them, which I assume included physical and psychological help and support. Maybe even reuniting them with their real families. I hope so. I pray that this happened at some point in time. As much



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as we shared this tender connection for a short time, I was confident that the right people would now be helping her and that I was not equipped to be part of that process. But she stays in my heart regardless.

When Kryztina revealed her story I realised what that invisible, compelling, guiding force was. God's love working in and through me. Kryztina had made prayers and God heard them. God is not here in physical form but can and certainly *does* work in and through us in many different ways to answer our prayers among many other things that are according to His will. God really does love us all. However, when He moves through us, comes to us in a tiny spark of a moment, to say or do something out of the blue, that we might not ordinarily be compelled to do ourselves, do we instantly reject that moment or surrender to it? In these moments there is *no* time to think and choose.

I believe we are all called to moments like this, but often shy away once the mind starts overthinking it. In fact, once the mind starts mulling it over the moment is lost because it then becomes a human choice, with all that goes with thinking something through. We often wonder how come there are people who can run into a burning house and save someone inside it, and their response is always the same. They didn't think about it, they just did it. And every time this happens, they save the individual inside and they are not harmed. [I am not suggesting we all run into burning buildings by the way either!] I can only liken my experience to something like this. And I am so very humbled that I was chosen.

So, how can I relate Scripture to this moment? Romans comes to mind, God calling us to cooperate with Him, on His behalf, to provide His love and according to His purpose. Then there is 1 John, "*God is love, and he who dwells in love is dwelling in God, and God in him*".

Don't get me wrong, Scripture was the last thing on my mind at this time, and I had my own fair share of trauma going on in my own life at that time! It took a lot of reflection in order to make the connections and understand this moment and the power of it, and the effects of those ripples of love that were created by His Grace.

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In closing, I reflect on John's words that many are invited but few are chosen. I would hazard that maybe we are all chosen in some small or large way to act in a moment of compelling but do we allow ourselves be stirred into surrender or do we dismiss that force?

That moment, that day, changed me and taught me so much. I am so blessed and thankful for being chosen for that moment and being open enough to surrender and do as I was compelled to do.

How wonderful is that? And what a gift.

## **Being Prepared**

*Sharon Waight writes:*

**D**uring Lent I have been reflecting on the words preparation and being prepared. In our spiritual life being prepared during Lent means engaging in a 40-day journey of spiritual renewal, repentance, and reflection to be ready for the Joy of Easter. For St Paul, an inner conversion, moving beyond surface, actions to a genuine change of heart. To be prepared means to get ready beforehand, be informed, to get organised in advance, to plan ahead—all this, to allow us to respond to challenges and opportunities better than when unprepared.

I think about the term being prepared in my professional life as a nurse, as something that I prepare for in a very proactive sense for the task ahead. For example, preparing to provide a patient's wound care and treatment, a change of wound dressing, administer a Covid vaccine injection. Or preparing to teach nurses a topic associated with my discipline: nursing. Such preparation involves having the necessary equipment ready beforehand, knowing the underpinning knowledge, researching and collating information. Usually, such preparations are thought of in a tangible way, this preparation feels real, touched, measured, and in this sense seem to be easily understood. Whilst thinking about being prepared in this way, it is a preparation of cognition and technical skill, of feelings, thoughts, and a sense of responsibility.

There have been some examples during Lent that have prompted me to think about preparing for and being prepared for something in



a deeper sense. Examples that have prompted deeper thoughts and caused me to question what does being prepared involve, when does it happen, start, and how do humans prepare for challenges and opportunities.

The first example involved listening to the Artemis 2 crew's preparations for their journey of exploration, an opportunity of a lifetime: travelling to the far side of the moon. The astronauts looked physically super fit, a physical preparation which did not just happen, and certainly required personal effort and training over many years, to achieve a maximum cardiovascular, respiratory, and kidney function. Their preparation also involved, it goes without saying, their technical and intellectual preparations.

Listening more carefully to the Artemis 2 crew they also explained their preparation in emotional, psychological and spiritual ways. Each astronaut shared how important friendship and their relationship with each other became. They described how they valued and respected each other and contributions each person made to the team. Crew members described bringing their emotional, social, ethical and spiritual self for their mission. Each crew member invested personally in their beliefs and values, respect, being

respectful, trust, being trustworthy to their team. They described being prepared spiritually, emotionally, mentally, and socially for their task ahead of them, which I can imagine as an exciting, yet challenging journey of a lifetime ahead of them.

In this second example, a little closer to home, I thought about the last week of term when the children from Beechcroft school came to church to explore the Stations of the Cross. At one station, the children each had the opportunity to make a Rosary. Each child had the opportunity to listen to the story of the Rosary beforehand. Their preparation involved gaining an understanding and knowledge about the Rosary. Then each child was given beads, thread, a paper heart to make their own Rosary.

One child asked me for help to make a Rosary, and in this child's words, *'help to make it properly, with love'*, as this child further explained to me, this was going to be given to someone very special. This child portrayed preparation as involving knowledge of how to do it and brought a deep emotional, spiritual self of being prepared, in making this Rosary. There was then an investment of the child's own thoughts, feelings, emotions, it was made with love, it was important and an item of significance and meaning to this child. This example demonstrated that being prepared was more than having knowledge, a technical ability and for this child it involved bringing their own emotions, thoughts and feelings in preparing this Rosary.

These examples portray a deeper sense of being prepared and what this involves. Recognising that emotions, feelings, personally held values and beliefs also have a part in and help us to be prepared and invested in what we do. We bring knowledge, technical ability, our spirituality, what matters to each of us, emotions, feelings, our values and beliefs, these accompany us in what we are about to do.

Whilst I understand that 'Being Prepared' may not always lead to things working out as we expect and anticipate, since conditions, situations we find ourselves in are complex and will impact us differently. Being Prepared does involve bringing feelings, emotions, a sense of spirituality, personally held values and beliefs, that in turn prepare us for our investment in what we are getting ready for and for that genuine change of heart.

Calendar, service times,  
and prayer intentions

Anniversaries of death

Order of Morning and Evening Prayer

## Calendar for May 2026

FRI	1 <sup>st</sup>	<b>Sts Philip &amp; James, Apostles</b>	12pm
SAT	2 <sup>nd</sup>	St Athanasius Bishop	9.30am
SUN	3 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>FINDING OF THE H. CROSS</b>	10.30am, 5pm
MON	4 <sup>th</sup>	The Martyrs of England & Wales	9am
TUE	5 <sup>th</sup>	St Pius V. Pope	9am
WED	6 <sup>th</sup>	St Dominic Savio (Rogation Day)	10am
THU	7 <sup>th</sup>	St Stanislaus Bp., Martyr (Rogation)	6pm
FRI	8 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Feria</i>	12pm
SAT	9 <sup>th</sup>	St. Gregory Nazianzen Bp., Doct.	9.30am
SUN	10 <sup>th</sup>	<b>5<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER EASTER</b>	10.30am, 5pm
MON	11 <sup>th</sup>	Minor Rogation Day	9am
TUE	12 <sup>th</sup>	Minor Rogation Day	9am
WED	13 <sup>th</sup>	Vigil & Minor Rogation Day	10am
THU	14 <sup>th</sup>	<b>ASCENSION</b>	10am, 6pm
FRI	15 <sup>th</sup>	St John Baptist de la Salle	12pm
SAT	16 <sup>th</sup>	May Devotion Day	9.30am
SUN	17 <sup>th</sup>	<b>SUNDAY AFTER ASCENSION</b>	10.30am, 5pm
MON	18 <sup>th</sup>	St Venantius, Martyr	9am
TUE	19 <sup>th</sup>	St Peter Celestine, Pope	9am
WED	20 <sup>th</sup>	St Bernardine of Siena	10am
THU	21 <sup>st</sup>	<b>Monthly Requiem</b>	6pm
FRI	22 <sup>nd</sup>	<i>Feria</i>	12pm
SAT	23 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>VIGIL</b>	9.30am
SUN	24 <sup>th</sup>	<b>PENTECOST</b>	10.30am, 5pm
MON	25 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Whit Monday</b>	9am
TUE	26 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Whit Tuesday</b>	9am
WED	27 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Whit Wednesday</b>	10am
THU	28 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Whit Thursday</b>	6pm
FRI	29 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Whit Friday</b>	12pm
SAT	30 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Whit Saturday</b>	9.30am
SUN	31 <sup>st</sup>	<b>TRINITY SUNDAY</b>	10.30am

## **Daily intentions & anniversaries of death**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Dying - *Sarah Grainger, Maurice Galling, Richard Limb*  
2<sup>nd</sup> Shrine of Walsingham
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Our Parishes - *Kenneth Kemp pr., Hamish Roger Grierson*  
4<sup>th</sup> Our Benefactors  
5<sup>th</sup> Our PCC - *Marjorie Wray, Bert Sertin, Daisy Bown*  
6<sup>th</sup> Beechcroft & Conifers - *Joy Scriven*  
7<sup>th</sup> Priests & vocations  
8<sup>th</sup> Deeper love for the Eucharist - *Jim Clothier, Gillian Hubbard*  
9<sup>th</sup> Our Cell of O.L.W. - *Jane Taylor*
- 10<sup>th</sup> Our Parishes - *Tony Hamshaw*  
11<sup>th</sup> Reconciliation in our church & in our families - *David Thomas bp.*  
12<sup>th</sup> Persecuted Christians - *Paulette Gasser*  
13<sup>th</sup> Our Choir & Organists  
14<sup>th</sup> Our Parishes  
15<sup>th</sup> Families - *Roger Pittard pr.*  
16<sup>th</sup> Peace especially in Gaza, Palestine, Iran, & Ukraine
- 17<sup>th</sup> Our Parishes - *Marjorie Bishop, Norman Moore*  
18<sup>th</sup> For HM The King - *Frank Woods*  
19<sup>th</sup> Migrants and refugees - *Carol Wilson*  
20<sup>th</sup> Each other & for the gifts of the Holy Spirit  
21<sup>st</sup> Departed  
22<sup>nd</sup> The sick - *Jenifer Cooper*  
23<sup>rd</sup> Our neighbourhood and its coming to Christ in faith
- 24<sup>th</sup> Our Parishes  
25<sup>th</sup> Grace of final perseverance & of a holy death - *Ted Moggeridge*  
26<sup>th</sup> Our missionary & evangelistic renewal  
27<sup>th</sup> Our Servers  
28<sup>th</sup> Those who hunger - *Dick Evans, Nan Evans*  
29<sup>th</sup> For gentleness, joy and forgiveness - *Janet Allen*  
30<sup>th</sup> S.P.O.T. & volunteers  
31<sup>st</sup> Our Parishes - *Nigel Brown*

*If there are names missing, or you want to add names please talk to the Vicar.*

Open, O Lord, my mouth to bless thy holy Name; cleanse also my heart from all vain, evil, and wandering thoughts; enlighten my understanding and kindle my affections; that I may worthily, attentively, and devoutly recite this Morning Prayer, and so be meet to be heard before the presence of thy divine Majesty. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### MORNING PRAYER

Joy to thee, O Queen of heaven, alleluia. He whom thou wast meet to bear, alleluia. As he promised, hath arisen, alleluia. Pour for us to God thy prayer, alleluia.

V. Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, alleluia.

R. For the Lord has risen indeed, alleluia.

V. Let us pray. O God, who through the resurrection of thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ didst vouchsafe to give joy to the world: grant, we beseech thee, that through His Mother, the Virgin Mary, we may obtain the joys of everlasting life. Through Christ our Lord. R. Amen.

V. O Lord, open my lips. R. And my mouth shall proclaim your praise. V. O God, make speed to save me. R. O Lord, make haste to help me. V. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. R. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Alleluia!

V. Let us rejoice in the Lord; let us joyfully sing to God our Saviour! Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us joyfully sing psalms to him! R. Alleluia, the Spirit of the Lord fills the world: alleluia.

V. For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods. In his hands are the depths of the earth; and the heights of the mountains are his. R. O come, let us worship Him, alleluia.

V. The sea is his, for who but he made it; and his hands fashioned the dry land. O come, let us worship and fall down, and weep before the Lord who made us! For he is the Lord our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. R. Alleluia, the Spirit of the Lord fills the world: alleluia.

**V.** Today if you shall hear his voice, harden not your hearts: As in the provocation, on the day of temptation in the wilderness, where your fathers tempted me, and put me to the test, and they saw my works.

**R.** O come, let us worship Him, alleluia.

**V.** For forty years I loathed that generation, and I said: They always err in heart, they have not known my ways, so I swore in my wrath: they shall not enter my rest. **R.** Alleluia, the Spirit of the Lord fills the world: alleluia.

**V.** Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

**R.** O come, let us worship Him, alleluia.

### Hymn

Eternal Monarch, King most high,  
Whose blood hath brought redemption nigh,  
By whom the death of death was wrought  
And conquering grace's battle fought:

Ascending to the throne of might,  
And seated at the Father's right,  
All power in heaven is Jesu's own,  
That here his manhood had not known.

That so, in nature's triple frame,  
Each heavenly and each earthly name,  
And things in hell's abyss abhorred,  
May bend the knee and own him Lord.

Yea, angels tremble when they see  
How changed is our humanity;  
That flesh hath purged what flesh  
had stained,  
And God, the flesh of God, hath reigned.

Be thou our joy and strong defence,  
Who art our future recompense:  
So shall the light that springs from thee  
Be ours through all eternity.

To thee we therefore humbly pray  
That thou wouldst purge our sins away,  
And draw our hearts by cords of grace  
To thy celestial dwelling-place.

So when the judgement day shall come,  
And all must rise to meet their doom,  
Thou wilt remit the debts we owe,  
And our lost crowns again bestow.

O risen Christ, ascended Lord,  
All praise to thee let earth accord,  
Who art, while endless ages run,  
With Father and with Spirit One.  
Amen.

*The appointed Psalm(s) and Reading(s) follow:*

1	Psalm 139	Proverbs 4:10-18 James 1:1-12	<b>3</b>	<b>2, 8, 146</b>	<b>Genesis 3:1-15 John 12:27-36</b>
2	31	Exodus 40:17-end Luke 4:31-37	4	32	Numbers 9:15-end Luke 4:38-end

5	34	Numbers 11:1-33 Luke 5:1-11	19	57	Numbers 23:1-12 Luke 8:1-15
6	36	Numbers 12 Luke 5:12-26	20	63	Numbers 23:13-end Luke 8:16-25
7	41	Numbers 13 Luke 5:27-end	21	68	Numbers 24 Luke 8:26-39
8	42	Numbers 14:1-25 Luke 6:1-11	22	70	Numbers 27:12-end Luke 8:40-end
9	44	Numbers 14:26-end Luke 6:12-26	23	71	Numbers 32:1-27 Luke 9:1-17
<b>10</b>	<b>73 v. 21-28</b>	<b>Job 14:7-27 1 Thess 4:13-end</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>Genesis 11:1-9 Acts 10:34-end</b>
11	48	Numbers 16:1-35 Luke 6:27-38	25	81	Exodus 35,30-end Galatians 5,13-end
12	50	Numbers 16:36-end Luke 6:39-end	26	93	Numbers 27,15-end 1 Corinthians 3
13	51	Numbers 17:1-11 Luke 7:1-10	27	30	1 Samuel 10,1-10 1 Corinthians 12,1-13
14	110, 150	Isaiah 52:7-end Hebrews 7:26-end	28	24	1 Kings 19,1-18 Matthew 3,13-end
15	54	Numbers 20 Luke 7:11-17	29	28	Ezekiel 11,14-20 Matthew 10,1-20
16	55	Numbers 21:4-9 Luke 7:18-35	30	43	Ezekiel 36,22-28 Matthew 12,22-32
<b>17</b>	<b>104 v. 26-35</b>	<b>Isaiah 65:17-end Revelation 21:1-8</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>86 v. 8-13</b>	<b>Exodus 3:1-15 John 17:1-11</b>
18	56	Numbers 22 Luke 7:36-end			

*Each reading ends with these words:*

**V.** This is the word of the Lord.  
**R.** Thanks be to God.

*Ant:* Send forth your Spirit, alleluia, and you shall renew the face of the earth, alleluia, alleluia.

Blessed be the Lord the God of Israel, \*  
    who has come to his people and set them free.  
He has raised up for us a mighty Saviour, \*  
    born of the house of his servant David.  
Through his holy prophets God promised of old \*  
    to save us from our enemies, from the hands of all that hate us,  
To show mercy to our ancestors, \*  
    and to remember his holy covenant.  
This was the oath God swore to our father Abraham: \*  
    to set us free from the hands of our enemies,  
Free to worship him without fear, \*  
    holy and righteous in his sight all the days of our life.  
And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High, \*  
    for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,  
To give his people knowledge of salvation \*  
    by the forgiveness of all their sins.  
In the tender compassion of our God \*  
    the dawn from on high shall break upon us,  
To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, \*  
    and to guide our feet into the way of peace.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, \*  
    and to the Holy Spirit.  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, \*  
    world without end. Amen.

*Ant:* Send forth your Spirit, alleluia, and you shall renew the face of the earth, alleluia, alleluia.

*V.* Let us pray. – ***Intercessions** are offered for the Church, for the Sovereign (the world), for those in need, and for the dead. Then follows the Collect:*

Grant, we beseech you, almighty God: that we, who believe your only-begotten Son, our Redeemer, to have ascended into heaven, may also ourselves dwell in mind amid heavenly things. Through the same Christ our Lord. *R.* Amen.

**V.** Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

**V.** The Lord bless us, and preserve us from all evil, and keep us in eternal life. **R.** Amen. **V.** Let us bless the Lord, alleluia, alleluia. **R.** Thanks be to God, alleluia, alleluia. **V.** And may the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. **R.** Amen.

### EVENING PRAYER

**J**oy to thee, O Queen of Heaven, alleluia. He whom thou wast meet to bear, alleluia. As he promised, hath arisen, alleluia. Pour for us to God thy prayer, alleluia.

**V.** Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, alleluia.

**R.** For the Lord has risen indeed, alleluia.

**V.** Let us pray. O God, who through the resurrection of Thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ didst vouchsafe to give joy to the world: grant, we beseech thee, that through His Mother, the Virgin Mary, we may obtain the joys of everlasting life. Through Christ our Lord. **R.** Amen.

**V.** O God, make speed to save me. **R.** O Lord, make haste to help me. **V.** Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. **R.** As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Alleluia!

### Hymn

Come, Thou holy Paraclete,  
And from Thy celestial seat  
Send Thy light and brilliancy:

Father of the poor, draw near;  
Giver of all gifts, be here;  
Come, the soul's true radiancy.

Come, of comforters the best,  
Of the soul the sweetest guest,  
Come in toil refreshingly:

Thou in labour rest most sweet,  
Thou art shadow from the heat,  
Comfort in adversity.

O Thou Light, most pure and blest,  
 Shine within the inmost breast  
 Of Thy faithful company.

Where Thou art not, man hath nought;  
 Every holy deed and thought  
 Comes from Thy divinity.

What is soilèd, make Thou pure;  
 What is wounded, work its cure;  
 What is parchèd, fructify;

What is rigid, gently bend;  
 What is frozen, warmly tend;  
 Strengthen what goes erringly.

Fill Thy faithful, who confide  
 In Thy power to guard and guide,  
 With Thy sevenfold mystery.

Here Thy grace and virtue send:  
 Grant salvation to the end,  
 And in Heav'n felicity. Amen.

1	Psalm 149	Job 23,1-12 John 1,43-end	12	45	Deuteronomy 28:1-14 1 Peter 4:12-end
2	29	Deuteronomy 15:1-18 Ephesians 6:10-end	13	46	2 Samuel 23:1-5 Colossians 2:20 - 3:4
<b>3</b>	<b>110, 150</b>	<b>Isaiah 63:1-16</b> <b>1 Cor 1:18-25</b>	14	8	2 Kings 2:1-15 Revelation 5
4	33	Deuteronomy 16:1-20 1 Peter 1:1-12	15	66	Deuteronomy 29 1 John 1
5	35	Deuteronomy 17:8-end 1 Peter 1:13-end	16	49	Deuteronomy 30 1 John 2:1-17
6	37	Deuteronomy 18:9-end 1 Peter 2:1-10	<b>17</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>Ephesians 1:15-end</b> <b>Mark 16:14-end</b>
7	38	Deuteronomy 19 1 Peter 2:11-end	18	52	Deuteronomy 31:1-13 1 John 2:18-end
8	39	Deuteronomy 22:1-8 1 Peter 3:1-12	19	53	Deut 31:14-end 1 John 3:1-10
9	40	Deuteronomy 24:5-end 1 Peter 3:13-end	20	58	Deuteronomy 32:1-14 1 John 3:11-end
<b>10</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>Revel 21:22 - 22:5</b> <b>John 21:1-14</b>	21	59	Deut 32:15-47 1 John 4:1-6
11	60	Deuteronomy 26 1 Peter 4:1-11	22	81	Deuteronomy 33 1 John 4:7-end

23	48	Deuteronomy 16:9-15 John 15:26 - 16:15	28	97	Daniel 3,47-51 Acts 8,5-8
<b>24</b>	<b>67, 133</b>	<b>Acts 2:14-21</b> <b>Luke 24:44-end</b>	29	98	Joel 2,23-27 Luke 5,17-26
25	20	Leviticus 23,9-17 Acts 10,42-48	30	100	Joel 2,28-32 Romans 5,1-5
26	72	Deuteronomy 26,1-11 Acts 8,14-17	<b>31</b>	<b>93, 150</b>	<b>Isaiah 6:1-8</b> <b>John 16:5-15</b>
27	96	Leviticus 26,3-12 Acts 2,14-21			

*Each reading ends with these words:*

**V.** This is the word of the Lord.

**R.** Thanks be to God.

*Ant:* I will not leave you orphans, alleluia; I go away, and come again unto you, alleluia, and your heart shall rejoice, alleluia.

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,+  
my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour; \*

he has looked with favour on his lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed;+

the Almighty has done great things for me \*

and holy is his name.

He has mercy on those who fear him, \*

from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm \*

and has scattered the proud in their conceit,

Casting down the mighty from their thrones \*

and lifting up the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things \*

and sent the rich away empty.

He has come to the aid of his servant Israel, \*

to remember his promise of mercy,

The promise made to our ancestors, \*

to Abraham and his children for ever.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, \*  
and to the Holy Spirit.  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, \*  
world without end. Amen.

*Ant:* I will not leave you orphans, alleluia; I go away, and come again unto you, alleluia, and your heart shall rejoice, alleluia.

*V.* Let us pray. – *Intercessions are offered for the Church, for the Sovereign (world), for those in need, our Benefactors, and for the dead. Then the Collect is said:* Grant, we beseech you, almighty God: that we, who believe your only-begotten Son, our Redeemer, to have ascended into heaven, may also ourselves dwell in mind amid heavenly things. Through the same Christ our Lord. *R.* Amen.

*V.* Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

*All:* The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. Amen.

*V.* Let us bless the Lord, alleluia, alleluia.

*R.* Thanks be to God, alleluia, alleluia.

*V.* And may the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

*R.* Amen.

*Evening Prayer ends with the following praise:*

**T**o the Most Holy and undivided Trinity, to our Lord Jesus Christ Crucified, to the fruitful Virginity of the most blessed and most glorious Mary, always a Virgin, and to the holiness of all the Saints be ascribed everlasting praise, honour, and glory, by all creatures, and to us be granted the forgiveness of all our sins, world without end. Amen.

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## Curiosities from British legislation

*Jeanne James writes:*

**H**ere are some unusual British laws that technically still exist (or have existed in statute law). Some are rarely enforced today but remain famous curiosities of British law.

1. Under the Salmon Act 1986 it is illegal to handle salmon in suspicious circumstances.
  2. In London it is illegal to beat or shake carpets out of a window after 8am (except doormats).
  3. It is technically illegal to die inside the Palace of Westminster, though this is more myth than enforceable law.
  4. Under the Treasure Act 1996, if you find hidden treasure, you must report it or you could be committing an offence.
  5. It is illegal to be drunk in charge of cattle under the Licensing Act 1872.
  6. The same law also makes it illegal to be drunk while in charge of a steam engine.
  7. You can be fined if you fly a kite in a public place and it annoys people under the Town Police Clauses Act 1847.
  8. It is illegal to knock on someone's door and run away (known as "knock down ginger") under the same Town Police Clauses Act 1847.
  9. Also under that act, it's illegal to slide on ice or snow in the street if it causes obstruction.
  10. Placing a postage stamp bearing the monarch's head upside down on an envelope is considered treason.
  11. It is illegal to let your pet mate in the street in some local by-laws.
  12. In some parts of the UK it's illegal to carry a plank of wood along a pavement.
  13. Under the Metropolitan Police Act 1839 it is illegal to shake a rug or mat in the street except before 8am.
  14. The same act makes it illegal to drive cattle through the streets during certain hours.
-

15. In York, legend says it is legal to shoot a Scotsman with a bow and arrow (except on Sundays).
16. It is technically illegal to wear a suit of armour inside the Houses of Parliament under the Statute of Northampton 1328.
17. Members of Parliament are not allowed to resign, but they can accept a ceremonial office instead (a workaround still used today).
18. You cannot block the pavement with goods for sale without permission.
19. It is illegal to obstruct a police officer even accidentally.
20. You must not bury a body anywhere except an authorised burial ground.\*
21. You cannot keep a pigsty at the front of your house in many historic bylaws.
22. You may be fined for singing loudly and badly late at night if it causes a disturbance.
23. You cannot gamble in the street.
24. You cannot carry a loaded firearm in public without good reason.
25. It is illegal to cause a nuisance with fireworks in public places under the Explosives Act 1875.

\* The Vicar, as “expert in burials” wishes to point out that n. 20, strictly speaking, is not true. The statement is often used as a simplified guideline to **discourage** (!) illegal or unsafe burials. Private burials, including in your own land or garden, though heavily regulated, can be legal. So, if you wish to bury someone in your garden ... well, please do *not* speak to the Vicar!





## Sandwiches that are *only* normal in Britain...

There are twenty-one sandwiches in Britain that would get you sectioned in any other country. Masterpieces that are normal here, but nowhere else. We are talking combinations so bizarre, so wonderfully British, the rest of the world thinks we are having them on. But why does the planet think we have lost the plot?

Let's start with the one that sounds normal until you describe it to a foreigner. A *cheese and onion sandwich* in Britain means sliced cheddar and raw onion rings on white bread. No cooking, no toasting, no fancy relish. Just cold cheese, raw onion, and perhaps a scrape of butter if you are feeling generous. In France, they would insist on melting the cheese. In America, they would grill it. But here, this is a packed lunch classic that has been fuelling school days and building sites since the '50s. The secret is in the cheddar. British cheddar, particularly the mature variety, has a sharpness that cuts through the bite of the onion. It works precisely because neither ingredient is trying to be anything other than what it is. Honest, uncomplicated, and distinctly ours.

If you think cheese and onion sounds straightforward, wait until you hear about the sandwich that turned a frozen rectangle into a national treasure. The *fish finger sandwich* is arguably Britain's greatest contribution to culinary engineering. Birds Eye launched the fish finger in 1955, developed at their factory in Great Yarmouth. Within a decade, it accounted for 10% of all UK fish consumption. The name itself was chosen by female factory workers in a vote, who thankfully rejected the original title of "battered cod pieces". Around 1.5 million fish fingers are eaten in Britain every single day and an estimated 70% of British children have had their first taste of fish from one. The classic version calls for white bread, butter, and a

squirt of ketchup. Purists insist on tartare sauce instead. Captain Birds Eye first appeared in adverts in 1967, played by actor John Hewer for over three decades. Birds Eye tried to retire the character in 1971, even placing a mock obituary in *The Times*. The public refused to accept it, and he was back by 1974.

Speaking of things that sound too simple to work, our next sandwich involves an ingredient you would normally put in your tea: *sugar*. This is the sandwich that horrifies health-conscious visitors. Sliced white, a thick layer of butter, and a liberal sprinkling of granulated sugar. That's the entire recipe, if you can even call it that. This was common in British homes during and after the Second World War, when rationing meant anything remotely sweet was a luxury. Sugar was among the few affordable treats, and spreading it on bread became a quick, cheap way to give children something that felt like pudding. Plenty of people born in the '40s and '50s will tell you it was an after-school regular. The bread had to be white, the butter real, and the sugar had to crunch. The texture was half the appeal. Try explaining this to someone outside Britain and you will be met with bewilderment.

From the sweetest sandwich in Britain, we are heading to something altogether darker and more mysterious. Bovril on bread reveals your age and your postcode. Spread thinly on toast with a slick of butter, it is savoury, intensely beefy, and bewildering to anyone who didn't grow up with that distinctive bulbous jar in the cupboard. The stuff was invented by a Scottish butcher named John Lawson Johnston during the Franco-Prussian War in 1870. The name fuses the Latin for ox with "vril", a



fictional energy force from a popular Victorian novel called *The Coming Race*. Bovril became so embedded in the culture that an early advertising campaign depicted Pope Leo XIII holding a mug alongside the slogan, “*The two infallible powers: the Pope and Bovril.*” Whether the Vatican approved remains an open question.

Our next entry takes tinned meat to a whole new level. The *corned beef sandwich* is a monument to British pragmatism. Tinned corned beef, sliced thick, laid on bread with a smear of mustard or a few pickled onions, salty, dense, and thoroughly unglamorous, which is probably why it has survived so long. Britain’s love affair with corned beef stretches back to the days of Empire. The tins were shipped from South America, particularly Uruguay and Argentina, where companies like Fray Bentos operated vast cattle ranches. The name Fray Bentos comes from a port town on the Uruguay River. During both World Wars, corned beef became a critical part of military rations, feeding soldiers across multiple fronts. Back home, it became a pantry essential that lasted years and could be turned into a sandwich in under a minute. The key is thickness. Too thin and it crumbles. Too thick and it overwhelms the bread. Get it right, and you’ve got one of the most satisfying cold sandwiches going.



Our next sandwich that would elicit questionable reactions in any other part of the world is *condensed milk* on bread, sometimes with a second slice on top, sometimes eaten open-faced. This was another post-war favourite, particularly in households where money was tight, but the Carnation tin was always in the cupboard. Condensed milk was

originally developed in the 1850s as a way to preserve milk before refrigeration became widespread. Spreading it on bread was the simplest possible treat. It’s cloyingly sweet, sticky, and impossibly rich. Most people who ate these as children remember them with either deep fondness or mild revulsion. There is rarely a middle ground.

## Cauliflower and tuna salad



I know this might sound like a slightly odd combination — it certainly did to me at first! But I came across this recipe on an Italian TikTok page and decided to give it a try, and I was pleasantly surprised by how fresh, light, and tasty it turned out to be. I decided to add a handful of Kalamata olives (not in the original recipe) which worked beautifully with the lemony dressing. I didn't do it this time, but I think some finely sliced red onion would also be a delicious addition.

**Ingredients:** 1 large cauliflower, 200g tuna in olive oil, 1 lemon, a handful of Kalamata olives (optional), fresh parsley (chopped), extra virgin olive oil, salt and black pepper.

### Method:

1. Remove the leaves and stem from the cauliflower and break it into florets. Cut any very large florets into smaller pieces.
2. Bring a large saucepan of water to the boil. Add a little salt and, if you wish, a small pinch of bicarbonate of soda to help reduce the cauliflower smell while cooking. Add the cauliflower and cook for around 10–12 minutes, until tender but not falling apart.
3. While the cauliflower cooks, drain the tuna and place it in a large bowl. Flake it gently with a fork.
4. Add the grated zest of the lemon, a little black pepper, chopped parsley, and the Kalamata olives if using.
5. Squeeze the juice of the lemon into a small bowl or cup and whisk it together with a generous drizzle of olive oil until slightly creamy.
6. Drain the cooked cauliflower well and add it straight into the bowl with the tuna mixture. Pour over the lemon and olive oil dressing and gently mix everything together until well combined. Taste and add extra salt, pepper, or olive oil if needed. Serve at room temperature.



## The mural painting of “The Good Shepherd”

When Duncan Grant (1885-1978) completed *The Good Shepherd* (1956–58) for the Russell Chantry in Lincoln Cathedral, it must have seemed a successful fusion of modern British art and ecclesiastical tradition. Yet within a few years, the chapel was locked, and the murals hidden.

In the early 1950s, Grant was invited to decorate the Russell Chantry, a small chapel dedicated to St Blaise, patron saint of wool workers. The project was funded by a trust, and the subject matter was broadly prescribed: Christian themes tied to Lincoln’s historical identity as a centre of the wool trade.

Grant responded with a scheme that was both rooted in tradition and unmistakably modern. On one wall, he depicted dockworkers loading wool along Lincoln’s Brayford, rendered with a Mediterranean, almost Italianate sensibility. Opposite this scene stood *The Good Shepherd*: a radiant, youthful Christ surrounded by sheep and shepherds, suffused in warm, golden tones. At first glance, the imagery might seem orthodox.

The most controversial aspect of *The Good Shepherd* lay in its model. Grant chose Paul Roche, his partner, as the figure of Christ. The result was striking: a beardless, sensuous, almost classical figure, far removed from traditional depictions of a solemn, suffering Saviour. Grant also included friends and associates as figures elsewhere in the murals, embedding his own social world into the fabric of a sacred space.

However, what felt natural within Grant’s liberal, avant-garde circle proved far more contentious within the conservative environment of a cathedral. Remarkably, the initial reception from

the cathedral authorities was positive. When the murals were completed and presented around 1958–59, the Dean and Chapter reportedly expressed delight. Yet this approval quickly gave way to discomfort—and then to suppression.

Criticism emerged from several directions. Some objected to the near-nudity of figures in the dockside scene; others were unsettled by the youthful, unconventional Christ. More insidious were rumours about Grant himself: his homosexuality, his relationships, and the suggestion that the murals encoded personal desire within religious imagery.

One persistent myth claimed that a saint in the chapel bore Grant's own likeness, gazing at the Good Shepherd not in devotion but in longing. Though false, such stories gained traction and fuelled a sense of scandal.

The response was decisive. Shortly after their unveiling, the Russell Chantry was closed to the public. The murals were effectively hidden, the chapel repurposed as a storage space, and for decades visitors to Lincoln Cathedral were unaware of their existence. For over thirty years, the paintings remained inaccessible. Cupboards were placed against the walls; guidebooks omitted them entirely.

In the broader cultural context of post-war Britain, where liberal attitudes towards sexuality, relationships, and artistic freedom were widely viewed with suspicion, the criticism was not just about one image but about the entire project—a modernist intervention into a sacred tradition that many felt should remain untouched.

In 1990, more than a decade after Grant's death, the Russell Chantry was reopened to the public. The murals, once hidden, could finally be seen and reassessed. Locked away for decades, *The Good Shepherd* reminds us that what is hidden often tells us as much about a culture as what is displayed.



## Symbols of Early Christian Art — The Zodiac

### How early Christians read the heavens

*Based on Prof. László Vanyó's book:*

When we look up at the ceiling of an old church and see stars, suns, moons, or even zodiac signs painted around Christ, it can feel surprising—almost out of place in Christianity. Yet for many early Christians, the zodiac was not seen as pagan superstition, but as a symbolic language that could point towards Christ and the Gospel.



From the earliest centuries, Christians often decorated church domes with the starry heavens. Christ appeared at the centre of the cosmos, surrounded by symbols of creation. In some churches, zodiac signs were included as part of this heavenly imagery. Rather than worshipping the stars, Christians reinterpreted them. The zodiac became a way of speaking about time, order, salvation history, and the mission of the Church.

One of the most important connections was between the twelve zodiac signs and the twelve apostles. The number twelve already carried deep biblical meaning: the twelve tribes of Israel, the twelve apostles, and the heavenly Jerusalem with its twelve gates. Because the zodiac was also divided into twelve parts, early Christian thinkers saw it as a symbolic reflection of God's divine order.

This idea appeared in art, mosaics, sermons, and biblical commentaries. Some ancient synagogue floors had already shown zodiac imagery surrounding biblical scenes, and Christians inherited and transformed this visual tradition. In several churches, Christ was depicted in the middle of the zodiac circle like the Sun at the centre of creation, while the apostles represented the spiritual “months” or “signs” through which the light of the Gospel spread across the world.

We see this interpretation most clearly in the Church Fathers. Clement of Alexandria compared Christ to the true Sun whose light reaches all humanity. Ambrose connected the apostles to the twelve months of the year, seeing them as bearers of grace throughout time. Other writers described the apostles as stars illuminating the darkness of the world.



A favourite biblical image was Jesus calling the apostles “the light of the world” and comparing believers to stars shining in heaven. Early Christians often understood cosmic imagery spiritually: the visible heavens reflected invisible spiritual truths.

The symbolism became especially rich in interpretations of Easter and Pentecost. The annual cycle of the Sun could symbolise Christ’s saving work, while the twelve months represented the apostolic mission continuing through history. Some writers even described the Church itself as a kind of spiritual cosmos ordered around Christ.

However, it is important to note that these Christian uses of zodiac imagery did not mean belief in astrology or fate. Early Christians rejected the idea that human lives were controlled by the stars. Instead, the heavens were viewed as signs of God’s wisdom and harmony. Zodiac symbols became visual tools for teaching faith, much like stained glass windows or icons later would.

For modern readers, these images reveal how creatively early Christianity engaged with the surrounding culture. Rather than abandoning ancient cosmic symbolism, Christians reshaped it around Christ. The stars no longer ruled humanity; they pointed beyond themselves to the Creator.

Seen in this light, the zodiac in Christian art was never mainly about horoscopes. It was about proclaiming that all creation—time, seasons, heavens, and history—finds its meaning in Christ.

*(First image: Zodiac in Beth Alpha Synagogue, Israel, 6<sup>th</sup> c. Second image: Mosaic from The Chora Church in Istanbul, 4<sup>th</sup> c. — now converted into a mosque.)*



## Feast of the month: Mary, Queen of Heaven

31 May

Established by Pope Pius XII in 1954, the feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Heaven, has biblical roots, with one of the most outstanding being during the Annunciation, when “*Gabriel announced that Mary’s Son would receive the throne of David and rule forever*” (cf. Lk 1:26-38). In addition to its biblical roots, Mary’s queenship is found in Church Tradition as well, summarized well in Vatican II’s *Lumen Gentium*, “*The Immaculate Virgin, preserved free from all guilt of original sin, on the completion of her earthly sojourn, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, and exalted by the Lord as Queen of the universe*” (par 59). Pope Pius XII wrote, “*The Blessed Virgin Mary should be called Queen, not only because of her Divine Motherhood, but also because God has willed her to have an exceptional role in the work of our eternal salvation.*”

Perhaps nowhere is Mary’s queenship depicted with more beauty than in “*The Virgin Crowned by Angels*” painted by German artist Stefan Lochner in the mid-1400s. This exquisite painting depicts Mary holding Baby Jesus and lovingly gazing at him. Above Mary, so faint that you can barely see them, are two angels crowning her as queen.

The most poignant thing in the painting is Mary’s expression as she looks upon the Baby in her arms. Though her look is filled with love, it also has a hint of pensiveness or maybe even a slight sadness, as she knew that her Son would eventually give his life in reparation for our sins. Lochner understood well that Mary’s queenship points us toward Jesus. It’s all about her Son.

Therefore, we can say that it’s all about motherhood. As Catholics, we know that while Mary was Jesus’ earthly mother, she is now our spiritual mother, for as Jesus hung on the cross, he gave her to us all.

Now Mary also holds us in her arms, just as she holds Baby Jesus in her arms in Lochner's painting. And just as she gazes upon him with love and possibly a bit of sadness, so she gazes upon us with the same deep maternal affection.

This is the epitome of motherhood—a love so strong and so complete that our children's pains are our pains, their joys are our joys, their sufferings are our sufferings. Mother Teresa once said, *"If you ever feel distressed during your day, call upon our Lady, just say this simple prayer: 'Mary, Mother of Jesus, please be a mother to me now.'"*

We can learn so much about motherhood from Mary. Her unconditional love is a love we must impart not only to our own children, but to all. After all, everyone is God's child.

As we think about this special feast day, let us also look at the world around us and about how the world depicts motherhood, throws it away, and sometimes holds it in disdain. Let us go to our mother Mary in prayer, asking for others to see babies, children, and mothers through her eyes.

Mary's loving gaze in Lochner's painting is the gaze of motherhood that our world seems to have lost. But it's not one that must be lost forever. Through prayer, through education, and through love, we can restore a reverence for the gift of motherhood, of family, and of life. Just as Mary's gaze is on Jesus, that is where our gaze must be as well. Her eyes point us toward him. Let us allow her to guide us to her Son, our Lord and Saviour.

*(A longer version of this essay by Susan Ciancio was published in The Dispatch 8 on 22 August 2025. The image is of the painting by Lochner mentioned in the article.)*





## **Know the Bible! - 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Book of Maccabees (2)**

(© bibleproject)

**T**he peace treaty between Judah and Antiochus V ends when the later is overthrown by his cousin, Demetrius I. A long and complicated story begins. Syria appoints new and new rulers over Israel while Mattathias' sons assume leadership of the resistance, one after the other as they die one by one. Bigger and bigger armies attack Israel.

One of the rulers appointed by the king of Syria, Alcimus dies a mysterious death when he starts tearing down part of the Temple. The Syrians, seeing that they just can't win against the brothers, give up and broker a new peace treaty.

And so it seemed like all was well again. Until things get complicated. Again. The new king of Syria offers Jonathan, one of Mattathias' sons, a lot of money and power and the role of Israel's high priest. Jonathan agrees and then he oversees the fortification of Jerusalem as a free city. After this comes a long period of rival rulers fighting each other. And Jonathan finds a way to survive and stay in power until his luck runs out.

A Syrian leader named Trypho, who is scheming to seize the throne, needs Jonathan out of the way. So he tricks Jonathan into a meeting and then ambushes and imprisons him. And when all of Israel hears about this, they grieve. So Simon is now the last of the brothers. Trypho executes the imprisoned Jonathan, but instead of trying to fight Trypho, Simon goes around him by sending to the new king of Syria. He asks that Judea become an independent nation. And after all the years of violent resistance, his request is granted. And so it was, in the year 142 B.C., that Simon became king and

high priest of a free Israel. And the yoke of the nations was removed from Israel.

*Days of glory* — After this come the glory days. But after Simon grows old and appoints his sons to lead Israel in his place, Simon is betrayed by his



power-hungry son-in-law, Ptolemy, who tries to seize power by inviting old Simon and his sons to a party, getting them drunk and then murdering them. But Ptolemy's plan fails. One of Simon's sons, John Hyrcanus I, finds out about Ptolemy's treachery, and he gets revenge. Then he takes up the role of Israel's leader and the high priesthood. He builds on the freedom gained by his father, and Israel continues on as an independent nation for the next 100 years until the arrival of a new power, the Roman Empire. This hundred-year Israelite kingdom is known as the Hasmonean kingdom, named after Asmoneus, the great-grandfather of Mattathias, with whom our story began.

*The kingdom that lasts forever* — Curiously enough, God is rarely mentioned in Maccabees. Most of the victories are credited to the wisdom and power of Mattathias' sons. And this is different from other battle narratives in the Bible. We also know that not all Israelites celebrated the Hasmonean kingdom. Maccabees was written in a time when Israel had fractured into rival groups, each one claiming that they were the ones being faithful to Israel's God. And so Maccabees is an important witness to the struggle experienced by God's people when they live in violent and unstable times. It can be so hard to know where God is at work and who really acts or speaks for God. The Hasmonean kingdom lasted a hundred years before it fell to the Roman Empire. Maccabees reminds us that while human kingdoms come and go, it's only God's Kingdom that lasts forever. And that's what the (First) Book of Maccabees is all about.

*(Image: Bronze coins [prutah] of John Hyrcanus with the inscription "Yehohanan the High Priest and council of the Jews.")*

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## The Psalms

*Psalm 60: With God's help we shall prevail*

**P**salm 60 is a prayer born out of confusion, defeat, and deep spiritual struggle. The people of God feel shaken, abandoned, and wounded. Their military strength has failed, their confidence has been broken, and they cry out to God with painful honesty: “*O God, thou hast cast us off.*” Yet this psalm does not end in despair. It becomes a testimony that even when all human strength collapses, God remains faithful.

The psalm reflects a moment when Israel experienced defeat in battle. The earth itself is described as trembling and broken apart, as though the nation's suffering had shaken the foundations of life. Such language is more than poetry; it expresses the spiritual distress of a people who believed themselves called and protected by God, yet now stand humbled and uncertain.

What is striking is that the people do not turn away from God in bitterness. Instead, they bring their anguish directly before Him. Their lament becomes prayer. They dare to ask why God has allowed this suffering, but at the same time they continue to seek His help. Faith here is not a denial of pain. It is the courage to remain before God even when His ways are difficult to understand.

At the centre of the psalm stands the divine promise. God speaks again to His people and reminds them that the land, the covenant, and the future still belong to Him. Human defeat does not cancel God's purposes. The people discover that their security was never meant to rest upon armies, leaders, or human achievement, but upon the steadfast faithfulness of the Lord.

The final verses move toward renewed confidence. The psalmist confesses that human help is ultimately vain, but with God “*we shall do valiantly.*” This is not a cry of pride or self-confidence. It is the quiet assurance that God's grace is stronger than human weakness. The people are able to rise again because they know they are upheld by the One who has not abandoned them.

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Psalm 60 speaks powerfully to the Christian life. There are moments when we too feel defeated: when prayers seem unanswered, when the Church faces discouragement, or when our own hearts are troubled by failure and fear. Like Israel, we may feel shaken to the core. Yet this psalm teaches us that defeat is not the end of the story. God often meets His people most deeply in moments of helplessness, teaching them again to trust not in themselves but in Him alone.

True faith is not the absence of struggle. It is the decision to keep turning toward God in the midst of struggle. When human strength fails, God's promises remain firm. And those who place their hope in Him find new courage to rise again.

### ***Reflective questions***

1. When have I experienced disappointment or failure that shook my confidence in God?
2. Do I bring my struggles honestly before the Lord in prayer, or do I hide them?
3. What human strengths or securities am I tempted to rely on more than God?
4. How is God inviting me to trust Him more deeply in this stage of my life?

### ***Prayer***

*Lord God,  
when our hearts are troubled and our strength fails,  
teach us to turn to You with trust.  
Give us courage in times of discouragement  
and renew our faith in Your promises.  
Help us to remember that true victory comes not from human power,  
but from Your steadfast love and grace.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.*

‘The Lord  
is in his holy temple;  
let all the earth  
adore him.’

HABAKKUK 2:20  
& PSALM 66:4

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