

# English Martyrs' Newsletter



7<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME  
23<sup>RD</sup> FEBRUARY 2025

**ENGLISH MARTYRS CATHOLIC CHURCH,**  
64, LIEBENROOD ROAD, READING, RG30 2EB:  
Registered Charity No. 1199568

Parish website: [www.englishmartyrsrdg.com](http://www.englishmartyrsrdg.com)

Livestream link on You Tube:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCulqb5ncxASpguMmd\\_0MNtA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCulqb5ncxASpguMmd_0MNtA)

Parish Priest: Fr. Gaston Forbah [gforbah@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:gforbah@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

Asst Priest: Fr. Samuel Alabi MSP [salabi@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:salabi@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

Retired Priest: Fr Richard Maniak

Secretary: Barbara Poole. Tel: 0118 957 2149

Parish Office: Open Tuesday to Thursday 9.00am to 3.00pm


All calls are monitored. Email: [office@englishmartyrsrdg.com](mailto:office@englishmartyrsrdg.com)

## PARISH SAFEGUARDING MINISTERS/CONTACT DETAILS/ROLES

Yvonne Newman: [safeguarding@englishmartyrsrdg.com](mailto:safeguarding@englishmartyrsrdg.com) (Safeguarding cases and concerns)

Gavin Knight: [safeguarding2@englishmartyrsrdg.com](mailto:safeguarding2@englishmartyrsrdg.com) (DBS applications/updating of DBS parish register)

Ernestina Amanfo: [safeguarding3@englishmartyrsrdg.com](mailto:safeguarding3@englishmartyrsrdg.com) (Safeguarding compliance in all parish activities)

<b>SCHOOLS:</b>		<b>TO DONATE TO OUR PARISH:</b>	
English Martyrs Catholic Primary Dee Road, Reading RG30 4BE. Head: Mrs C. Doberska : 0118 937 5466 <a href="https://www.englishmartyrs.reading.sch.uk/home">https://www.englishmartyrs.reading.sch.uk/home</a>		Parish Bank Details: A/C Name: CDP Reading English Martyrs. Sort Code: 30 – 93 – 04. Account No. 00885666 You can also use Direct Debit (forms available in colonnade), the Dona(te) machines in the church or by scanning the QR code on the right.	
Blessed Hugh Faringdon Fawley Road, Reading RG30 3EP. Head: Dr Simon Uttley 0118 957 4730 <a href="https://www.hughfaringdon.org/">https://www.hughfaringdon.org/</a>	<b>MASS TIMES WEEK COMMENCING</b> <b>23<sup>rd</sup> FEBRUARY</b> Sunday at 9.00am; 11.30am; 5.00pm Monday to Friday at 9.30am Saturday at 10.00am Saturday at 6.00pm (Vigil Mass for Sunday)	<b>CONFESSIONS WEEK COMMENCING</b> <b>23<sup>rd</sup> FEBRUARY</b> Sunday 30 mins before 9.00am & 11.30am & from 4.30pm Monday to Friday 15 mins before Mass Saturday: After 10.00am Mass and from 5.30pm	
	<b>EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION: On Friday from 10.00am to 6.00pm. From 5.00pm, Praise and Worship will feature music, scripture reading, guided reflection, a time of silence and concluding with Benediction.</b>		

## LOVE EVEN WHEN IT HURTS

This weekend's Gospel presents a challenging request. Loving, giving, and blessing others can be difficult, especially when it feels like there's little to no reciprocation or when there's a risk of people taking advantage of our kindness.

Jesus invites us to follow in His footsteps.












He loves, gives, and blesses each one of us, regardless of how we respond to Him. This is epitomized in His sacrifice on the cross, where He gave Himself for every person. How do we respond to His sacrifice? Eternal life is a gift that is freely given and cannot be earned, but accepting this gift from Christ calls us to respond by living our lives as He did.

Do we choose to love the people we encounter each day without any hidden agenda? Are we willing to give up a parking space in a busy lot to help someone else? Do we let someone go ahead of us in a queue when we arrive at the same time, even though we're in a hurry? Can we respond with love to those who speak in anger? Are we able to continue giving of ourselves, even when it feels like we have nothing left to offer?

What can we do in the coming week to live according to Jesus' teachings?

Fr. Gaston

# PARISH NOTICES

Sunday Readings for:	7 <sup>th</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	8 <sup>th</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
	<b>First:</b> Samuel 26:2-7-9.12-13.22-23 <b>Psalm:</b> 103(102):1-4.8,10,12-13 <b>Second:</b> Corinthians 15:45-49 <b>Gospel:</b> Luke 6: 27-38	<b>First:</b> Sirach 27:4-7 <b>Psalm:</b> 92(91) 2-3.13-16 <b>Second:</b> Corinthians 15: 54-58 <b>Gospel:</b> Luke 6: 39-45
<p>Wednesday Word (<a href="http://www.wednesdayword.org">www.wednesdayword.org</a>) has some helpful reflections for parishioners on the three Sunday readings each week and a special page for younger children and their families.</p>		
<p><b>RCIA/ JOURNEY IN FAITH</b>            Half Term break. Meetings resume on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> February.</p>		
	<p>The Holy Father, Pope Francis, proclaimed 2025 as a Jubilee Year, a sacred time of renewal, reflection, and grace celebrated every 25 years.  <b>WHAT IS A JUBILEE:</b> "Jubilee" is the name given to a particular year. A time to re-establish a proper relationship with God, with one another, and with all of creation.  <b>THEME OF THE JUBILEE 2025: PILGRIMS OF HOPE</b>            For the first ordinary jubilee since the Great Jubilee of 2000, Pope Francis has chosen the theme of hope, a virtue that "does not deceive or disappoint because it is grounded in the certainty that nothing and no one may ever separate us from God's love," the Pontiff <a href="#">said</a> in his "papal bull" proclamation of the Holy Year. Diocese of Portsmouth Jubilee Website: <a href="http://Jubilee Year 2025 - Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth">Jubilee Year 2025 - Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth</a></p>	
	<p><b>EMMAUS GROUPS – HOW TO UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE.</b> Our Parish Emmaus groups explore the Sunday readings together with fellow parishioners in an informal setting. Next meeting(s) is/are on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> February at 7.30pm Room 2, and Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> February at 10.30am in Bethlehem Chapel.</p>	
	<p><b>SENIOR YOUTH / CONFIRMATION GROUP:</b>            The group is taking a break and will resume meetings on Sunday 2nd March.</p>	
	<p><b>PRAYER BOX IN THE COLONNADE</b>            Please drop your intentions in this prayer box for our parish intercessors to pray for you. The Friday Adorers of the Blessed Sacrament and some members of the English Martyrs Legion of Mary Apostolate offer these intentions in prayer. After a while, the priests prayerfully burn them.</p>	
	<p><b>TILEHURST DROP-IN CENTRE &amp; FOODBANK</b>            Many thanks for supporting us with your prayers and generous donations. Our Drop-in Centre and Foodbank is open every Wednesday, from 1-3pm. The Foodbank is also open every Friday from 5-6.30pm. For those able to donate, this week we are short of the following items: Orange juice, alternative milk soya, hot chocolate, tinned fruit, ladies and men's deodorant, jam, biscuits and rice pudding. Many thanks for your donations. John Foley 07769 251747.</p>	
	<p><b>BOOKSHOP AND REPOSITORY</b> In addition to Sunday mornings, we will now be open after the 5pm Mass on Sunday evenings. The bookstall is situated in room 3 at the back of the hall and sells books, cards and other religious items to support your faith journey.            A new CTS weekday missal will be available at the end of April. This is a hardback book giving the readings in the new translation for all weekday Masses. The cost of the missal is £55. If you would like to pre-order one please contact Chris Coxwell at <a href="mailto:chris.coxwell@ntlworld.com">chris.coxwell@ntlworld.com</a> as soon as possible. Because of the high cost of this item we would like a deposit of £30 before ordering.</p>	
	<p><b>BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS FOR FEBRUARY:</b> We extend our best wishes to everyone born in the month of February, who will be blessed after the Homily at all Masses this weekend. May God bless all their endeavours.</p>	
	<p><b>BAPTISM</b>            Congratulations to Lucas William Greenham who received the sacrament of baptism on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2025. Also, Alyssa Mabel Kamara who receives the sacrament of baptism this Saturday 22nd February. Please keep them and their families in your prayers.</p>	
	<p>In the children's liturgy at our morning Masses this week, we will be looking at the importance of following Jesus' suggestion of giving, loving and blessing. Every child will also act out this message by choosing a scripture card and giving this to someone in the parish with the desire to demonstrate the love of God and how the act of giving can bless another person.            At the 5pm Mass, this week, the children will be looking at the topic of Loving your enemies. The children will be focusing on 1 Samuel 26:2-23 when David after killing Goliath went to King Saul. When King Saul due to jealousy set off with an army to kill David, David when he had the opportunity to kill King Saul, did not. The children will be recreating this gospel passage in the form of a picture booklet.</p>	
	<p><b>LIGHTS IN CHURCH</b>            During the day, the Church will remain open, but we shall be turning off the lights when no one is in. Please, if you come in to pray, turn on the lights using the switch on your left as you enter the door of the church from the colonnade. The upper button turns on the lights, and the lower button switches off the lights. We request that if you are leaving the church when no other person is in, kindly switch off the lights.            We remind everyone that the Church is open from 8a.m to 7p.m for us to come in and say a prayer.</p>	



R.I.P

### **TOM MCKEOWN RIP**

The parish offers condolences to the family of Tom McKeown who passed away recently. *Please pray for the repose of Tom's soul.*

Tom's Funeral Mass will be celebrated on Tuesday, 4th March at 1 pm at St Joseph's, Tilehurst, followed by committal at West Berkshire Crematorium at 3.00 pm. *All are welcome.*

### **CAFOD BIG LENT WALK(1)**

Join CAFOD's Big Lent Walk in the Jubilee Year  
You are invited to join CAFOD's Big Lent Walk together with Catholics in England and Wales as "Pilgrims of Hope" in response to Pope Francis' calling in his promotion of this Jubilee Year. By so doing, you will challenge yourself to walk 200km over 40 days during Lent.

Every £1 you raise will support CAFOD's work to fight injustice and global poverty and help communities like Lokho's in Kenya, experiencing the worst impact of the climate crisis, to rebuild their lives in hope.

You can sign up by clicking: <https://walk.cafod.org.uk/>

### **CAFOD BIG LENT WALK(2)**

#### **Reading Catholic Parishes Big Lent Walk for CAFOD on Saturday 8th March**

For those seeking something less challenging than a slog over 40 days, but still under the aegis of the Big Lent Walk, a Reading parishes community walk of about 8km is being organised with a meet time of 9.30 a.m. on 8th March at the starting point of Our Lady and St Anne's church in Caversham. Damian Porter from St Anne's will lead the walk.

It will pass St James church and proceed along the Kennet through beautiful countryside as far as The Cuning Man in Burghfield, arriving there by 1p.m. There is a Reading Buses service (route 2) to take you back to central Reading, running every 30 minutes. You can sign up by clicking: <https://walk.cafod.org.uk/>

### **FOR OUR DIARIES**

1/ Lenten Penitential Service and Confessions: April 12th beginning at 9:45a.m.

2/ Please note that Group Co-ordinators meeting shown in Event Planner for Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> September will now be held on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> September.

### **LIVING HISTORY" PRESENTATION BY GEORGE NOWACKI**

Many thanks to all who turned out to listen to George Nowacki's presentation on Thursday 20th February. We are grateful to George Nowacki for creating this opportunity for parishioners to interact with each other and support the restoration project of our Parish Organ.

### **WE ARE RECRUITING AND HAVE TWO EXCITING OPPORTUNITIES AT THE MUSTARD TREE.**

1) We are looking for someone who is enthusiastic about our mission and values to be our new Operations Administrator. They will manage a variety of administrative tasks and create a positive and welcoming experience for our service beneficiaries, volunteers and partners. This role will suit someone who is organised and proactive and has strong communication and interpersonal skills. It is for 18 hrs per week with a salary ranging from £25-27k FTE dependant on your experience.

2) We are also looking for a Finance Manager who will maintain accurate financial records, ensure compliance with finance regulations and produce management reports for Finance Committee and Board of Trustees. This role will suit someone with a professional accounting qualification and at least 2 years experience, preferably with a charity or not for profit organisation. It is for 30hrs a month which can be managed flexibly over each week. The salary will be around £40k FTE dependant on experience. We would also consider someone who prefers to work on a self employed basis.

For more information and to view the full job descriptions and person specifications please visit our website:

<https://themustardtree.org/2025/02/07/we-are-recruiting/>

We will be holding interviews on an ongoing basis until a suitable person is found.

### **WEEK OF ACCOMPANIED PRAYER IN OUR PARISH:**

**5<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2025**

Have you ever wished you had the time to go on a retreat, to spend some unhurried time with the Lord – but your life is busy and going away to a retreat centre is not really an option for you? Weeks of Accompanied Prayer (WAPs) are an opportunity for busy people like us to do just that. For 5 days, you set aside a half an hour for a time of personal prayer and then meet with an experienced prayer guide each day for half an hour, at a time that works for you, to reflect on your prayer time, and perhaps discover some new ways of praying. Your meetings are one to one and completely confidential.

Here is a quote from someone who attended a recent WAP in a neighbouring parish All I want to say is that this has been a wonderful week, and I am so grateful that I had this opportunity. It has been invaluable in my journey with God and my only sadness is that it has to finish. Thank you so much to the organisers and to my prayer guide, Stephen, for all it has brought to me.

Our parish is hosting a Week of Accompanied Prayer in October: 5-10th, starting with an Introductory meeting on Sunday 5th. Save the date.

### **LEGION OF MARY**

*Meetings will be held every Monday from 4.30pm - 5.30pm until further notice via Teams.  
Please contact [legionofmary@englishmartyrsrdg.com](mailto:legionofmary@englishmartyrsrdg.com) for link or to find out more*

### **ORGAN RESTORATION FAMILY/FRIENDS WEEKEND (MARCH 1ST/2ND)**

We are grateful to all families who have repeatedly donated to Our Parish Organ Restoration project through the different fundraising initiatives. The weekend of March 1st/2nd will be an opportunity for parish families to once more support this project. Perhaps we could appeal to our children, siblings, and friends to support our family Weekend donation to this important restoration project. We are glad to note that we recently received a £5000 donation from one family. This takes the total raised so far to £30,893.

Find the revised cost breakdown by Goetze and Gwynn Ltd. (Revised August 29th, 2024) on the website.

<https://englishmartyrsrdg.com/parish-organ-project/>

### **SOME PROPOSED FUNDRAISING INITIATIVES DURING 2025**

- Cake Sale by Parish Youth – 26th/27th April and 10th/11th May
- Sponsored Cycling led by Fr Gaston – Date tbc
- Pentecost Lapel Ribbons by Anne Francois/Tracey Gurr – 7th/8th June
- Goan Evening – Date tbc
- Any other initiative would be much appreciated.

**MASS INTENTIONS:  
Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> February to Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2025**

**7<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**

Saturday 22 <sup>nd</sup> <i>(Vigil Mass for Sunday)</i>	6.00pm	James Biggins RIP
Sunday 23 <sup>rd</sup>	9.00am	People of the Parish
	11.30am <i>Live Streamed</i>	Martin Brennan RIP Terry Clarke RIP
	5.00pm	Deceased members of Barrett & Commins families RIP
Monday 24 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	Sid Stopp RIP
Tuesday 25 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	Martin Brennan RIP
Wednesday 26 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	Good Health of Denzila Fernandes
Thursday 27 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	Helen Burke RIP
Friday 28 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	Lourdes Lucero and All Souls in Purgatory RIP
Saturday 1 <sup>st</sup> March	10.00am	Dickson & Roseline Fernandes RIP

**8<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**

Saturday 1 <sup>st</sup> <i>(Vigil Mass for Sunday)</i>	6.00pm	People of the Parish
Sunday 2 <sup>nd</sup>	9.00am	Martin Sheehan RIP
	11.30am <i>Live Streamed</i>	Martin Brennan RIP
	5.00pm	Maura Bolger RIP



**St Anne's Catholic Primary  
School**  
**Mother Teresa Catholic  
Academy Trust**  
Pinkerton Road, Basingstoke, RG22 6RE  
Tel: 01256 464165 [www.st-annes.hants.sch.uk](http://www.st-annes.hants.sch.uk)

**Headteacher – September 2025**

The CEO of Mother Teresa Catholic Academy Trust (MTCAT) and Governors of St. Anne's Catholic Primary School wish to appoint an outstanding Head Teacher to lead our team.

We are looking for a practising and committed Catholic who can demonstrate:

- A clear vision of Catholic education in the 21st century.
- Successful teaching and management experience.
- The ability to lead and motivate a committed staff.
- The energy and enthusiasm to take our school from good to outstanding.

Required from September 2025  
L15-21 – NOR 219

Closing date for applications:

Monday 10<sup>th</sup> March (noon)  
Short Listing: Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup>

Interview date:

March  
tbc

Further information:

<https://www.st-annes.hants.sch.uk/home/contact-us/vacancies>

School contact:

Barbara Hough, School Business  
Manager  
[adminoffice@st-annes.hants.sch.uk](mailto:adminoffice@st-annes.hants.sch.uk)

**Building a Eucharistic Community**

Day of  
Reflection



Exploring our  
identity and  
mission as a  
Parish

St Joseph's Catholic  
Church, Tilehurst,  
RG31 5JJ

Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> April, 10am-3.40pm

Mass - Retreat talks - Discussion - Adoration

Led by Sr Veronica, OP:  
Dominican Sisters  
of St Joseph

Please bring a packed lunch.  
Tea and coffee will be  
provided



"Churches are not museums that display perfect people. They are hospitals where the wounded, hurt, injured and broken find healing." - Nicky Gumbel