

# English Martyrs' Newsletter



THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT  
23<sup>RD</sup> MARCH 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 Tuesdays to Thursdays 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)

## SCHOOLS:

English Martyrs Catholic Primary  
Dee Road, Reading RG30 4BE.

Head: Mrs C. Doberska : 0118 937 5466

<https://www.englishmartyrs.reading.sch.uk/home>

## TO DONATE TO OUR PARISH:

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 colonnade and hall  
or by scanning the QR code on the right.



Blessed Hugh Faringdon

Fawley Road, Reading RG30 3EP.

Head: Dr Simon Uttley 0118 957 4730

<https://www.hughfaringdon.org/>

## MASS TIMES WEEK COMMENCING

23<sup>rd</sup> MARCH

Sunday at 9.00am; 11.30am; 5.00pm

Monday to Thursday at 9.30am

Friday at 6.30am and 9.30am

Saturday at 10.00am

Saturday at 6.00pm (Vigil Mass for Sunday)

## CONFESSIONS WEEK COMMENCING

23<sup>rd</sup> MARCH

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



**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.**

## ENSURING GROWTH IN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

One sign of life is growth. Our relationship with God should be a vibrant one, always growing rather than stagnant. Our love for God today should be greater than it was yesterday, and our love tomorrow should be even greater still. As we become more aware of His love for us, our understanding of Him as our Father should deepen each day, prompting us to respond accordingly.

However, like a living plant, this relationship requires cultivation to grow and flourish. How can we nurture our relationship with God?
















As we enter the third week of Lent, consider any habits you might adopt that could help cultivate this relationship. This could involve prayerfully reading the Gospel of the day, spending time in adoration, or praying the Rosary daily.

Sometimes, a plant not only needs support to grow but also requires that certain parts be removed, as they can hinder its growth. Similarly, we should consider aspects of our lives that may impede our relationship with God. These areas - whether harmful habits, choices, or beliefs - can be brought to God in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, where we can leave them behind.

Acknowledging and addressing these obstacles enables us to grow closer to God and live in the truth that sets us free.

Fr. Gaston

# PARISH NOTICES

Sunday Readings for:	3 <sup>rd</sup> SUNDAY OF LENT	4 <sup>th</sup> SUNDAY OF LENT
	<b>First:</b> Exodus 3: 1-8a. 13-15 <b>Psalm:</b> 103(102) 1-4. 6-8. 11 <b>Second:</b> Corinthians 10: 1-6.-10-12 <b>Gospel:</b> Luke 13: 1-9	<b>First:</b> Joshua 5: 9a. 10-12 <b>Psalm:</b> 34(33) 2-7 <b>Second:</b> Corinthians 5: 17-21 <b>Gospel:</b> Luke 15: 1-3. 11-32
<b>Wednesday Word (<a href="http://www.wednesdayword.org">www.wednesdayword.org</a>)</b> has some helpful reflections for parishioners on the three Sunday readings each week and a special page for younger children and their families.		
	<b>RCIA/ JOURNEY IN FAITH:</b> This week, we watched the Sycamore film: The Sacrament of Reconciliation: Forgiveness, Healing and Mission, followed by a very helpful discussion with Fr Samuel. The Gospel at the 9 am Mass on Sunday will be John 4: Jesus meeting with the Samaritan Woman at the Well. We read it together in a dramatised format. When the parish has adults preparing for Baptism at Easter, the Gospels for year A are used at the Mass they attend. For the next three Sundays, there will also be Scrutinies at 9 am Mass. These are a special rite of prayer for our Elect, Chris, Ian and Tyreece as they draw closer to their Baptism and receiving the sacraments of Confirmation and the Holy Eucharist at the Easter Vigil.	
	<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> March at 7.30pm in Room 2 and Wednesday 26 <sup>th</sup> March at 10.30am in Bethlehem Chapel.	
	<b>SENIOR YOUTH / CONFIRMATION GROUP:</b> This week we are going to look at what we can do that will act as the (good) manure in our lives; what we can do to help us grow into strong and healthy Catholics with a secure relationship with God. Next week, ahead of the Parish's penitential service we will be looking at the importance of the Sacrament of Reconciliation and how we can prepare for this. Youth group starts after the 5:00pm Mass and finishes at 7:15pm.	
	<b>BAPTISM</b> Congratulations to Juliana Rose Thottappilly who receives the sacrament of baptism this Saturday 22nd March 2025. Please keep her and her family in your prayers.	
	<b>PARISH AFTERNOON TEA</b> There will be another Parish Afternoon Tea for any parishioners who would like to come and join us for a relaxed afternoon with tea / cake and a chat. The event is being held in the Parish Hall on Thursday 27th March at 2.30pm. Please spread the word, and you can bring a friend with you to the Tea if you wish. We can offer transport to anyone who needs it. Please let Stephen Hogg know on 07891 773379 if you need a lift. We look forward to seeing you all again."	
	<b>BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS FOR MARCH:</b> Next weekend after the homily there will be a special blessing for everyone celebrating their birthday during the month of March.	
	<b>ENGLISH MARTYRS LENT FOOD BANK</b> Please place non-perishable items in the collection box by the church door. These donations will benefit those families in our parish who are in need. The collection of items will end on 30 <sup>th</sup> March and distribution will be done the week beginning 31 <sup>st</sup> March.	
	<b>BOOKSHOP AND REPOSITORY</b> Unfortunately, the person who offered to open the bookstall and repository after the 5pm Mass had to withdraw, which means that we can no longer open at this time every week. Instead, starting on April 6th, we will open once a month on the first Sunday of the month (name badge Sunday). We will continue to open on Sunday mornings after the 9am Mass until about 11.15am. If anyone feels they can help with the bookstall after the 5pm Mass or any other Mass please contact Chris Coxwell at <a href="mailto:chris.coxwell@ntlworld.com">chris.coxwell@ntlworld.com</a>	
	<b>THIS WEEK</b> at 9:00am and 11:30am Masses, children's liturgy, we are going to be looking at the importance of being surrounded by the presence of God and how we can learn to recognise God's loving presence in each of our lives. At 5:00pm Mass, the children will learn that 'God gives us another chance'. If we decide to give something one more chance God will always help us. Even when we get this wrong time and time again. We will look at the Gospel of tree that bears no fruit and see how we should be bearing fruit for God.	
	<b>ROSARY AT 6.00pm VIGIL MASS</b> We will be praying the Holy Rosary from 5:30pm each Saturday, before the 6.00pm Vigil Mass. Let us join our prayers with those of our Blessed Mother, Mary, especially during this time of Lent.	
	<b>STATIONS OF THE CROSS FRIDAY 28<sup>th</sup> MARCH @ 7.00pm</b> Group Leading: Legion of Mary Organiser(s): Rachael McEvoy	
	<b>YOUTH PILGRIMAGE TO ROME</b> The Diocese will be going there for the Youth Jubilee, from 28th July to 4th August. During that week, there will be thousands of young people in Rome at the invitation of the Holy Father. We will also be there for the Mass and the ceremony at which Bl. Pier Giorgio Frassati, Patron of our Youth, will be canonised. <i>Details on the Noticeboard in the colonnade.</i>	
	<b>ORGAN RESTORATION PROJECT BARN DANCE</b> Friday 13th June 2025 at 7.00pm Including hot food. Tickets will be sold after Masses weekend of 29 <sup>th</sup> /30 <sup>th</sup> March and can also be obtained from Jack & Mel Noronha. Email: <a href="mailto:noronhamel@hotmail.com">noronhamel@hotmail.com</a> Tel: 0118 996 7208. If payment is made via Parish Bank Account, use Ref: Barn Dance See Poster in the Colonnade for more details.	
	<b>NEWSLETTER NOTICES</b> Requests via the parish office should be submitted no later than close of play of the Wednesday preceding the weekend newsletter they wish to be included in.	

**RELAUNCH OF PARISH FACEBOOK PAGE.**

Our Parish Facebook page has now been updated with helpful information. Check it out for inspiring conversations on Marriage, parish notices, and upcoming events. Please share our updates with family and friends.  
Thanks to Regson Do Rego for managing our Facebook page! If you have news about your group or an inspiring event, please send it to Regson via SocialMedia@englishmartyrsrdg.com. You can also share your WhatsApp contact with Regson to join the Parish Social Media WhatsApp group for easier communication.

**CAFOD BIG LENT WALK(1)**

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, who are 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/>

**NEXT WEEKEND: 22nd/23rd March:**  
There will be a Second Collection for the Clergy Assistance Fund.



**St James Way Camino Ingles**



**Walking Pilgrimage – 68.5Miles over 5 days – Reading to Southampton  
Weds 18<sup>th</sup> June to Sun 22<sup>nd</sup> June**

As part of the Jubilee Year "Pilgrims of Hope" we invite you to join us on the UK leg of the Pilgrimage route to Santiago De Compostela in Spain. This ancient route along footpaths and bridal ways is well marked, going through Mortimer down to Winchester and then on to Southampton.  
Discover what it means to be a true Pilgrim and how such a journey will transform you. The estimated total cost is £300 - depending on the number of people - and would only include accommodation and breakfast. We will also aim to have daily mass or morning prayer/adoration available over the 5 days.  
If you are interested in this challenge of a lifetime and think you can walk 11 to 16 miles a day, then please contact Adam at [adamwlasak@hotmail.com](mailto:adamwlasak@hotmail.com) or Tel: 07851 504962 for more details.

**CATECHISTS LENT DAYS OF PRAYER, FORMATION AND NETWORKING**

The Vicariate for Evangelisation will be hosting their final free online event during Lent for Catechists across the diocese. It will begin at 7:30 PM and last for one hour and will be held on Thursday 3rd April (Theme: Confirmation and RCIA)  
To sign up for this event, please go to <https://forms.office.com/e/VkCdj1SWzA>.

**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

**Saturday 29th March 1.30pm-4.30pm: Our Lady of Peace, Earley would like to invite you to join them for a Catholic-themed quiz afternoon in the Parish Hall!**  
Entry fee: £2 per adult, £1 per child of age 7+.

Bring some friends along, even those outside of our parish! See poster for more details.

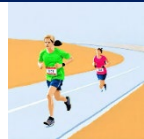
**Saturday 26th April 9am-4pm: Chess tournament at Our Lady of Peace, Earley, in the Parish Hall.**  
Sign up at <https://tinyurl.com/olop-chess-april-2025>. See poster for more details.

**PRIESTS' LENTEN VISITS TO THE SICK**

Fr. Gaston and Fr. Samuel began visiting sick parishioners this past week to prepare them sacramentally for the celebration of Easter. These visits will continue throughout the remaining weeks of Lent.  
A special thanks to the Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist who accompany the priests during these visits.  
We also appreciate the children from English Martyrs School (Years 3 – 5), who wrote beautiful prayers on cards for the sick. These cards are being taken along during the visits.

**PARISH AND SCHOOL JOINT CELEBRATION OF THE YEAR OF HOPE**

English Martyrs Primary School is inviting parishioners to join them in one of their activities to mark the Year of Hope.  
The activity is the CAFOD Big Walk (*Walk in Solidarity*) and will take place on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of April at 3:45pm. The walk (1km) will also involve parents of school children and is designed to raise funds for CAFOD and enable them to fight poverty around the world. The following link can be used for your donations: <https://cafod.org.uk/fundraise/big-lent-walk>



**READING HALF MARATHON – SUNDAY 23<sup>RD</sup> MARCH**

Road closures will be in effect as follows: Tilehurst Road (between Russell St. and Liebenrood Rd.) from 9.30am to 1.15pm and all of Liebenrood Road from 9.30am to 2.00pm. There will be no vehicular access to the church car park for those attending the 11.30 Mass.

**LENTEN PENITENTIAL SERVICES:  
READING PASTORAL AREA**

Location	Date	Time
St. John Bosco, Woodley	8 <sup>th</sup> April	7.00 – 8.00pm
St. Joseph's, Tilehurst	9 <sup>th</sup> April	7.00pm
Christ the King, Reading	10 <sup>th</sup> April	7.00pm
Our Lady of Peace, Earley	12 <sup>th</sup> April	9.00am – 12.00pm
English Martyrs	12 <sup>th</sup> April	9.45am
St. James, Reading	Every Saturday	5.00 – 5.40pm

**MASS INTENTIONS:  
Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> to Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2025**

***Third Sunday of Lent***

Saturday 22 <sup>nd</sup> <i>(Vigil Mass for Sunday)</i>	6.00pm	Andzej Pogozelski RIP
Sunday 23 <sup>rd</sup>	9.00am	Martin Brennan RIP
	11.30am <i>Live Streamed</i>	People of the Parish
	5.00pm	Rosalica Goes RIP
Monday 24 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	Mark Herbert RIP
Tuesday 25 <sup>th</sup> THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD, Solemnity	9.30am	Theotonia Goes RIP
Wednesday 26 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	Reginald Cecil Powys Lybbe RIP**
Thursday 27 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	Norman Bricker, Intentions
Friday 28 <sup>th</sup>	6.30am	Josephine Pereira RIP
	9.30am	Margaret Hutson RIP
Saturday 29 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am	Lucy Hope RIP
<b><i>Fourth Sunday of Lent</i></b>		
Saturday 29 <sup>th</sup> <i>(Vigil Mass for Sunday)</i>	6.00pm	Josephine Pereira RIP
Sunday 30 <sup>th</sup>	9.00am	Helen Lourenco & Vito Francis Araujo, RIP
	11.30am <i>Live Streamed</i>	Terence John Morse RIP
	5.00pm	People of the Parish

\*\*Cecil Powys Lybbe donated £10,000 to the Church, which enabled the land to be bought and English Martyrs Church to be built. We are now approaching our Centenary.

<b>LENT &amp; EASTER 2025 AT ENGLISH MARTYRS</b>			
DAY	DATE	TIME	SERVICE
Fridays	21 <sup>st</sup> & 28 <sup>th</sup> March and 11 <sup>th</sup> April	6.30 am	Mass
		9.00am 10.00 am to 5.00 pm 5.00-6.00pm 7.00 pm	Stations of the Cross/9:30 Mass Adoration  Praise & Worship/Benediction Stations of the Cross
	21 <sup>st</sup> & 28 <sup>th</sup> March 11 <sup>th</sup> April	6.00pm 7.15 to 9.15pm	Stations of the Cross PARISH RETREAT in Parish Hall. Theme: Reconciliation and Forgiveness
Friday	4 <sup>th</sup> April (1 <sup>st</sup> Friday)	6.30 am 9.00am 10.00 am to 5.00 pm 5.00-6.00pm 6.00 pm 8.30pm	Mass Stations of the Cross/9:30 Mass Adoration  Praise & Worship/Benediction Angelus/Stations of the Cross followed by Mass for Peace. Prayer to Sacred Heart
Wednesday	19 <sup>th</sup> March	7.30 to 9.00pm	Lenten Film show in Parish Hall. Video on THE POWER OF PRAYER: WHAT IS PRAYER? DOES PRAYER MAKE A DIFFERENCE? HOW TO PRAY.
Saturday	12 <sup>th</sup> April	9.45am	Lenten Service of Reconciliation
Palm Sunday	13 <sup>th</sup> April	6.00pm Sat 9.00 am 11.30 am 5.00 pm	Palm Blessing & Procession before all Masses from the back of the hall
Maundy Thursday	17 <sup>th</sup> April	7:30 pm	Mass including Washing of Feet
Good Friday	18 <sup>th</sup> April	till Midnight 9:30 am 3.00 pm 8:30 pm	Veneration at Place of Repose Public Stations of the Cross in Church grounds Celebration of the Lord's Passion Easter Vigil
Holy Saturday	19 <sup>th</sup> April	8:30 pm	Easter Vigil
Easter Sunday	20 <sup>th</sup> April	9.00 am 11:30 am 5.00 pm	Easter Masses

**SAVE THE DATE:** African Cultural Music evening with dinner to raise more funds for our organ restoration project. This will take place on October 11th 2025 from 7:15pm in our Parish Hall. We shall be having a guest Artist who hails from Cameroon.