

English Martyrs' Newsletter

FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

8TH FEBRUARY 2026





ENGLISH MARTYRS CATHOLIC CHURCH,
64, LIEBENROOD ROAD, READING, RG30 2EB:
Registered Charity No. 1199568
Parish website: www.englishmartyrsrdg.com
Livestream link on You Tube:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCulqb5ncxASpguMmd_0MNtA

PARISH **EMERGENCY ONLY** CONTACT NUMBER: 07495 711537
Parish Priest: Fr. Gaston Forbah gforbah@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk
Asst Priest: Fr. Innaiah Maddineni imaddineni@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk
Retired Priest: Fr. Richard Maniak
Secretary: Barbara Poole. Tel: 0118 957 2149
Parish Office: CLOSED - REOPENS TUESDAY 17th FEBRUARY AT 9.00am
All calls/emails are monitored. Email: office@englishmartyrsrdg.com

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PARISH SAFEGUARDING MINISTERS/CONTACT DETAILS/ROLES

Yvonne Newman: safeguarding@englishmartyrsrdg.com (Safeguarding cases and concerns)
Gavin Knight: safeguarding2@englishmartyrsrdg.com (DBS applications/updates of DBS parish register)
Ernestina Amanfo: safeguarding3@englishmartyrsrdg.com (Safeguarding compliance in all parish activities)

SCHOOLS: English Martyrs Catholic Primary Dee Road, Reading RG30 4BE. 0118 937 5466 Executive Headteacher: Mr Jamie Carroll Head of School: Mr Anton Dworzak 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 FROM Sunday 8th February Sunday at 9.00am; 11.30am; 5.00pm Monday to Friday at 9.30am Saturday at 10.00am and 6.00pm (Vigil Mass for Sunday)	CONFESSIONS From Sunday 8th February Sunday 30 mins before 9.00am, 11.30am & 5.00pm Masses Monday to Friday 15 mins before Mass Saturday after 10.00am Mass and at 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.	

YOU ARE SALT AND LIGHT OF THE EARTH

In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus tells His disciples, “You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world.” He doesn’t say you should become salt and light someday; He says you are. This defines our identity as baptised Christians and forms the foundation of our call to be missionary disciples.


Salt only fulfils its purpose when it is poured out, and light only shines when it is placed where it can be seen. Similarly, faith cannot remain hidden or comfortable. If our relationship with Christ stays private, cautious, or confined within church walls, it loses its power to transform the world. Jesus calls us outward—into our families, workplaces, schools, neighbourhoods, and even online spaces. He urges us to live visibly different lives rooted in Him.


Being a missionary disciple does not mean having all the answers or preaching on street corners. It means allowing Christ to shape how we speak, forgive, serve, and love. It involves choosing integrity when it costs us, showing mercy when it is difficult, and offering hope when others are discouraged. Our good works are not meant to draw attention to ourselves, but to point beyond us: “that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”

In a world often marked by division, fear, and indifference, the Church is called to shine with the light of Christ. Each of us has a role in that mission. When we live our faith with joy, humility, and courage, we become signs that God is still at work, seasoning the world with grace and lighting the way home.


PARISH NOTICES


If you are a newcomer to our Parish, we are delighted to have you join us. Please, follow this link [New to Our Parish – English Martyrs Reading](#) for some helpful information. Also, please make yourself known to one of our Welcomers at the back of the church after Mass.


Readings for:	5th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	6th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
	First: Isaiah: 58: 6-10 Psalm: 112(111); 4-9. Second: Corinthians: 2: 1-5. Gospel: Matthew: 5: 13- 16.	First: Sirach: 15: 15-20 Psalm: 119(118); 1-2.4-5.17-18.33-34. Second: Corinthians: 2: 6-10. Gospel: Matthew: 5: 17-37.


 **RCIA/JOURNEY IN FAITH.** This week, the JIF group reflected on the Gloria, the great prayer of praise at the beginning of Mass. We then discussed this Sunday's Gospel on the Christian call to be Salt and Light in our world. We watched, and discussed, the Sycamore film on the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a5VOnJ_rzKI). Our catechumens and Candidates were encouraged to read and watch more on the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist from the Catechism of the Catholic Church in the coming weeks.


 **EMMAUS GROUPS – HOW TO UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE.**
 NEXT MEETING(S) WILL BE ON: Wednesday 11th February at 10.30am in the Bethlehem Chapel

 **TILEHURST DROP-IN CENTRE & FOODBANK** Firstly can I say a huge thank you for the donations we received last week. The number of clients requesting food is increasing every week so we are so grateful for your support. Our list of requirements this week is: Coffee, squash, sweet and savoury biscuits, sugar, pasta sauce, fruit juice, rice pudding, tinned fruit, jam and long life whole milk.

 **PORTSMOUTH CATHEDRAL – MOTHER CHURCH OF OUR DIOCESE TURNS 150 IN 2032:**
 50% of our Parish Fundraising of 2026 will support this Project
 In 2032, the Cathedral Church of St John the Evangelist, Portsmouth, will celebrate its 150th anniversary. Since its opening in 1882 ([History – St John's Catholic Cathedral, Portsmouth](#)) it has been a landmark in the City of Portsmouth and the Mother Church the Diocese of Portsmouth.
 To be continued – Read more at: <https://portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/cathedral150-appeal/>
 To offer support the Renovation Works in the Cathedral, use the QR Code on the left.



 **CAN YOU HELP ?**
CIRDIC, the Reading Churches' Drop In Centre, is urgently looking for help (alongside some fellow parishioners) serving lunches to Homeless and disadvantaged people. If you can offer help on Tuesdays from 11:30 to 2.00pm – even if only once a fortnight, we would love to hear from you. Contact the parish office or angela.wills@btinternet.com

 **PARISH AFTERNOON TEA** 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 19th February 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](tel:07891773379) if you need a lift. We look forward to seeing you all again.

IN-PERSON SAFEGUARDING TRAINING
 There will be a DBS Safeguarding Training Session in the Main Hall on Saturday 7th March between 1pm and 4pm with a short tea break. All DBS cleared volunteers have to undertake this training unless they have done it online. See Poster in the colonnade.

SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION
 We are pleased to announce that Bishop Philip will come to our Parish on May 16th to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation to our Senior Youths who are ready to receive this Sacrament. The candidates from St Joseph will join our Candidates on that day. Let us keep all of them and the Catechists in our prayer.

ENGLISH MARTYRS @ 100

15th April: Drop-in Cafe

8th May: Celebratory Mass with all our schools joining us.

23rd May: Litter picking in Prospect Park

24th May: Pentecost Community Lunch

CENTENARY CORNER

CENTENARY JOURNAL: VOICES OF THE PARISHIONERS

Would you like to contribute to our Parish Centenary Journal? Consider responding to the following question in not more than 75 words: *"HOW HAS ENGLISH MARTYRS PARISH SUPPORTED YOUR SPIRITUAL AND SOCIAL LIFE?"* Send your reply to office@englishmartyrsrdg.com

It will be nice if you include a passport-size photo and your full name. If, for any reason, you prefer to be anonymous, that is fine.

Summary of Parish History: Many thanks to Chris Maude who has kindly offered to summarise the 4 Volumes of our Parish History, which will go into our Centenary Journal.

RUBY JUBILEE OF FATHER RICHARD'S PRIESTLY ORDINATION

Fr Richard Maniak will celebrate 40 years in the Priesthood on Pentecost Sunday, 24th May 2026. It will be a wonderful opportunity to thank God for the gift of the Priesthood to His Church and for the commitment of Fr. Richard in the Lord's Vineyard for all these 40 years. Fr Richard prefers that we combine this celebration with our Pentecost Lunch. This means the Pentecost Lunch this year will be unique and special. There will be a special intention for Fr. Richard at all the Masses on Pentecost Weekend, while the 11:30 am Mass will be the Main Anniversary Mass. We will also set up a small planning committee for this significant event.

ALPHA FORMATION PROGRAMME

Our Parish wishes to run the Alpha Formation Programme from the 6th of May until July. Those who would love to be part of the team of facilitators of this formation could contact the Parish office. Training sessions will involve modelling two Alpha Sessions and will take place on April 22nd and 29th.

REST IN PEACE

Please pray for the souls of:

Helena Kennedy RIP, whose funeral will be here at 12.45pm on Tuesday 17th February

Chandra Livingston RIP, whose funeral will be here at 11.15am on Wednesday 18th February

Mr Woods RIP who died recently in Scotland.

Paddy Davies RIP who died on 4th February. Funeral details to be confirmed

Arthur Ryan RIP who died on 4th February. Funeral details to be confirmed.

Please also keep their loved ones in your prayers.

GOING INTO HOSPITAL: If you or a loved one are taken into hospital, please let the Catholic Chaplaincy know. Hospital staff are not allowed to ask you. Ring the hospital on 0118 322 7105 to let them know that you or your loved one would like a visit from a priest.

LOURDES CENTENARY PILGRIMAGE

21 people have now completed booking forms and after speaking with Tangney Tours, there is still availability for more people to sign up this week. So if you are still interested, please pick up a form from the Colonnade, complete and return ASAP; taking note of the updated costs i.e Sharing room (£790) and Single Room (£930). Intentions of Parishioners to take to Lourdes, will be collected the week before we go.

THANKSGIVING MASS FOR SUCCESSFUL FUNDRAISING FOR OUR PARISH ORGAN. As a Parish Community, we have been richly blessed by God throughout our fundraising for the restoration of our Parish Organ. Mass will be offered to thank God on March 11th at 6:30 p.m. followed by refreshments.

WEDNESDAY 18TH FEBRUARY IS ASH WEDNESDAY This is a day of fasting and Abstinence and is the beginning of the season of lent. Masses will be at 6.30am, 9.30am and 7.00pm.

MASS INTENTIONS: SATURDAY 7th TO SUNDAY 15th FEBRUARY 2026

FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

<i>Saturday 7th (Vigil Mass for Sunday)</i>	6.00pm	<i>Jimmy Hurley RIP</i>
<i>Sunday 8th February</i>	9.00am	<i>Carmina Falcao RIP</i>
	11.30am <i>Live Streamed</i>	<i>Karen Gallagher RIP</i>
	5.00pm	<i>People of the Parish and Mr Woods RIP</i>
<i>Monday 9th</i>	9.30am	<i>Joe Murray RIP</i>
<i>Tuesday 10th</i> <i>St Scolastica, memorial</i>	9.30am	<i>Sydney Burrett RIP</i>
<i>Wednesday 11th</i> <i>Our Lady of Lourdes, memorial</i>	9.30am	<i>Tess Donohue RIP</i>
<i>Thursday 12th</i>	9.30am	<i>João Da Luz RIP</i>
<i>Friday 13th</i>	9.30am	<i>Tessie Donoghue RIP</i>
<i>Saturday 14th</i> <i>St Cyril & St Methodios, feast</i>	10.00am	<i>Leticia Arnado RIP</i>

SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

<i>Saturday 14th (Vigil Mass for Sunday)</i>	6.00pm	<i>Jimmy Hurley RIP</i>
<i>Sunday 15th February</i>	9.00am	<i>John Fernandes & Natalina Gomes (Wedding Anniversary, Thanksgiving)</i>
	11.30am <i>Live Streamed</i>	<i>Margaret O'Shea RIP</i>
	2.30pm	<i>Vietnamese Mass</i>
	5.00pm	<i>Ethelreda Davis RIP</i>

IMPROVING LIGHTING AROUND THE CHURCH

Work on improving lighting all around our Church premises will begin this week. Hopefully, we will soon enjoy a brighter Church premises when it gets dark.

RETIREMENT OF BARBARA POOLE. Sadly, Barbara will finish working on Wednesday 25th March and we are thankful for her dutiful service in our Parish. We shall celebrate a Mass of Thanksgiving for all the blessings that God has bestowed on Barbara and our Parish throughout her service and this will begin at 6:30pm, followed by refreshments in the Hall.

VACANCY AT ENGLISH MARTYRS PARISH

PARISH ADMINISTRATOR – PART TIME 21 HOURS PER WEEK

As Barbara Poole will be retiring on 25th March 2026, the parish is looking to recruit a new parish administrator. The role is part-time, 7 hours per day on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. For further information including the job description, please contact office@englishmartyrsrdg.com. Ideally the successful candidate will commence employment in early March.