

# English Martyrs' Newsletter



## PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD SUNDAY 29<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2026



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 EMERGENCY ONLY CONTACT NUMBER: 07495 711537  
Parish Priest: Fr. Gaston Forbah [gforbah@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:gforbah@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)  
Asst Priest: Fr. Innaiah Maddineni [imaddineni@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:imaddineni@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)  
Retired Priest: Fr. Richard Maniak  
Secretary: Shyamalie McArthur. Tel: 0118 957 2149  
Parish Office: OPEN TUESDAY to THURSDAY 9am to 3pm  
All calls/emails are monitored. Email: [office@englishmartyrsrdg.com](mailto:office@englishmartyrsrdg.com)

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### PARISH SAFEGUARDING MINISTERS/CONTACT DETAILS/ROLES

Vacancy: [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:		TO DONATE TO OUR PARISH:	
English Martyrs Catholic Primary Dee Road, Reading RG30 4BE. 0118 937 5466 Executive Headteacher: Mr Jamie Carroll Head of School: Mr Anton Dworzak <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 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 <a href="https://www.hughfaringdon.org/">https://www.hughfaringdon.org/</a>	<b>MASS TIMES FROM Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March</b> Sunday at 9.00am; 11.30am; 5.00pm Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday at 9.30am Thursday at 7.30pm Friday at 3.00pm Saturday at 8.30pm (Easter Vigil)	<b>CONFESSIONS From Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March</b> Sunday 30 mins before 9.00am, 11.30am & 5.00pm Masses Monday to Wednesday 15 mins before Mass Thursday, Friday & Saturday: By Arrangement	
	<b>EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION: WILL NOT TAKE PLACE (GOOD FRIDAY). FIRST FRIDAY CELEBRATIONS ARE CANCELLED FOR APRIL.</b>		

### STANDING WITH THE CROWD THAT WELCOMED JESUS

As we enter Holy Week on this Palm Sunday, we stand with the crowds who welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem with joy and expectation. We hold palms in our hands and proclaim “Hosanna,” yet we also know how quickly those same voices would turn to cries of “Crucify him.” This tension invites us to reflect honestly on our own hearts. Are we faithful disciples only in moments of comfort and celebration, or are we willing to walk with Christ through suffering and sacrifice?





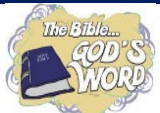


Palm Sunday is not just a day of remembrance; it is an invitation. Jesus enters not only the holy city, but also the depths of our lives: our struggles, our fears, and our hopes. He comes not as a conquering king, but as a humble servant, riding on a donkey, showing us that true greatness is found in love poured out for others.

As we begin this sacred week, we are called to follow Him more closely. We walk with Him from the joy of this day, through the sorrow of Good Friday, and toward the hope of Easter. Let us not remain at a distance, but enter fully into these mysteries.

May this Holy Week be a time of deep prayer, repentance, and renewal. Let us open our hearts to Christ, accompany Him in His Passion, and allow His love to transform us into true missionary disciples, ready to proclaim His mercy and resurrection to the world.

# 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:	PALM SUNDAY	EASTER SUNDAY
	First: Isaiah: 50: 4-7 Psalm: 22(21); 8-9.17-20.23-24 Second: Philippians: 2: 6-11. Gospel: Matthew: 26: 14-27:66.	First: Acts: 10: 34a. 37-43. Psalm: 118(117); 1-2.16-17.22-23. Second: Colossians: 3: 1-4. OR CorinthiansL 5:6b-8 Gospel: John: 20: 1-9.
	<b>RCIA/JOURNEY IN FAITH</b> This week, our RCIA group shared a Passover seder meal with our priests. Please continue to pray for our Elect and also those preparing to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation and to be received into the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil, next weekend.	
	<b>MONDAY 23<sup>rd</sup> MARCH</b> . We welcomed 5 guests overnight, plus 2 extra dinner guests for our last night shelter. The Hairy Bikers' sausage casserole and vegetarian lasagne were delicious, followed by apple crumble with custard and/or cakes. Lots of conversations, some games and showers taken. After a peaceful night, our guests were treated to a full English Martyrs' hot breakfast. The good news is that 3 more men now have a room of their own. We ask for your prayers for those still not housed. Thank you to all our volunteers, many of whom have expressed the wish to continue this work next year if needed. We thank also those praying for our guests, staff and volunteers and the staff at Faith Group.	
	<b>OPEN AIR STATIONS OF THE CROSS FRIDAY 3<sup>rd</sup> APRIL @ 10.00am</b> Organiser(s): Sharon Antony, Anita Connolly	
	<b>EMMAUS GROUPS – HOW TO UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE</b> . NO MEETINGS NEXT WEEK. NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING(S) WILL BE ON: Wednesday 8 <sup>th</sup> April at 10.30am in the Bethlehem Chapel.	
	<b>ENGLISH MARTYRS LENT FOODBANK</b> We would like to thank everyone for their profound sense of generosity. We shall be distributing the hampers put together from our donations on Monday 30 <sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 31 <sup>st</sup> . March. We are still happy to receive more items during this week. We shall resume collecting for St Joseph's Food Bank from Easter Sunday.	
	The Bookstall will be closed over the Easter weekend but normal service will resume the following week. Don't forget that as well as our normal stock, we also have a number of second- hand books that can be taken for a small donation to CAFOD or Life.	

## **MARRIAGE SUPPORT:**

From relationships that are 'Just in a Rut', needing some refreshment or more serious issues - If you are open to try again – Retrouvaille could be the solution. We have helped thousands of couples get their relationship back on track as they rediscovered hope and trust in the marriage.

To find out more visit: [www.retrouvaille.org.uk](http://www.retrouvaille.org.uk) or Tel: +44 7973 380443

**ENGLISH MARTYRS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL** is seeking two Foundation Governors to join their Governing Body. In a Catholic primary school, Foundation Governors are specifically appointed by the Bishop to ensure that the school's religious character is preserved and developed. They serve as a link between the Parish, the Diocese, and the school, ensuring that Catholic values remain at the heart of everything they do.

If you would like to find out more, please contact the school office to arrange a chat with Mr Carroll or Mr Dworzak. Alternatively, find out more at: <https://www.casopportsmouth.org.uk/applying-to-be-a-governor/> or apply directly by completing this form:

<https://portsmouthdiocese.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/CASOWebsiteDocumem>



Life in the Spirit is being run again in the Portsmouth Diocese starting on Thursday 23rd April. There are seven sessions with the last one being on the 18th June, due to Ascension Day and half-term. The Holy Spirit Day will also be at St Bede's Church, Basingstoke on 23rd May, the Eve of Pentecost, a brilliant time to receive an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. These sessions are being held online, but there are also live sessions at St Bede on the relevant dates. For more details and to register, please see <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/0ntyh8dxTF6b72BXv1LByg> or use the QR code on the right.



### **MARRIAGE RETREAT JUNE 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> : ISLE OF WIGHT**

This retreat is for engaged and married couples, wanting to strengthen the marital relationship rooted in the love of God. Arrive: Friday 12<sup>th</sup>. Depart: Sunday 14<sup>th</sup>. Children are welcome - child care can be arranged. Accommodation provided at centre. Price: £150 for cost of stay. Donations needed to support running event. For more information, please contact us at: [verbumdei.iow@gmail.com](mailto:verbumdei.iow@gmail.com)

**GOING INTO HOSPITAL:** If you or a loved one has to go 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.

**BARN DANCE** Friday 19th June 2026. 7:00pm to 10:30pm in the Parish Hall. A night of fun and frolic for all ages in aid of Cathedral Renovation and the Upgrading of English Martyrs Audio Visual System.  
**ADULTS £15.00; CHILD (5-12) £10.00; Under 5's Free. (Ticket price includes sit down meal)**

Parishioners from all parishes are invited to join together for an outing on Saturday 20th June to see 'THE LIFE OF CHRIST', details as shown on the poster in the colonnade.

Ticket prices are: Adult £40.00: Child (3-18 yrs) £20.00: Family ticket; (2 adults, 2 children) £110.00  
Groups of 30 or more can enjoy a 15% discount on ticket prices. Bookings would need to be done by the end of May so please contact Mel on 0118 996 7208 as soon as you can.

Note: Other dates are also available for the discount.

Travel to & from the event is still to be finalised but do consider car sharing as a viable option.

### **ENGLISH MARTYRS HOLY WEEK MASS TIMES (MARCH 28<sup>TH</sup> TO APRIL 5<sup>TH</sup> 2026)**

**PALM SUNDAY VIGIL MASS:** Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March at 6.00pm. Begins in the hall. *Palms will be provided.*

**PALM SUNDAY MASSES:** Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March:

- 9.00am: Mass begins in the hall. *Palms will be provided.*
- 11:30am: Mass begins in the hall. *Palms will be provided.*
- 5.00pm: Mass begins in the hall. *Palms will be provided.*

**MONDAY 30<sup>TH</sup>:** Mass at 9:30 am. (Fr Gaston's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Ordination)

**TUESDAY 31<sup>ST</sup> April:** Mass at 9:30 am.

**WEDNESDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> APRIL:** Mass at 9:30 am.

### **HOLY TRIDUUM**

**MAUNDY THURSDAY (2<sup>nd</sup> April) – MASS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER – 7:30pm**

**GOOD FRIDAY (3<sup>rd</sup> April):**

Public way of the Cross (in the rear car park) at 10.00am.

Good Friday liturgy begins at 3.00pm

**HOLY SATURDAY (EASTER VIGIL 4<sup>th</sup>):** Begins at 8:30pm. with lighting of the Easter Fire outside

**EASTER SUNDAY MASSES:** - 9.00am., 11:30 am. and 5.00pm.

### **EASTER OFFERING FOR OUR CLERGY**

In line with Diocesan Policy, our offering at our Easter Masses will go towards augmenting the income of our Priests. Our parish has always been very generous with this offering and so we say a huge thanks as you do this again this coming easter. While offering this financial support to your clergy, please kindly continue to pray for them.

**MASS INTENTIONS: SATURDAY 28<sup>th</sup> MARCH TO SUNDAY 5<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2026**

**PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD**

<i>Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> (Vigil Mass for Sunday)</i>	<i>6.00pm</i>	<i>Fr Gaston Afah, Thanksgiving on 10th Anniversary of his Ordination</i>
<i>Sunday 29<sup>th</sup></i>	<i>9.00am</i>	<i>Paddy Davis RIP &amp; Thanksgiving for 10th Anniversary of Fr Gaston's Ordination</i>
	<i>11.30am</i> <i>Live Streamed</i>	<i>Rita Lay Carceras RIP &amp; Thanksgiving for 10th Anniversary of Fr Gaston's Ordination</i>
	<i>5.00pm</i>	<i>Lucy Hope RIP &amp; Thanksgiving for 10th Anniversary of Fr Gaston's Ordination</i>
<i>Monday 30<sup>th</sup></i>	<i>9.30am</i>	<i>Terence John Morse RIP &amp; Thanksgiving for 10th Ordination Anniversary of Fr Gaston</i>
<i>Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup></i>	<i>9.30am</i>	<i>Derek Taplin RIP</i>
<i>Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> April</i>	<i>9.30am</i>	<i>Margaret Govern RIP</i>
<i>Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup></i> <i>Maundy Thursday</i>	<i>7.30pm</i> <i>Live Streamed</i>	<i>Miguel Salvador Rodrigues RIP</i>
<i>Friday 3<sup>rd</sup></i> <i>Good Friday</i>	<i>3.00pm</i> <i>Live Streamed</i>	<i>Celebration of the Lord's Passion</i>
<i>Saturday 4<sup>th</sup></i> <i>Holy Saturday</i>	<i>2.00pm</i>	<i>Święconka wielkanocna (Polish Blessing of Food)</i>
	<i>8.30pm</i> <i>Live Streamed</i>	<i>Pedro Rodrigues RIP</i> <i>Joseph Perera RIP</i>
<b>EASTER SUNDAY</b>		
<i>Sunday 5<sup>th</sup></i>	<i>9.00am</i>	<i>Tony Howard RIP</i>
	<i>11.30am</i> <i>Live Streamed</i>	<i>John Lourenco Fernando RIP</i> <i>Micaela Travasso RIP</i>
	<i>5.00pm</i>	<i>People of the Parish</i>

**RELAUNCHING ALPHA IN OUR PARISH**

We are glad to introduce this year's Alpha 2026 programme in our parish. The Alpha course is designed to explore the foundations of the Christian faith in an open and relaxed environment with provided meals each session. The course unpacks topics on who Jesus is, how to read the bible, develop a strong faith and much more. Our Parish Alpha will run weekly, from the 13<sup>th</sup> May to July 15<sup>th</sup> 2026 and is open to parishioners and those from all walks of life and faith. We are also seeking volunteers who would be willing to join the catering/meal coordinating team for the duration of this programme as well as any monetary donations towards the course. For more information on signing up to the Alpha course or volunteering, please email Godly Sowah:

[godlysowah.nii@googlemail.com](mailto:godlysowah.nii@googlemail.com)

**COLLECTION ON GOOD FRIDAY**

We shall have a collection at the end of the Good Friday Liturgy, which will be for Holy Places.

**POLISH FOOD BLESSING.**

This will take place on Holy Saturday, April 4<sup>th</sup> at 2.00pm. The offering at this event will go towards the purchase of more chairs in our Parish Hall.

**PURCHASE OF NEW CHAIRS IN OUR PARISH HALL**

We are currently looking to get good-quality chairs to replace those currently in the hall, which have been in use for quite a while and are now due for replacement. We are pleased to announce an anonymous donation of £500.

**FAREWELL CEREMONY FOR BARBARA POOLE**

We had a lovely and well-attended farewell Mass and Reception for Barbara Poole, our outgoing Parish Administrator and Finance Officer. We wish to thank all who played any role towards this successful event. Barbara Poole was visibly happy, and we pray the memories stay with her for a long time. We also pray for Shyamalie McArthur, who has replaced her.