

English Martyrs' Newsletter



21ST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
23RD AUGUST 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 Priest: Fr. Gaston Forbah gforbah@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

PARISH SAFEGUARDING MINISTERS/CONTACT DETAILS/ROLES

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

Ernestina Amanfo: 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 https://www.englishmartyrs.reading.sch.uk/home		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 23 rd August Sunday at 9.00am; 11.30am; 5.00pm Monday to Friday at 9.30am Saturday at 10.00am and 6.00pm (Vigil)	CONFESSIONS From Sunday 23 rd August Sunday 30 mins before 9.00am, 11.30am & 5.00pm Masses Monday to Friday 15 mins before Mass Saturday after 10am Mass and at 5.30pm.	
	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.		

KNOWING JESUS FOR OURSELVES

Jesus asks his disciples a deeply personal question: "Who do you say I am?" Peter answers with faith: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." It is a question that each of us must answer for ourselves. It is not enough simply to know about Jesus; we are invited to know him personally, as the living Lord who meets us today.

How, then, do we come to know Jesus? Faith grows through encounter. At Sunday Mass, we encounter Christ in the Eucharist and are drawn more deeply into his life. In Reconciliation, we meet his merciful love and receive the grace to begin again. In prayer and in visits to the Blessed Sacrament, we learn to become still and recognise that Jesus is truly present with us.

The Holy Habits (Sunday Mass, daily prayer, Friday penance and charity, visiting the Blessed Sacrament, regular Confession, and belonging to a small group) are not simply duties or good routines. They are practical ways of putting the Person of Jesus Christ at the centre of our lives.

Peter's confession of faith began a new chapter in his discipleship. May our own encounters with Jesus lead us to say, not merely with our lips but with our lives as we grow each day in our relationship with him: "You are the Christ."



Rest In Peace

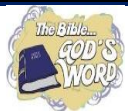
Please pray for the repose of the soul of Florence Bardos, a longtime parishioner of St. Anne's Caversham, a teacher at English Martyrs School for many decades and a member of the UCM at St. James. Details of her funeral have yet to be confirmed and will be advised in due course.
A Memorial Mass will be held for John Conroy RIP on Saturday 5th September at 1.30 pm at English Martyrs.

To keep up to date with the news of the Diocese and the Bishop please follow us on: Facebook: @PortsmouthRC / LinkedIn: Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth / X (formerly Twitter): @PortsmouthRC / Diocesan website: <https://www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/>
If you have news that you want to share with the Diocese, please contact communications@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

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:	21st SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (23/08)	22nd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (30/08)
	First: Isaiah 22: 15. 19-23. Psalm: 138(137); 1-3. 6.8bc. Second: Romans 11; 33-36. Gospel: Matthew 16; 13-20.	First: Jeremiah 20: 7-9. Psalm: 63(62); 2-6.8-9. Second: Romans 12; 1-2. Gospel: Matthew 16; 21-27.



EMMAUS GROUPS – HOW TO UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING(S)
WILL BE ON: Monday 24th August at 7.30pm in Room 2 and Wednesday 26th August at 10.30am in the Bethlehem Chapel.



TILEHURST DROP-IN CENTRE & FOODBANK We are supporting approximately 45 households, weekly, with food and household products. Many thanks to your very generous donations. This week we are short of cereal/weetabix, tinned corned beef/spam/ham, tinned mackerel, mayonnaise, peanut butter, biscuits, and wet wipes. Financial donations can be made to CDP Reading St Joseph. Sort Code: 30-93-04. Account No: 00885992. Please include as a reference, 'Foodbank'. Many thanks.



PROCESSIONAL CANDLES We are raising funds to replace our 4 broken and worn-out Processional Candles and we are pleased to report that our target of £650.00 to cover the replacement costs is now within reach. However, we still need your help, so if you can make a donation, please put it into the box in the wall in the colonnade behind the church door. Thank you all for your generosity.

THE GIFTS THAT GOD GIVES TO US

What is faith? Faith is man's response to God, who reveals himself and gives himself to man, at the same time bringing man a superabundant light as he searches for the ultimate meaning of his life (CCC 26)

ENCYCLICAL

The Principle of Subsidiarity (Magnifica Humanitas 65-67)

Subsidiarity means decisions should be made as close as possible to those affected. Individuals, families and local communities should be supported rather than replaced by higher authorities. This principle promotes participation, responsibility and dignity, including within today's digital society.

BAPTISM PREPARATORY COURSES FOR 2026:

Please register your interest with the parish office. *Catechists: Tony Maina & Saffiatu Bangura*

The next sessions will be in September and November 2026. Attendance is compulsory prior to Baptism taking place.

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.

PROJECT TO SUPPORT UPGRADE OF OUR AUDIO-VISUAL CENTRAL CONTROL UNIT

This September, Livingstons Hearing & Vision Care is supporting our church's audiovisual development project through a special hearing-care initiative. Members of the church, their families and friends can book a comprehensive 90-minute advanced hearing assessment for £100. The assessment includes an ear-health examination, detailed hearing testing, middle-ear testing and speech testing in both quiet and background noise. Your results will be clearly explained, together with personalised clinical advice and recommendations. The full £100 assessment fee will be donated to the church's audiovisual development project. If hearing aids are recommended, you will also have the opportunity to trial suitable private hearing aids free of charge, with no obligation to purchase. Appointments must take place during September 2026 at Livingstons Hearing & Vision Care, 14 Norcot Road, Tilehurst. To book, call 0118 304 9779 and mention the church newsletter.

MR. KWABENA KYERE BOAKYE & MRS MIRABEL BOAKWE ANTWI Invite everyone to the christening of baby Leon to be held at 11.30 on 29th August at English Martyrs.

PARISH EVANGELISATION CELLS: IMAGINE OUR PARISH

Imagine a parish where everyone feels welcomed, faith is shared naturally and more people discover their gifts for serving others. Imagine parishioners praying regularly for family and friends, encouraging one another and growing together as disciples.

This is the vision of Parish Evangelisation Cells; not replacing parish life or already established groups but strengthening the parish from within.

Our Parish Evangelisation Envisioning Evening is at 7:30pm on September 16th at St Joseph's Tilehurst.

Come and hear how this vision is renewing parishes and discover how we might embrace it together here in Reading.

To find out more go to www.pecsengland.com

SEASON OF CREATION 2026 "Living Water - Where the river flows everything will live. Ezekiel 47:9 From 1st September to 4th October, Christians throughout the world observe the Season of Creation: a time to give thanks to God for the gift of creation and to reflect on our responsibility to care for our common home. This year's theme, "Living Water", draws on Ezekiel's vision of water flowing from the sanctuary and bringing life wherever it goes. It reminds us that creation is God's gift, entrusted to our care.

As Catholics, our concern for creation begins not with politics, but with faith, gratitude and stewardship. We are called to care for the world around us and for our neighbours, especially those most affected by environmental damage. During this Season of Creation, why not make one simple commitment?

PRAY — giving thanks for creation and praying for those affected by droughts, floods and other disasters.

ACT — perhaps by reducing waste, using water wisely, encouraging wildlife, avoiding food waste or spending time appreciating God's creation. Small, faithful actions can be expressions of our Christian faith.

LOOKING TO MAKE A REAL DIFFERENCE TO COUPLES, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES?

Join us in continuing to make the world of difference to thousands of couples - many of whom say our service helped them rebuild their relationship and keep their family together! Whether you can spare a few hours a month or much more, and whether you want a front-line role or prefer to work 'behind the scenes', there's a volunteering opportunity to suit you and a welcoming community for you to be a part of.

To find out more please visit:

www.marriagecare.org.uk

or email: volunteer@marriagecare.org.uk

PEAK CELEBRATION OF OUR CENTENARY YEAR

It is now less than a month until Bishop Phillip and some of our previous parish priests return to join us in celebrating our centenary anniversary and plans are well underway to ensure the occasion is suitably celebrated.

Our centenary publication is just about to go to the printers and will be available from 18th September.

We now need your help and ask if you could visit the parish website and click on the links to sign up and help with the celebrations on 18th and 20th September, and also if you would like to order a copy of the centenary publication.

More details to follow shortly.

If you would like to pre-order a copy (copies), please use this link: [English Martyrs Centenary Publication](#)

To volunteer your help over the weekend of 18th to 20th September, please use this link:

[English Martyrs Centenary Celebrations](#)

UPDATE ON MAINTENANCE JOBS

We wish to thank our Maintenance team (Stephen Hogg, Peter McDonald, Graham Finch, Phil D'Arcy, Jacob Cerpeko and Dennis Crimmins) for the marvellous work done in keeping our Parish property in good condition. Below are the jobs that have been completed in the past 6 months.

Repair & Repainting of Carved Roundels at front of Church

Replace broken rainwater drainpipes around Church

Repaired Cistern in LH Ladies Toilet and fixed water leak from Ceiling

Repairs to lights & fitting of new external lights around Church Buildings

Convert Office Reception Door from Colonnade into a proper Fire Door

Legionella Risk Assessment Around Church, Hall and Presbytery

Accessible Toilet Refurbishment

Refix Arched Window above Fire Exit by Confessional

Block out the Doorway from Parish Office into the Presbytery Office

Complete Replacement of the Intruder Alarm System

Replacement of the Church Roof Alarm System

Updating and replacement of the Security Cameras around our site

Repainted the front of the Church & Presbytery

Door Lock on Office Reception Door : Door Bolt on Church Door

Special Glass in Choir Stairs Window: Colonnade Bottom Door Bolt

Fitting of extra Lights at rear of Church

MASS INTENTIONS: SATURDAY 22nd TO SUNDAY 30th AUGUST 2026

21st SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

<i>Saturday 22nd (Sunday Vigil)</i>	<i>6.00pm</i>	<i>Gregory Nanayakkara RIP</i>
<i>Sunday 23rd</i>	<i>9.00am</i>	<i>Hyacinth Chia Nkwain RIP</i> <i>People of the Parish</i>
	<i>11.30am</i> <i>Live Streamed</i>	<i>Vincent Alphonso RIP</i>
	<i>5.00pm</i>	<i>John Gorham RIP</i>
<i>Monday 24th</i>	<i>9.30am</i>	<i>Mary Daly RIP</i>
<i>Tuesday 25th</i>	<i>9.30am</i>	<i>Jim Pickering RIP</i>
<i>Wednesday 26th</i>	<i>9.30am</i>	<i>Kitty Lydon RIP</i>
<i>Thursday 27th</i>	<i>9.30am</i>	<i>Louie Fearn's RIP</i>
<i>Friday 28th</i>	<i>9.30am</i>	<i>Tommy Donohue RIP</i>
<i>Saturday 29th</i>	<i>10.00am</i>	<i>Thomas Higgins RIP</i> <i>Charles Philip Tima RIP</i>

22nd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

<i>Saturday 29th (Sunday Vigil)</i>	<i>6.00pm</i>	<i>Deceased members of the McCormack & Martland Families RIP</i>
<i>Sunday 30th</i>	<i>9.00am</i>	<i>Tolentina Fernandes RIP</i>
	<i>11.30am</i> <i>Live Streamed</i>	<i>Kathleen Lennon RIP</i>
	<i>5.00pm</i>	<i>People of the Parish</i>

CONGRATULATIONS to all our young people who received their GCSE, A Level and BTEC results over the last couple of weeks. We celebrate the hard work, commitment and achievements that these results represent, and wish you every blessing as you look ahead to your next chapter. Whether you are continuing your studies, beginning an apprenticeship, starting work or taking a different path, we pray that you will be guided, encouraged and inspired in all that lies ahead. May God bless you and accompany you always.

HEALING OF FAMILIES (HOF) The HOF Seminar-Retreat is a fascinating learning journey into the word of God that answers: "Why the need for family healing?"

IDENTIFY - See, listen to, and recognise family pains, dysfunctions, and struggles that constitute unnecessary sufferings for every family member.

CONFRONT - Distorted relationships of self, family and God's identities, need to be tackled to avoid blocking God's healing graces that keep us in a body-mind-soul's bondage loop.

PRAY - Discover how to pray effectively for those personal and familial problems and receive the love and healing of God.

UNDERGO - Experience you and your family not only the healing power of Jesus over your body, mind or soul's struggles, but also the beginning in your lives of a truly, heavenly and unfailing new joy (Novum Gaudium).

The first three days is comprised of thorough teaching through the Word of God, Doctrine and Tradition of the Catholic Church, about the foundations of the Healing of Families according to Fr Yozefu Ssemakula's Healing of Families Book.

Father Gaston's Holidays will be as follows:

3rd to 5th September and 28th September to 9th October.