

ST MATTHEW'S CATHOLIC CHURCH, NORTHWOOD

SERVING THE COMMUNITIES OF NORTHWOOD AND NORTHWOOD HILLS

'Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations...' [Matt 28:19]

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (JANUARY 29TH - FEBRUARY 5TH)

DEAR PARISHIONERS,

Do Not Hate.

On Friday we commemorated Holocaust Memorial Day. This is a day that gains a lot of attention and it is not just about looking to the past but also looking to the future. There was an excellent debate in parliament this week on this subject. One of the people mentioned in that debate was the Holocaust survivor Zigi Shipper who recently died on his 93rd birthday. He was a survivor of the Lodz ghetto and both the Auschwitz and Stutthof concentration camps. He arrived in the UK in 1947 and had spent over two decades sharing his testimony in schools across the country, being awarded a British Empire Medal in 2016 for his work with the Holocaust Educational Trust. In talking about his work he said

One thing that students often ask is whether I hate the Germans. I am always confused by this question. How could I hate someone for something their grandparent or great-grandparent did? But I think the young people I speak to leave my talk understanding something even bigger – I don't hate anyone. And they take this message home with them. I get letters every week from students who have gone away and learned more after my talk, or from young people who have spoken to their parents differently because hearing me speak about growing up alone made them realise how precious their lives were.

I had my own family – a beautiful wife, two children, 6 grandchildren and even a great grandchild. Hitler didn't win. But if I spend the rest of my life hating, I won't win either. I survived, and I will keep telling my story as long as I can, to make sure that young people always know what happened to us. We must never give up, and we must never stop teaching young people about the dangers of hatred.

The message that Zigi shared is one that we must take to heart today. Our Sunday Gospel gives us a model of living through the Beatitudes and we should try and live out the particular line *Happy the peacemakers: they shall be called sons of God*. That is how we should try and live our lives and also to pray for peace.

As we look at the world today, it is easy to see a place that is full of hatred. The war in Ukraine. In Jerusalem and the West Bank we are seeing hatred living out. We have also recently seen in Memphis, a man beaten up to the point where he dies from his injuries. Hatred is something that kills and we should try and avoid it at all costs.

I sometimes despair when I look at social media and all the hatred and vitriol that can be seen there. How can we share the message that Zigi spread through all those years? Well simply by living our lives according to the Beatitudes, where love is at the heart of living.

With all my prayers and best wishes,

Fr Tom

CONTACT US

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northwood@rcdow.org.uk

Fr Tom Montgomery Parish Priest:

Email:

tommontgomery@rcdow.org.uk

Parish Office:

Contact Cheryl Myring or Siobhan Hogg

9:00 — 3:30pm
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday

Sunday School & Catechetics:

RE Co-ordinator: awaiting appointment

Hall Bookings: contact the office or
northwoodph@rcdow.org.uk

SAFEGUARDING

Colette Quirk
Elizabeth Scudder

EMAIL(S):

northwoodsg@safeguardrcdow.org.uk
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Or safeguarding@rcdow.org.uk

Our Sanctuary Lamps

burn for

**Those killed in Jerusalem
and the West Bank**
(Blessed Sacrament)

and for

**Our Young People preparing
for their First Reconciliation**
(Our Lady)

Last Week's Offering.

Loose Cash: £344.84 Planned Giving Envelopes: £119.25 Standing Orders: £475.00 Contactless Giving £127.82
Total Offering: £1066.91.

Christmas Crib Appeal

Many thanks to all who have donated to the work of the Catholic Children's Society in our diocese. The CCS does invaluable work throughout the year with families and supporting very young lives in extraordinary circumstances. Our crib remains in church until the Feast of Candlemas (2nd February) after which we will send our contributions to the CCS.

Candlemas.

There will be an extra Mass this week on Thursday morning at 10.30am. Mass will be as usual at 7.00pm..

Taking down of Cribs.

On Friday we will be taking both our cribs down. We will start after Mass. If you are able to help (even if it is later in the day) please speak with Fr Tom

Blessing of Throats

In the diocese we celebrate SS Lawrence, Dunstan and Theodore on the 3rd February. It is also the memorial of St Blaise, therefore there will be the traditional blessing of throats after Mass on Friday.

Annual Mission Appeal

This year in our diocese the Annual Mission appeal will be made by members of various Institutes of Missionary Sisters of England and Wales. On the weekend of 4th/5th February we will be joined by Sr. Reena and Sr. Mini of the Missionary Sisters of St Peter Claver. Who will tell us about their mission work and would be grateful of your support..

They will stay in the presbytery overnight. Would anyone be willing to offer a light supper on the Saturday evening or Sunday lunch for Fr Tom and the sisters during their stay? Please speak with Fr Tom if you would like more details.

Weekday Mass Times

The question has been raised by some parishioners about the time of the weekday morning Masses. Some feel that 10.30am is a bit late and eats in to the rest of the day. We are therefore having a consultation to help gauge which time people would prefer Mass to be on a weekday morning. Fr Tom has no particular time that he prefers and is happy to have the mass whenever people would prefer it to be. If you wish your opinion on weekday morning Mass times, please take a voting form and state your preference. Then return the form to Fr Tom at the end of Mass.

Mass Intentions

The greatest prayer that we can offer is the Mass. Each of us should have an intention for Mass each time we come to Mass. It is also the practice to request a specific intention for the priest to offer when he says Mass. The diary has a number of spaces for Mass Intentions in the coming weeks. If you have particular dates that you would like Mass to be offered for your intention, then please contact the Parish Office during Office Hours. A priest can only accept one Mass intention per Mass. To make it fair for people to be able to have Mass offered for their intention, we operate the following policy. **For Sunday Masses**, the same intention can only be offered once within the calendar month. **For Weekday Masses** the same intention can only be offered once within the week. There are a number of spaces in the upcoming weeks.

World Day of the Sick

On Saturday February 11th 2023, the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, and the 31st World Day of the Sick, Cardinal Vincent will celebrate Mass in the Cathedral at 2.30pm. During this Mass anointing of the sick will be offered. This is a ticketed Mass and tickets need to be booked through the parish office. There are three types of tickets. 1) Those in a wheelchair to be anointed. 2) Walking sick to be anointed 3) Those assisting the sick and not requiring anointing. Please contact the office by the end of the week. Tickets will be sent from the cathedral from the 6th February.

Readers' Rota

Would readers please check their email and reply if they haven't done so already, this allows us to prepare the next rota.

Children's Liturgy

Every Sunday at the 9am Mass young children until Year 2 are invited to celebrate their own Liturgy of the Word. They must be accompanied by their parent or a responsible adult. Thank you to those parents who are accompanying their children and to those who have volunteered to lead the sessions. If you are interested in helping lead these session, please speak with Fr Tom.

Wednesday Word

The Wednesday Word is available at the back of church to take home to use to help you prepare for next Sunday's Mass.

Sponsor a Lamp

Why not sponsor the seven day lamp that burns before the Blessed Sacrament and Our Lady? A prayer intention will be attached to the lamp for that week (which will be printed). A donation of £10 for each lamp is suggested.

Lent 2023

This year Lent begins with Ash Wednesday on 22nd February. There will be Masses at 10.30am and 7.00pm. Fr Tom would like to know how people might wish to mark Lent this year. Please let him know your ideas and what you might like to do.

Appeal For Help

A local school is setting up a chess club and is appealing for any unwanted chess sets. If you have any that you no longer want, please give them to Fr Tom and he will pass them on to the school.

Hillingdon Foodbank Wish List

Thank you to everyone who supports the Foodbank. If you would like to donate anything please feel free to put any of the following items in the container in the porch. - Noodles, Sugar in small packs, Tinned Vegetables, Tinned Fruits, Jam, Honey, Long life Milk, Rice pudding or Custard in tin or small packs, Apple or Orange Juice, Toilet Tissues, Toiletries (Shampoo, conditioner, etc.), Sauces, Cleaning Supplies, Laundry supplies.

News From "Retrouvaille"

A Programme for Couples Struggling in their Marriages: Help Your Marriage – Do you feel alone? Are you frustrated or angry with each other? Do you argue ... or have you just stopped talking to each other? Does talking about it only make it worse? Retrouvaille is a programme to support couples who have difficulties in their marriage. It brings a positive focus, new hope and helps nourish and grow your marriage. Tens of thousands of couples headed for divorce have successfully saved their marriages by attending and using the tools provided. The programme helps spouses uncover or re-awaken the love, trust and commitment that originally brought them together. It helps them through difficult times whether they are disillusioned or in deep misery. There is no group therapy or group work. For confidential information about 'Retrouvaille' or to register for the next programme: a Face to Face weekend in Welwyn Garden City on 24 - 26 February 2023, call or text 07887 296983 or 07973 380443 or email retrouvailleukinfo@gmail.com - or visit www.retrouvaille.org.uk

Baptisms

Congratulations to Joseph Anthony Emmanuel Flahive who was baptised last Sunday. If you wish to have your child baptised, please contact Fr Tom to arrange to attend a baptism preparation meeting and to complete the necessary paperwork

Freedom of Religion is a vital human right

Speaking on behalf of the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales, Bishop John Sherrington, Lead Bishop for Life Issues, has reaffirmed a resolution passed by the Bishops at their November 2022 plenary highlighting concerns with current and proposed legislation on the issue of 'Buffer Zones' around abortion clinics. He issued the following statement

On 30 January the Government's Public Order Bill will be entering the report stage in the House of Lords. Clause 9, which was an amendment to the Bill in the House of Commons last autumn, introduces the 'offence of interference with access to or provision of abortion services'.

This clause will criminalise a range of activities within a 150m radius of an abortion service, under the broad premise of 'interference'. Problematic for freedom of religion, expression, and association, are many of the terms. These include: 'seeks to influence', 'persistently, continuously or repeatedly occupies,', 'advises or persuades, attempts to advise or persuade, or otherwise expresses opinion'.

Clause 9 could extend trends seen at a local level, where Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) in Bournemouth and Birmingham have set a dangerous precedent and banned, amongst other activities, prayer and the recitation of Scripture. Recent police actions have further exacerbated the concerns of Catholic bishops, and many others, regarding the broad legislative proposal of Clause 9 and its implications for freedom of religion, belief, expression, and association.

The interpretation of terms such as 'seeks to influence' could make prayer, certain types of thought, and even mere presence a criminal offence in a public place. There is a risk, despite any other intent, that existing and proposed measures constitute discrimination and disproportionately have an impact on people of religious faith. Its implications extend beyond the perimeters of an abortion service and raise questions about the state's powers in relation to the individual in a free society, both those with faith and those without.

All harassment and intimidation of women is to be condemned. Moreover, as accepted in a 2018 Home Office Review, there are already laws and mechanisms in place to protect women from such unacceptable behaviour and so render this Clause unnecessary and excessive.

The Catholic bishops, and many others, hold religious liberty to be essential for the flourishing and the realisation of the dignity of every human person and recognise it as a foundational freedom of any free and democratic society.

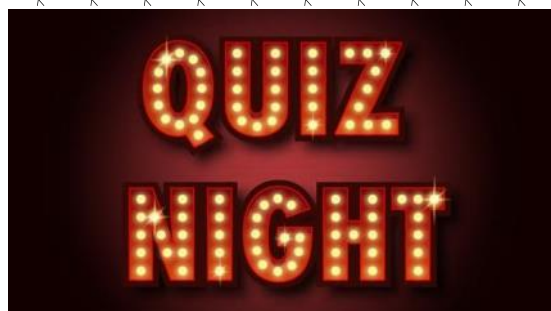


CENTENARY NEWS

Preparing for our Centenary Celebrations

Please come into the hall after the 9:00 and 11:15 masses on Sunday 12 February to share your memories or anecdotes of past parish life which we can record as part of our forthcoming centenary celebrations. We also need any photographs of past events or images of the Church and we will have facilities available to scan them to add to our parish archive.

There will be refreshments available and the 200 Club February draw will take place after the 9:00 mass.



Saturday 18th February
St Matthew's Church Hall
Doors Open 7.00pm
Quiz Starts 7.30pm

*Tickets £12.50 each
includes a Ploughman's Supper.*

*Teams of 8
(if you can't make 8 people you can team up with others)*

Bar available - Raffle - Prizes

*Tickets are on sale after Sunday Masses or from the Parish Office
Cash or Credit Card taken*

Centenary Fund

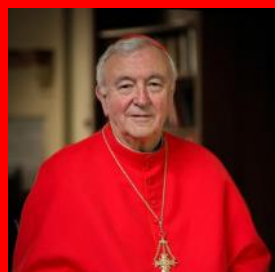
You can donate to the Centenary Fund via the contactless machine at the back of church. Any donations given to this will go to any particular projects that will be for our Centenary Year. More details to come.

Centenary Committee

The next meeting will be on Thursday 23rd February after the evening Mass.

When is the actual Centenary Year

We begin our Centenary celebrations on the 100th anniversary of the laying of the Foundation Stone of St Matthew's on Saturday 21st October 2023 and it finishes on Sunday 13th October 2024 which marks the 70th Anniversary of the Consecration of St Matthew's.



Centenary Mass

celebrated by Cardinal Vincent Nichols
and joined by former Parish Priests of St Matthew's.

11.00am Saturday 21st October

Centenary Pilgrimage to Rome and Assisi



6 – 13 November 2023

4 nights in Rome, 3 nights in Assisi

Return flights with British Airways – from Heathrow

Half board accommodation at
Hotel Emmaus within walking distance of St Peter's Basilica and the Vatican.
Hotel San Pietro, within the historical centre of Assisi.

Transfers to and from Rome airport

1 x ½ day tours of local area in Rome

1 x ½ day tours of local area in Assisi.

Full coaching in Assisi

Full services of an English speaking courier for the duration of the tour

Cost: £1030 per person

Single Room Supplement: £138 per person

*Cost based on a group of 20 -
if the group goes over 30
then the cost reduces to £955pp
and if over 40 reduces to £925pp*



Saint of The Week

Saint Blaise, Bishop and Martyr

Patron Saint of illnesses of the throat and other illnesses, wool workers, animals, bricklayers, bakers, farm workers

From 1346 to 1353, a bubonic plague commonly referred to as “Black Death” ravaged Europe, Asia, and North Africa. It was the most deadly pandemic in human history, with conservative estimates of its deadly toll reaching higher than 25 million people. Almost half of the people in Europe died in this pandemic. During that plague, many Catholics prayed fervently. Out of that chaos, a new devotion to the “Fourteen Holy Helpers” emerged. Those holy helpers were fourteen saints who were believed to be powerful intercessors, especially to cure illness. Among those fourteen is Saint Blaise.

Very little is known about Saint Blaise. The earliest mention of his life was not written until about 200 years after his death, by the medical writer Aëtius Amidenus, who spoke of the intercessory power of Saint Blaise to help unlodge objects stuck in the throat. The slightly more detailed *Acts of Saint Blaise* was written about 400 years after his death. Whether or not the stories written of him are true, what is certain is that the faithful have devoutly sought his intercession for centuries, and that practice continues today in the form of the blessing of throats on his feast day.



Legend has it that Blaise was an excellent physician in his hometown of Sebaste, Armenia, modern-day Silvas, Turkey. As a youth, he studied many of the great philosophers. When the Bishop of Sebaste died, Blaise was chosen as the new bishop by the popular acclaim “of all the people.” He was said to be a man of great faith and virtue, caring for his people in both body and soul. Many came to him for physical healing as a physician but also received many miracles. Many others came to him for spiritual healing, which was imparted by his deep faith. According to that same legend, even animals would listen to him and obey his commands, and he would heal them of ailments.

In the year 313, the co-ruling Roman Emperors, Constantine I and Licinius, jointly issued the Edict of Milan which established religious toleration throughout the Roman Empire. However, the *Acts of Saint Blaise* states that in 316, the Governor of Cappadocia, acting on an order by Licinius, began to arrest and kill Christians. Bishop Blaise is reported to have been among those arrested.

While on Blaise’s way to jail, the legend continues that a boy was choking on a fishbone, and the boy’s mother sent her son to Blaise for his prayers. Bishop Blaise miraculously cured him on the spot. Another story relates that on that journey to jail, a woman begged him to save her pig who had been seized by a wolf. Bishop Blaise ordered the wolf to release the pig and the wolf obeyed. Out of gratitude, the woman brought Blaise two wax candles to give light to his prison cell.

Despite these miracles, the governor insisted that Bishop Blaise renounce his Christian faith, which Blaise refused to do. Therefore, at the governor’s order, Blaise was ripped apart by metal combs used to comb wool and then beheaded.

Today, Saint Blaise is the patron saint of wool combers because of the legend of his torture and death by the metal combs. He is patron saint of animals because of his alleged authority over them. He is the patron saint of diseases of the throat and other illnesses because of the story that he healed the boy with a fishbone stuck in his throat, was a physician, and miraculously healed many others of their ailments. Two wax candles are used to bless throats today because of the legend of the candles brought to him in jail by the grateful woman.

As we reflect upon these stories that have been passed down through the years, perhaps the most important story to reflect upon is the story of faith that so many people have had for many centuries in the intercession of Saint Blaise. From the people who might have sought his prayers at the time of his ministry, to those who sought his intercession during the Black Death centuries ago, to the priestly blessings today at Mass using candles to bless throats, God has used Saint Blaise in ways that he could have never foretold. This should reassure us that God wants us to turn to the intercession of the saints in our time of need. Though God is fully capable of directly answering our prayers, He often chooses to use the mediation of others to impart His grace. Reflect upon your own devotion to Saint Blaise and all the saints. Seek out your special patron. Entrust your prayers to him or her and know that when you do, your patron offers you and your needs to God.

**Through the intercession of Saint Blaise, bishop and martyr,
may God deliver you from every disease of the throat and from every other illness.
In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit**

~Blessing of throats



*The Feast of the Presentation
of The Lord
(Candlemas)
2nd February*

Mass Times

10.30am & 7.00pm

Readings for Sunday Mass

First reading

Zephaniah 2:3,3:12-13

Seek the Lord,
all you, the humble of the earth,
who obey his commands.
Seek integrity,
seek humility:
you may perhaps find shelter
on the day of the anger of the Lord.

In your midst I will leave
a humble and lowly people,
and those who are left in Israel will seek refuge in the name
of the Lord.

They will do no wrong,
will tell no lies;
and the perjured tongue will no longer
be found in their mouths.
But they will be able to graze and rest
with no one to disturb them.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 145(146):6-10

How happy are the poor in spirit: theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

It is the Lord who keeps faith for ever,
who is just to those who are oppressed.
It is he who gives bread to the hungry,
the Lord, who sets prisoners free.

How happy are the poor in spirit: theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

It is the Lord who gives sight to the blind,
who raises up those who are bowed down,
the Lord, who protects the stranger
and upholds the widow and orphan.

How happy are the poor in spirit: theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

It is the Lord who loves the just
but thwarts the path of the wicked.
The Lord will reign for ever,
Zion's God, from age to age.

How happy are the poor in spirit: theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Second reading

1 Corinthians 1:26-31

Take yourselves for instance, brothers, at the time when you were called: how many of you were wise in the ordinary sense of the word, how many were influential people, or came from noble families? No, it was to shame the wise that God chose what is foolish by human reckoning, and to

shame what is strong that he chose what is weak by human reckoning; those whom the world thinks common and contemptible are the ones that God has chosen – those who are nothing at all to show up those who are everything. The human race has nothing to boast about to God, but you, God has made members of Christ Jesus and by God's doing he has become our wisdom, and our virtue, and our holiness, and our freedom. As scripture says: *if anyone wants to boast, let him boast about the Lord.*

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

Blessed are you, Father,
Lord of heaven and earth,
for revealing the mysteries of the kingdom
to mere children..

Alleluia!

Gospel

Matthew 5:1-12a

The Lord be with you.
And with your spirit.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.
Glory to you, O Lord.

Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up the hill. There he sat down and was joined by his disciples. Then he began to speak. This is what he taught them:

‘How happy are the poor in spirit;
theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Happy the gentle:
they shall have the earth for their heritage.

Happy those who mourn:
they shall be comforted.

Happy those who hunger and thirst for what is right:
they shall be satisfied.

Happy the merciful:
they shall have mercy shown them.

Happy the pure in heart:
they shall see God.

Happy the peacemakers:
they shall be called sons of God.

Happy those who are persecuted in the cause of right: theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

‘Happy are you when people abuse you and persecute you and speak all kinds of calumny against you on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.’

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PLEASE JOIN US IN PRAYING FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK AND THOSE WHO HAVE DIED

Please contact us with any additional names you may wish to be added to these lists which are updated weekly, and accept our apologies for anyone we have omitted.

FOR THOSE WHO ARE UNWELL:

Those sick with COVID throughout the world, - Kathleen Clarke, Ada Barker, Ron Picardo, Vince Thapermall, Kerry Blackburn, Martha Felleppa, James Wilson, Patricia Lee, Sinead Bushnell, Hayley Duncan, Audrey Potts, Tracy Bessant, Jo Smith, Brendan Smith, Mary Tierney, Michael Keating, Rafael Pino, Julius Fayiti, Anna Kelly, Justin, Margaret Downing, Victor & Gilda Kumarathasan, as well as others for whom we have been praying together recently.

FOR THOSE WHO HAVE DIED RECENTLY:

Tony Orr, Kathleen Heatley and all who have died as a result of war and conflict.

AND THOSE WHOSE ANNIVERSARY OCCURS AROUND THIS TIME:

Bishop Philip Harvey, Angela Leggieri, James Byers, Christopher Sherwin, David Saines, Saverio Sanzone, Rosina Grimwade.

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THIS WEEK (JANUARY 29TH - FEBRUARY 5TH)

SUN 29TH JAN	FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
	09:00 JOE DA CUNHA RIP
	11:15 PEOPLE OF THE PARISH
	18:00 MARIA WILSON (INTNS)
MON 30th <i>Feria</i>	10:30 JAMES BYERS RIP (ANNIV) 12:00 - 16:00 Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament*
TUES 31st <i>S John Bosco</i>	10:30 JOE GAUCI RIP 12:00 - 16:00 Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament*
WED 1st <i>Feria</i>	CHURCH CLOSED
THURS 2nd <i>THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD</i>	10:30 THE CUTHBERTSON FAMILY 19:00 PEOPLE OF THE PARISH 18:00 - 18:45 Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
FRI 3rd <i>SS Lawrence, Dunstan & Theodore</i>	10:30 SEBASTIANO DI FALCO RIP (Blessing of Throats after Mass)
SAT 4th <i>Blessed Virgin Mary on Saturday</i>	10:30 MARIANNE COOKE (INTENTIONS) 11:00 - 11:50 (Confessions available) 17:00 - 17:45 (Confessions available) 18:00 PEOPLE OF THE PARISH
SUN 5TH FEB	FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
	09:00 SABRINA LO (THANKSGIVING)
	11:15 ROBERTO CROVELLA RIP (ANNIV)
	18:00 NO INTENTION YET

Holy Father's Prayer intention for FEBRUARY:

During the month of **February**, please pray that parishes, placing communion at the center, may increasingly become communities of faith, fraternity and welcome towards those most in need.

* **EXPOSITION:** Whilst every effort will be made to ensure that this will take place at the times noted, circumstances may dictate that it be curtailed or cancelled at short-notice if Fr Tom is not available to facilitate it. We apologise for any inconvenience that this may cause.

Items for the Newsletter.

If you would like something to be in the newsletter. Please email Fr Tom (email address on front page) by 12 noon on Wednesday



You can make a donation to the parish
by using this QR code