

Diocese of
Shrewsbury
Ad Clerum

2022/02 January





Dear Fathers and Deacons,

THE PANDEMIC

We are all hearing reports that Covid restrictions may be lifted in part or even entirely in the weeks ahead. However, until official announcements are made; and we have received any specific guidance for places of worship, it will be important to continue with the prudential measures presently in place in order to provide reassurance and safety for all.

CLERGY

APPOINTMENTS - Airport Chaplain for Manchester

I am grateful to *Deacon Chris Wells* for accepting appointment as Catholic Chaplain to Manchester International Airport. Chris will succeed Deacon Mike Denny to whom we record our thanks for his dedicated pastoral service within the chaplaincy team and within the airport community. Chris will take up his new appointment at the end of January.

SICK CLERGY

Father Bernard Forshaw

Please remember at the Altar and in your prayers Father Bernard Forshaw's father, Mr Tony Forshaw, who died at Liverpool's Broadgreen Hospital on Sunday morning. May he rest in peace.

Father Bernard has requested a period of leave from parish and diocesan duties to recover his health and strength. Bernard will take residence with Canon Niall Mullaley and Father Humphrey Agbim at Saint Joseph's, Birkenhead. I am grateful to the clergy who have so generously agreed to help with the pastoral support of the parishes. Please keep Bernard's time of rest and recuperation in your prayers.

Father David Craig

Father David continues to receive treatment at Leighton Hospital and please keep his continuing recovery in your prayers.

Deacon Michael Cafferata

Deacon Michael was admitted to Leighton Hospital last week with pneumonia and please pray for his continuing recovery.

Canon David Roberts, Father David Long

Canon David Roberts and Father David Long have tested positive with Covid-19 in the past week thankfully with the mildest symptoms and have undertaken the required periods of self-isolation.

MEETING OF DEANS

The regular meeting of Deans on 4th February will now take place online. Theresa will be sending a link for this meeting, which will begin at 11am.

NEWLY-ORDAINED PRIESTS

The monthly gathering of our newly ordained clergy will take this month on 24th and 25th January. The focus will be on the



Second Vatican Council's vision of ecumenism and dialogue.

CLERGY DAY OF RECOLLECTION

The pre-Lenten Clergy Day of Recollection will take place on Wednesday 23rd February at Saint Anthony's, Wythenshawe and be led by Father Philip Caldwell who taught for many years at Ushaw and Oscott. A separate letter from Canon Michael Gannon VG should have been received together with the registration form.

DIOCESE

RE-STARTING THE PROGRAMME OF PARISH VISITATIONS

I hope to be able to re-start the programme of parish visitations in the coming weeks. It has been good during the period between September and Christmas to celebrate many Confirmations across the Diocese and a number of notable parish anniversaries. However, I hope conditions will soon allow me to be with you again in the parishes Sunday by Sunday. I have tentatively pencilled-in a first visit at Timperley at the end of next month following the beautiful renewal of the church building. I am conscious school visits may have to be delayed until later in the year; and that you are best placed to advise on the timing of visits in the light of local conditions. Theresa will be in touch with parishes individually starting with those whose visitations were

delayed at the beginning of the pandemic in order to begin arranging possible dates.

MRS CAROL LAWRENCE

Carol is due to have surgery on Friday this week and be on convalescent leave for at least 4 weeks. Please pray for the success of the operation.

Enquiries on financial and legal matters can be referred during this time to the Finance Office, our in-house solicitor Mrs Georgina Ford or to Canon Philip Moor VG as Moderator of the Curia.

WE WELCOME NEW MEMBERS OF STAFF

Diocesan Office for Catechesis

We Welcome *Doctor Stephen Yates* formerly of the Maryvale Institute in Birmingham as new member of our Diocesan Catechetical Team and *Lisa Martinez* formerly of our Youth Mission Team who will strengthen this new team under the direction of Jane Deegan. Jane is presently convalescing following surgery and we hope the complete team will be together by the beginning of February.

SAFEGUARDING DAY

The day for safeguarding representatives due to take place on Saturday 22nd January has been postponed due to Covid concerns.



CHESHIRE CHRISTIAN UNITY SERVICE

The Bi-annual Service of Prayer for Christian Unity in Chester's Anglican Cathedral on 22nd January has also been postponed due to Covid concerns.

BISHOP'S RETREAT DAY FOR RCIA CANDIDATES

We are considering whether to move the planned Retreat Day for RCIA candidates from across the Diocese due to take place on Saturday 19th February to an online reflection with the Bishop.

RENEWAL OF THE DIOCESAN WEBSITE

I am pleased that work is presently being undertaken to renew our Diocesan Website as we emerge from the period of the pandemic. I hope to be able to announce the re-launch date in the weeks ahead.

SHREWSBURY YOUTH MISSION TEAM

A poster is attached which you may wish to display in your parish, for the SYMT Young Adults Group who will be meeting on the last Sunday of each month at the Cathedral. There will be transport provided from St Vincent's, Knutsford for those in the north of the Diocese.

FINALLY ...

I am conscious the final period of this time of listening has coincided with much uncertainty for planning and renewed anxiety among parishioners, following the exponential spread of

the Omicron variant. I am continuing to receive individual reflections, which I hope represent how the faithful have responded to this opportunity as a time of attentiveness in prayer and in reflection on communion, participation and mission. I hope we too can seek to listen in our prayer and be able to reflect at the beginning of this year on the task of re-building.

I have been reading a beautiful book of the Holy Father's reflections during the time of the pandemic echoing the words of Our Lord "Why are you afraid? Have you no faith?" Pope Francis reminds us how we face the fears which can threaten to overwhelm us by making every crisis a moment to renew our own faith in the Lord and to ask that our faith be increased.

May this be enduring fruit of this time of trial and uncertainty through which we have all lived.

United in this prayer,

+ Mark

Bishop of Shrewsbury

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➤ *SYMT Young Adults Group Poster*