

Diocese of
Shrewsbury
Ad Clerum

2022/17 October





Dear Fathers and Deacons,

OCTOBER MASS COUNT

The complete picture of Mass attendance across the Diocese will come together with the statistical returns after Christmas. It has been encouraging to hear anecdotal evidence from parish priests and to see some of our parishes returning to almost pre-Covid levels of Mass attendance this Autumn. I am also conscious from speaking with clergy that in not a few communities there continues to be a fall in numbers, especially in our smaller missions.

Whatever, the statistical return this past month I would want to encourage you and record my own thanks for all you have done in many different and challenging situations, to rebuild the life of the parishes since we were first able to re-open the doors of our churches in the summer of 2020.

SYNOD OF BISHOPS 2023 & 2024

Pope Francis announced during the Angelus message that for the synodal process to come to maturity, it was necessary not to be in a rush. The Holy Father has asked for a more relaxed period of discernment announcing that the Synod of Bishops in October next year will be followed a second Synod of Bishops in October 2024.

INDEPENDENT INQUIRY INTO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

I am sure you will be aware of the publication of the Final Report of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse. I attach the link to the final report on the IICSA website for your convenience

<https://www.iicsa.org.uk/final-report> and have attached the statement from the Catholic Council chaired by Baroness Nuala O'Loan.

I know the media has focused much of its reporting on the seal of Confession. It is sad to see there is much misunderstanding of the nature, purpose and practice of this great Sacrament in which the 'sacramental seal' must always be inviolable.

CLERGY

FATHER MICHAEL CUPIT RIP ~ FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS

Father Michael's mortal remains will be received into Saint Vincent's, Altrincham this Thursday, 27th October with a Vigil Mass at 7.00pm. I will be offering Michael's Requiem Mass on Friday 28th October at 11.30am at Saint Vincent's prior to the interment at Dunham Lawn Cemetery, Altrincham. Please keep Father Michael and his family in your prayers.

DIOCESAN EUCHARISTIC SHRINE: PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS AND THE SANCTIFICATION OF PRIESTS

It was a very beautiful and well-attended Mass on Saturday inaugurating the new Diocesan Eucharistic Shrine at Saint Joseph's, Stockport. It is good to know that the continuous Eucharistic Adoration has begun this week with the assurance of many graces and blessings. I would wish to record all our thanks to Father Sean Davidson for all he has done to make this possible. I hope we will occasionally be able to personally share in this prayer at Saint Joseph's



and unite our prayers throughout the year for these great and urgent intentions.

LOURDES CONFERENCES AND CELEBRATIONS

In the month ahead, the Diocese will be welcoming to Shrewsbury Cathedral the British Lourdes Pilgrimage Doctors for a conference during the weekend of 5th/6th November; and the British Lourdes Directors Conference from 8th to 11th November. I will be celebrating Mass for the Lourdes Doctors at 5.30pm on 5th November and for the Lourdes Directors at 5.30pm on 9th November.

DIOCESE ~ HEALTH AND SAFETY

Julie Tinsley writes:

INTRODUCTION OF THE DIOCESE HEALTH AND SAFETY FILE

The new comprehensive Health and Safety File has been printed and will be distributed to all parishes during the next few weeks. Each church should place a copy of the file either in the office or sacristy where it can be available for inspection as necessary and kept up to date. The document contains the current Diocese Health and Safety Policy Manual, User Handbook and Fire Safety Policy. Additionally, it holds all current Health and Safety Guidance Notes, Risk Assessment Templates and Forms for parish reference and future use.

There are empty sections which are for churches to store their own health and safety records such as Fire Risk Assessment, Asbestos Report, Inhouse Inspection Records and Parish Activity

Risk Assessments. There is also a section for your Church Statutory Inspection Reports i.e., PAT Certificates, Lightning Conductor Tests etc. On receipt of the file, please ensure you complete the empty sections with your parish/church documents.

The file should be available to view by all your staff and volunteers plus any external authorities on request.

For any advice on this file please contact the Health and Safety Officer (details below)

WINTER SAFETY PREPARATION

Daylight Saving Time in the UK, ends at 2am on Sunday 30th October. At this time parishes should be considering winter safety preparations, such as checking external lighting is working properly and you have supplies to suitably grit your pathways as the weather turns frosty. A 'Parish Winter Safety Preparations' risk assessment should be completed or your previous assessment reviewed in time for the weather changes.

Please be aware that Covid -19 is still endemic within the UK. The latest Government and NHS guidance includes:

- Encouraging people to take up the vaccinations
- Keeping buildings ventilated, windows kept open or suitable mechanical ventilation system in place i.e., free standing air filtration units can help to improve air quality and reduce risk of infection.
- Maintaining cleanliness - hand sanitisers available at entry points and frequently touched areas are regularly cleaned.



If you are in the process of considering whether you can offer your parish community facilities such as 'Warm Spaces' this winter, you will need to have in place, a Winter Safety Preparations assessment in addition to completing the new 'Parish Warm Spaces 2022' risk assessment which was sent out to parishes last week.

This assessment should be sent to the Health and Safety Officer (details below) for review before you open your 'Warm Space' to the public. (Please see the enclosed forms).

NOTIFICATION OF SERIOUS INCIDENT

The Diocese have recently been notified of a serious incident which occurred at a church during a memorial service, where the family had brought in their own electrical equipment to present a montage of photographs. While setting up the equipment, a member of the public received an electric shock. Fortunately, the man received no further harm but the church electric circuits to the sacristy and altar were affected. On observation the amplifier cable was seen to have no suitable insulation and had not been PAT tested.

For this reason, any equipment used or stored on site by professional photography/audio-visual technicians or musicians must have an appropriate PAT test/label to accompany the equipment and the use of third-party electrical equipment must be discouraged.

JOINT SAFEGUARDING AND HEALTH & SAFETY TRAINING SESSIONS

There are two joint training sessions for Safeguarding and Health & Safety, remaining before the end of the year:

Saint Anthony's Parish Centre, Wythenshawe, on 9th November and Saint Anne's Parish Centre, Rock Ferry, on 1st December.

If you are interested in attending the course, and/or sending your parish Safeguarding and Health and Safety Representatives, please complete and email the booking form using the title "Training Booking" to the **Health and Safety Officer**:

Julie.Tinsley@dioceseofshrewsbury.org

COURSES AND EVENTS

OSCOTT COLLEGE LECTURE SERIES

Doctor Mary McCaughey has organised a series of lectures on Interreligious Dialogue at Saint Mary's College, Oscott in November. There is also a lecture by George Wiegel on his soon-to-be-published book "To Sanctify the World: The Vital Legacy of Vatican II" I attach two posters with details of the lectures and how to book a place.

CATHOLIC NATIONAL SHRINE AT WALSINGHAM ~ CLERGY RETREAT 2023

There will be a retreat for clergy at Our Lady's Shrine from 6th to 10th March 2023, to be given by Canon John Udris, Parish Priest of St Peter's, Marlow, Amicus Clero of the Diocese of Northampton and former Spiritual Director at Saint Mary's Seminary, Oscott.

The cost is £330. The retreat starts with supper at 6.30pm on Monday 6th and finishes with lunch on Friday 10th. To book, please contact reservations@walsingham.org.uk



SVP TASTER SESSIONS

An invitation from Maggie Doherty, St Mary's University, to join SVP National Taster Sessions:

This month, you can take part in a range of free online taster sessions, including: 'care leavers', 'end of life companionship', 'social justice', 'holiday camps', and 'support for refugees and migrants'. Get involved and turn concern into action! To discover more:

visit www.svp.org.uk/discover or email your interest to discover@svp.org.uk If you are aware of a need, please contact us at request@svp.org.uk

APPEAL FOR A CRIB

On behalf of the Chaplaincy Team at *Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust*, Deacon Antony Zidan would like appeal to any parish who may have a spare Christmas crib for the hospital.

Please contact Deacon Antony on Tel: 07714 617626 Email: tony.zidan@gmail.com or Sister Bernie on Tel: 07771 805715 Email: bernieibvm@aol.com

FINALLY ...

The Health and Safety section of this Ad Clerum has alerted us to the approach of winter. Next Tuesday sees the beginning of November with the Solemnity of All Saints and the month-long prayer of remembrance and intercession for all the faithful departed.

In the past week, we have remembered the third anniversary of the death of Bishop Brian Noble in 2019 and have said farewell to so many members of the Shrewsbury clergy in the intervening years.

Let us keep us keep them all in prayer as prepare for the traditional month of prayer for all those who have gone before us.

+ Mark

Bishop of Shrewsbury

Enc.

- *IICSA ~ Statement from the Catholic Council*
- *Parish Winter Safety Preparation Form*
- *Parish 'Warm Spaces' Form*
- *Diocese of Shrewsbury Training 2022*
- *Oscott College Lecture Series – Two Posters*