

Diocese of
Shrewsbury
Ad Clerum

2023/05 May





Dear Fathers and Deacons,

WELCOMING THE NEW APOSTOLIC NUNCIO TO GREAT BRITAIN

Please remember in prayer Archbishop Miguel Maury Buendia as he begins his mission this week as the Apostolic Nuncio to Great Britain.

Archbishop Buendia brings a wealth of experience from his service of the Holy See in the Apostolic Nunciatures of Rwanda, Uganda, Morocco, Nicaragua, Egypt, Slovenia, Ireland and in the Section for Relations with States of the Secretariat of State in Rome and as Apostolic Nuncio to Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan and most recently Apostolic Nuncio to Romania and Moldova.

We pray for the many responsibilities involved in being the personal representative of the Holy Father in our land.

THE CORONATION OF KING CHARLES III

I am sure you will have read that Pope Francis has sent relics of the True Cross as a gift to King Charles on the occasion of his coronation. King Charles has asked these precious relics should be placed in the processional Cross that will lead the procession into Westminster Abbey on Saturday. It will be a poignant reminder of the Christian foundations of our country and of the central place of Christian prayer amid the pageantry and constitutional requirements of Saturday's Coronation.

We can be thankful that Christian faith and prayer retains a central place for our Head of State and in so much of our national life. I am often struck when attending civic celebrations in the Diocese, that we are blessed that so many dimensions of our public life are hallowed by Christian prayer. May the celebration this coming weekend be an occasion for us to share in this prayer.

In addition to the guidance offered in the last *Ad Clerum*, I am grateful to Canon Christopher Matthews who has sent suggested intercessions for the King, the Royal Family and the well-being of the nation and the commonwealth for the Universal Prayer on Sunday. I hope these happy celebrations will, as the King desires, help bring people together and affirm the spirit of service across society.

BISHOP DAVID MCGOUGH AND BISHOP CHRISTOPHER BUDD R.I.P

The Requiem Mass for Bishop David McGough, the Emeritus Auxiliary Bishop of Birmingham, was celebrated at Saint Chad's Cathedral on 20th April. The Requiem Mass for Bishop Christopher Budd, the Emeritus Bishop of Plymouth, will be celebrated at the Sacred Heart Church, Exeter on Friday 5th May. Please remember them in your prayers.

CLERGY

ORDINATIONS TO THE PRIESTHOOD

In addition to the priestly ordinations with which our Shrewsbury Diocese is blessed this year, I was delighted to receive news of the ordination to the Priesthood of Liam Dodds, a parishioner of Christ the King, Bromborough for the Institute of Christ the King, Sovereign Priest. Canon Dodds will be celebrating a first Mass at Saint Peter & Paul, New Brighton on Saturday 13th May.

I will also have the happy privilege of ordaining Thomas Mannion OP to the Priesthood on Saturday 8th July at Blackfriars, Oxford. Brother Thomas is a parishioner of Saint Joseph and Saint Alban's.

Please remember these members of our Diocese as they begin their priestly life and ministry in the



Institute of Christ the King and the Dominican Order.

THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE AND RECONCILIATION

Hearing Confessions in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation lies at the heart of our priestly ministry. It is a Sacrament we greatly treasure that those who acknowledge and confess their sins and resolve to amend their way of life receive the forgiveness of God, the Father of mercies and renewal in holiness. It is good to see this Sacrament of our conversion after Baptism being made more frequently available in the parishes.

I am also conscious that confessional practice and especially the Seal of Confession are being questioned today, often due to ignorance or misunderstanding. The bishops reflected this past week on the Seal of Confession being absolute and that the sacred confidentiality involved in hearing a sacramental confession can never be violated under any circumstances. It is, however, essential that we are aware of what response should be made to a penitent if crimes such as the abuse of children are confessed. In this we are helped by the following guidance from the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency relating to concerns and allegations regarding the disclosure of child abuse in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Disclosures of abuse within the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation are to be responded to in accordance with sacramental practice.

- The Sacrament of Reconciliation offers the penitent the Seal of absolute confidentiality; in this context alone the priest is bound to keep secret what is disclosed. Where there is involvement of an interpreter, e.g. during the Confession of a deaf person, a duty of complete confidentiality is extended to this person. Information gained in the context of

sacramental confession may not be used in any other forum.

- If the priest is subsequently contacted by the penitent, outside the Seal of Confession, the Seal of Confession still applies to what was disclosed in the original Confession. However, the priest must make it clear to the penitent that the Seal of Confession no longer applies to anything disclosed subsequently outside Confession. Although the priest cannot use any knowledge gained from the original Confession or act on it, he must explain that he has a responsibility to take all reasonable steps to protect children or adults who may be at risk of abuse.
- When the nature of the abuse disclosed is criminal, the penitent should be directed to bring the matter to the attention of the statutory authorities outside the Sacrament of Confession and informed that the Diocesan Safeguarding Office can help in making the necessary contacts.
- Survivors and victims of abuse can be encouraged to seek help outside the Sacrament and, to pass on the information to an appropriate person. The Diocesan Safeguarding Office can help in making any necessary contacts. It is not the priest's role to engage in counselling in the context of the sacramental confession, even if he is appropriately professionally qualified to do so, since this leads to confusion of roles and might give rise to conflicts of interest.

See Item 7 in the following document [Practice-Guidance-Management-of-Concerns-and-Allegations.docx \(live.com\)](#)

This guidance can apply to other crimes. Concerning the consequences of sins which are also crimes, exhorting and encouraging honesty and accountability upholds the virtue of justice so that a penitent might take full responsibility for their actions.



We appreciate that our ministry as confessors is an immense privilege and responsibility. For the Sacrament of Penance will always be a sanctuary to be defended and respected as a sacred place of encounter between a repentant sinner and the mercy of God.

DIOCESE

DIOCESAN MASS FOR THE CELEBRATION OF MARRIAGE

The annual Marriage Mass is to be held this year for the first time since February 2020. It will be celebrated on Saturday October 14th 2023, 12 noon at Saint Columba's Church Plas Newton Lane, Chester CH2 1SA, and will be followed by a reception in the Parish Hall.

I will be inviting couples who are celebrating significant wedding anniversaries this year: Silver, Pearl, Ruby, Golden, Diamond or Platinum and also newly married couples to attend for their first anniversary. This invitation is also extended to couples who celebrated their wedding in 2021 and 2022.

Please send the details, including the couples address and anniversary (e.g. Ruby/40), of any parishioners who wish to receive an invitation to: theresa.stones@dioceseofshrewsbury.org

THE NEW LECTIONARY

At the meeting of the Bishops Conference last week, we received news that the Dicastery for Divine Worship has granted the *confirmatio* – the final approval - for the new Lectionary for England and Wales. We can look forward to the introduction of the new Lectionary from the beginning of Advent 2024. The Lectionary will be published by the Catholic Truth Society in four volumes 1. For Sundays, Solemnities and Feasts

of the Lord 2. Weekdays: Advent, Christmas, Ordinary Time (Weeks 1-9), Lent, Easter with the Proper of Saints: December to May, Commons. 3. Weekdays Ordinary Time (Weeks 6- 34) Proper of Saints: June to November, Commons. 4. Ritual Masses, Masses for Various Needs and Occasions, Votive Masses, Masses for the Dead. The CTS will also aim to publish a Book of the Gospels to be available at the same time as the new Lectionary.

The new Lectionary will happily begin its use for the Holy Year, and I will keep you in touch with developments regarding the ordering of volumes next year and plans for preparations and opportunities for formation.

DIOCESAN MISSION FOR CATECHESIS

News and information from our Diocesan Director of Catechesis, Mrs Jane Deegan:

• Day for Catechists

We ran our first Day for Catechists for the parishes in Chester in early February 2023 with the help of Father Paul Shaw and we have our next Day for Catechists booked for 3rd June 2023 at Saint Albans parish in Macclesfield. All catechists from the surrounding parishes are welcome.

• Catholic Christian Outreach

An initiative that began in Canada now helps parishes enter more deeply into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and to be true disciples. The first stage in the Faith Formation Series run over six evenings focusses on announcing the Kerygma and is entitled *Discovery*. We have started this initiative with Saint Georges parish in Whitchurch with the help of Father Thaddeus Opara. Ongoing accompaniment for the parish is inbuilt. For more



information or if you would like us to bring it to your parish, please contact Natalie on 07730 526826 - natalie.oreface@dioceseofshrewsbury.org

- **Parish Mission - Saint George's Whitchurch**

Following on from the six-week Discovery series we are holding a Parish Mission Day for Saint Georges Whitchurch on May 27th, 2023. Parishioners from surrounding parishes would also be most welcome. It will be held in the Parish Hall of the nearby Anglican Church of Saint Alkmund's, Whitchurch.

- **Day for Discernment of Gifts & Service For Laity**

We ran the first of these discernment days back in November 2022. We now have a second one organised and it will be run at Saint Columba's Parish Hall on June 24th 2023.

- **Conference: The Person of The Catechists And The Directory For Catechesis 2020**

This will be a one-day Conference with teaching on the calling and person of a Catechist and a look at the new Directory of Catechesis published in 2020. There will be guest speakers. More information to follow. It will take place at Saint Columba's Church Hall in Chester on September 2nd 2023. For more information, please contact Stephen Yates on 07842 487978 or email at Stephen.yates@dioceseofshrewsbury.org

- **Marriage Preparation**

The new Marriage Preparation Course entitled *Betrothed* was run very successfully as a pilot in February and March 2023 with positive feedback from the couples. A further course will be run at Saint Vincent's, Altrincham over two consecutive Saturdays 18th and & 25th November 2023. The course includes (among other things) catechesis on the truth and meaning of the human person, the meaning of marriage in God's plan from the beginning, marriage under the regime of sin and marriage in the Lord. It also includes researched

based relationship education and skills training proven to strengthen marital relationships. Couples can book via Jane Deegan 07517 906435 or email at jane.deegan@dioceseofshrewsbury.org

- **Marriage Enrichment Retreats**

A marriage enrichment Loving 4 Life was successfully run for the first time in the Diocese last October with positive feedback from all the couples. The new dates are 17th, 18th June at Saint Vincent's, Altrincham (Non-residential) and 15th - 17th September at Wistaston Hall, Crewe (residential if required). (Flyers to be sent out soon). Couples can book directly at www.loving4life.co.uk

The Christian Heritage Centre, Stonyhurst, Clitheroe are also running a Retreat for Married Couples from Friday 19th-Sunday 21st May 2023 entitled 'A Great Mystery: Man and Wife as Image of the Church' Please see further details at <https://christianheritagecentre.com/events/a-great-mystery-marriage-enrichment/> or contact Stefan Kaminski Director of the Centre T: 01254 827329 | director@christianheritagecentre.com

- **Natural Family Planning Awareness & Infertility Help**

The Diocese has been able to sponsor a parishioner to undergo training in NFP Methods. She commenced the course in February and is due to complete at the end of this month. Thereafter she will be available to teach couples either in person or via Zoom/Teams.

In the meantime, a digital video of introduction to the methods has been produced by Freda McMahon an experienced practitioner. She is based in London, and she also teaches clients via Zoom. She specialises in assisting couples who are struggling to achieve a pregnancy. Freda has her own website where couples may contact her directly.

<https://www.naturalfertilitymatters.com/>



• **Marriages in Crisis**

If couples are struggling, I would recommend they contact Retrouvaille see their website at <https://www.retrouvaille.org.uk/> Their next weekend is at the beginning of July 2023.

If couples seek therapeutic help, then finding Catholic therapists in the UK is something of a challenge. If couples are happy to be seen via Zoom, then I can recommend Catholic Psyche see <https://www.catholicpsych.com/about-us> They offer a new model of accompaniment rather than a one off or a series of single sessions.

Please contact Jane Deegan on 07517 906435 or email at jane.deegan@dioceseofshrewsbury.org for more information regarding any of the items in this section. There will be flyers with some additional information sent to parishes in the near future.

APF-MILL HILL RED BOX RESULTS 2022

The Red Boxes from the Diocese of Shrewsbury raised a total of £131.199 for 2022. The Association for the Propagation of the Faith has written to record their thanks to Father Anthony Grace, our Diocesan Director, to all our parish priests, local secretaries, promoters and the people of the Diocese for this generous support for the worldwide mission of the Church.

EVENTS AND COURSES

STONYHURST

• **Coronation Bank Holiday: sponsored Walk for Life at Stonyhurst**

Starting at 2.00 pm on Monday 8th May at Theodore House, Stonyhurst, walkers will head along a shortened route of the scenic Tolkien Trail, offering the chance to take part in an

afternoon of prayer and witness in aid of *Right to Life*.

There will be Eucharistic Adoration in Saint Peter's Church throughout the afternoon for those wishing to accompany the event in prayer, with Benediction at 5:15pm, after which refreshments will be served at Theodore House.

<https://christianheritagecentre.com/events/walk-for-life/> to register and for more information.

• **"A Great Mystery": Marriage Enrichment Retreat**

Running from Friday 19th to Sunday 21st May and responding Pope Francis' call for ongoing formation for married couples, this retreat will ground couples in the Church's vision of marriage as an icon of Christ and His Church, strengthening their sense of the supernatural and ecclesial dimensions of the marital vocation.

<https://christianheritagecentre.com/events/a-great-mystery-marriage-enrichment/> to book and for more information.

• **"Building Catholic Culture in Education"**

A 2-day course for governors, CEOs, heads and senior leaders of Catholic schools and MATs, running from Friday 12th to Sunday 14th May.

A line-up of speakers with a range of educational and ecclesial experience, including Mgr Michael Nazir-Ali, will discuss how school leaders can promote an authentic Catholic culture in educational settings against the backdrop of opportunities and challenges of contemporary secularism.

<https://christianheritagecentre.com/events/building-catholic-culture-in-education/> to book and for more information.



SOCIETY OF SAINT GREGORY – SUMMER SCHOOL, 26-29 JULY 2023

I enclose a flyer for the Society of Saint Gregory Summer School along with the information which was sent to my office below:

Venue: Liverpool Hope University, Hope Park Campus, Childwall, L16 1JD. Theme: 'Joyful Proclamation of the Gospel'

In his recent Apostolic letter, *Desiderio Desideravi*, Pope Francis calls for the Liturgical Formation. Heeding this call, through talks, workshops, liturgies and music, the Society of Saint Gregory Summer School 2023 considers the vision of the Second Vatican Council, its relevance today, and how we can help to root it more firmly in our communities.

Speakers include Bishop John Arnold, Professor Claire Ozanne and David McLouglin speaking about the Council documents, with time for questions afterwards. Workshops will be focusing on parish ministry. We welcome both Residential and Day Delegates and Bursary funding is available. Further details, and online booking for Residential places, are available at <https://www.ssg.org.uk/summer-school-2023/> or by emailing summerschool@ssg.org.uk

For Non-Residential bookings, please contact summerschool@ssg.org.uk

PACT MASS

05/23

(Birmingham)

Bishop Emeritus David Christopher McGough

Died 25/03/2023

ENDNOTE

In parish visitations Sunday after Sunday, it is encouraging to see signs of new life and growth after the setbacks of the Covid years. It is also good to see renewed progress towards the mission goals we set in the Diocesan initiative Our Mission Together. In this edition of the Ad Clerum it is especially encouraging to see developments for the renewal of parish catechesis, support for the vocation of marriage and for the training and support of catechists. I record our thanks to Jane Deegan and the Diocesan Catechetical Team.

+ Mark

Bishop of Shrewsbury

Enc.

➤ *Society of St Gregory flyer*