

Diocese of  
Shrewsbury  
*Ad Clerum*

2023/09 October





Dear Fathers and Deacons,

## A PASTORAL LETTER

### *'At the Hour of Our Death'*

I attach a Pastoral Letter "At the Hour of Our Death" to be read at all Masses on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> October in anticipation of the month of November. The letter was requested at the recent meeting of Deans. The Deans reported a new culture of non-participation developing around funerals and identified the need to set out anew the Christian vision. I hope the teaching set out in my letter is helpful and accessible and may be a starting point for further initiatives in preaching, catechesis and pastoral preparation.

## THE HOLY LAND

We are following day by day the horror of the violence which has erupted in the Holy Land. We pray for the release of the hostages, the protection of innocent lives in Gaza and a peaceful resolution of this most deadly crisis in half a century where the vulnerable and the innocent are so often victims. The Latin and Greek Patriarchs of Jerusalem have expressed their hope and prayer for an end to violence, imploring all political leaders and authorities to engage in sincere dialogue for the people of the Holy Land who, they note, have endured the burden of conflict for far too long.

## THE HOLY SEE

### APOSTOLIC EXHORTATION 'LAUDATE DEUM'

On the liturgical Memoria of Saint Francis of Assisi, the Holy Father published an Apostolic Exhortation following his Encyclical Letter "Laudato Si."

### "Laudate Deum" link:

[https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/20231004-laudate-deum.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/20231004-laudate-deum.html)

## XVI ORDINARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE SYNOD ON SYNODALITY

The Synod on Synodality began its first month-long meeting in Rome in the silence of retreat and has subsequently adopted silence in media communication. Let us continue to accompany the assembly in our prayer.

I attach Pope Francis' Homily at the Opening Mass and the Holy Father's Opening Address at the Synod:

<https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2023/documents/20231004-omelia-nuovi-cardinali.html>

<https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2023/october/documents/20231004-apertura-sinodo.html>

## CLERGY

### THE VISIT OF THE APOSTOLIC NUNCIO

We look forward to welcoming the Apostolic Nuncio's on his visit to the Diocese on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> October. His Excellency Archbishop Buendia will join us in prayer and meet with the clergy in a reception at Saint Joseph's, Stockport. I am grateful to all who have indicated they will be there and please let Theresa know if you have forgotten to indicate your attendance. For parking at Saint Joseph's please approach via Fletcher Street (SK1 1DY) which leads directly to the school carpark which is available for us. The alternative is paid parking in the Merseyway Carpark. Refreshments will be served at the reception following the Hour of Eucharistic Adoration and Evening Prayer.



## MEMORIAL MASS FOR CANON HARRINGTON

A reminder that the Memorial Mass for Canon Timonthy Harrington will be celebrated at Shrewsbury Cathedral on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> October at 12 noon.

Clergy wishing to concelebrate are invited to contact Canon Christopher Matthews by Friday 27<sup>th</sup> October: [dean@shrewsburycathedral.co.uk](mailto:dean@shrewsburycathedral.co.uk)

## JESSICA BAKER RIP

The schoolgirl Jessica Baker who was tragically killed in the recent school coach accident on M53 will take place at Saint Theresa's, Blacon. Please remember Jessica and her family in your prayers.

## DAYS FOR THE RECENTLY ORDAINED AT THE CATHEDRAL

We continue in the week ahead the monthly gatherings at the Cathedral for priests recently ordained. Happily, with the increased number of newly ordained priests we now have two cycles on Tuesday and Wednesday which will be exploring the promotion of vocations in the Diocese and the essentials regarding finance and legal requirements in parish and diocese.

## CLERGY IN-SERVICE TRAINING DAY

We look forward to the Clergy Day this coming Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> October which addresses the growing requests for Deliverance Ministry.

## DIOCESE

### DEDICATION OF THE CATHEDRAL ALTAR

The new altar in the Cathedral will be dedicated on Sunday, with the beautiful rites the Church provides. It is a happy moment to see this central work completed with all its providential elements not least in the recovery of the beautiful floors of the

sanctuary and the unexpected provision of a 19<sup>th</sup> century altar thanks to the generosity of the Dean and Chapter of Ely. Relics of Saint Polycarp, bishop and martyr; Saint John Mary Vianney; and Saint Charles Lwanga and the martyrs of Uganda will be placed into the altar inviting prayer for the holiness and witness of the clergy and lay faithful of the Diocese.

## RETIREMENT OF OUR DIOCESAN PROPERTY DIRECTOR

Richard Crawford will be retiring at the end of this year after almost 15 years of service as Diocesan Property Director. Richard has made an enormous contribution to the management and oversight of our many diocesan properties. I have been personally grateful for his help since I came to the Diocese. I know you would wish to join me in recording all our thanks for his dedicated and generous work. We are now beginning the process of recruiting a new property director and details will be sent to the parishes shortly.

## MISSION SUNDAY – 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2023

*A message from Father Anthony Chantry - Missio National Director:*

World Mission Sunday this year is on 22<sup>nd</sup> October. On this day the whole Church unites through prayer for its missionary activity, and by collecting funds to support Catholic communities across the world experiencing situations of poverty and turmoil.

The theme chosen by the Holy Father is: *'Hearts on fire, feet on the move'* (based on Luke 24). In his message for World Mission Sunday, Pope Francis encourages us all to set hearts ablaze with God's love and compassion for *'everyone has the right to receive the Gospel and we as Christ's followers have the duty to proclaim it without excluding anyone.'*

Donations and prayers on this day have a direct impact on Catholic communities overseas where



the Church is too young, too small, or too poor to flourish without help from the rest of the Church. Our donations help build the Church, support vocations, and enable missionaries to carry out their mission in often dangerous and remote places.

Thank you for your ongoing support of Missio through prayer and charity. Please encourage your parish to do all they can to celebrate this day in solidarity with the whole Church.

For more information about World Mission Sunday, please visit [missio.org.uk/wms](https://missio.org.uk/wms)

## ANNUAL MISSION APPEALS 2024

I have received a letter from Mr Richard Owens of the Catholic Missionary Union of England and Wales regarding the 2024 Mission Appeals in parishes.

The **Combined Men's Society (CMS)** which includes - *Missionaries of St Paul (MSP)*, *Society of Mary (Marist)*, *Dela Salle Brothers*, *Salesians*, *Vincentians*, *SCJ Bethram (SCJ)* *Sacred Heart*, *Network for Better World (N4BW)* - have been allocated to Shrewsbury Diocese for 2024 mission appeals.

The Annual Mission Appeal is a mandatory appeal directly from a missionary, religious or lay, about the nature of the church as both universal and missionary. I would be grateful if you could make a note of this for 2024 so that you are informed before the requests from the CMS are sent to your parishes.

## SAFEGUARDING

### MASS FOR THE VICTIMS/SURVIVORS OF ABUSE ~ *Tuesday 14th November 2023*

A circular from our Safeguarding Co-ordinator, Mr Andrew O'Brien, with information about this initiative was sent out to clergy last week. The

Shrewsbury Diocese Mass will be celebrated on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2023 at 6:45pm at Holy Apostles & Martyr's Church, Wallasey, Wirral. For more information contact: [andrew.obrien@dioceseofshrewsbury.org](mailto:andrew.obrien@dioceseofshrewsbury.org)

or see website:

<https://survivorsvoices.org/loudfence/>

## ANNUAL SAFEGUARDING MASS

*Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> November 2023*

The annual Safeguarding Celebration Mass for Diocesan Parish Safeguarding Representatives will take place at Saint Mary's Crewe on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> November at 11.30am.

This is an opportunity to join in prayer and thanks for all the members of our Diocese who share in this work of safeguarding and protecting the most vulnerable in our church communities.

## SAFEGUARDING SUNDAY

*19<sup>th</sup> November 2023*

The Diocesan Office for Liturgy has sent out some liturgical resources for 'Safeguarding Sunday.' It is important that we continue to build a culture of safeguarding in our parishes, and even the inclusion of a Universal Prayer at Mass on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> November will help to do so.

## OTHER, COURSES AND EVENTS

### MARYVALE INSTITUTE, BIRMINGHAM

The Maryvale Higher Institute of Religious Sciences (HIRS) is the only ecclesial institute of this kind in the English-speaking world.

Study part-time, by distance learning for a Bachelor of Divinity (BDiv) or a Licence in Divinity. The Ecclesiastical BDiv is a five-year part-time, collaborative-learning degree programme in Catholic theology providing a



comprehensive exposition and analysis of Christian doctrine based on the study of the sacred Scriptures, the works of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, and the documents of the Magisterium. There are just three places remaining this year.

Contact: Admissions Tutor, Deacon Dr Harry Schnitker at: [researchcentre@maryvale.ac.uk](mailto:researchcentre@maryvale.ac.uk)

## CHRISTIAN HERITAGE CENTRE STONYHURST

The Christian Heritage Centre are hosting a retreat for clergy at Stonyhurst from 8<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

*The Priest as Spouse and Bridegroom* will be preached by Father Anthony Doe, a priest of Westminster Diocese, currently Spiritual Director at Allen Hall seminary and a qualified psychotherapist. The retreat will focus on the priest's ministry as manifesting Christ's spousal love for His Church. For info and booking: <https://christianheritagecentre.com/events/priest-as-spouse-and-bridegroom/>

## ENDNOTE

*Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> October will be the fourth anniversary of the death of Bishop Brian and on the last day of this month we will remember Canon Ted Harrington, one of our longest serving priests. At diocesan meetings we often pray for members of the clergy who have recently died. Let us take up the invitation of the month of November to remember in the Mass and in prayer all our departed bishops, priests and deacons of the Diocese that they may rest in peace.*

+ *Mark*

**Bishop of Shrewsbury**

*Enc:*

- *Pastoral Letter "At the Hour of Our Death"*