

Diocese of
Shrewsbury
Ad Clerum

2024/06 April





Dear Fathers and Deacons

THE HOLY SEE

On Human Dignity

We received from the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, a Declaration on Human Dignity "Dignitas Infinita." The Declaration was personally confirmed by Pope Francis on 25th March and addresses a wide range of present challenges from poverty to euthanasia to gender theory and surrogacy. I attach the document for your reference.

THE BISHOPS OF ENGLAND AND WALES

"Intricately Woven by The Lord: A Pastoral Reflection on Gender."

Among the challenges highlighted in the Holy See's declaration on human dignity is the ideology of gender. At our Easter meeting at Buckfast Abbey, the Bishops of England and Wales approved a document providing pastoral guidance on these questions concerning gender and identity in the light of Christian anthropology.

This important pastoral document is offered to accompany all Catholics, especially parents and families, seeking to guide their children and pass on the truth regarding the human person; to accompany those who struggle with their identity as male and female and to accompany fellow Christians, people of other religions and all people of good will, who often question the diverse and confusing views that are being put forward about the human person, gender and sex, in the educational, medical, legal and political fields.

I attach the full document and an executive summary which may be helpful for wider circulation.

A PASTORAL LETTER – ON THE MONTH OF MARY

I attach with this Ad Clerum a Pastoral Letter *On the Month of Mary* to be read at all Masses on Sunday 5th May, which continues the Holy Father's theme of prayer in anticipation of the Jubilee Year 2025.

NEW BISHOPS

The Holy Father has appointed four new bishops in England and Wales. Monsignor James Curry, until now Parish Priest of Our Lady of Victories, Kensington as a new Auxiliary Bishop of Westminster; Monsignor Timothy Menezes, until now Dean of Birmingham Cathedral and Canon Richard Walker, Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Birmingham as Auxiliary Bishops of the same Archdiocese and earlier today Father David Waller until now Vicar General and Parish Priest of Christ the King, Chingford as Bishop Ordinary of the Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham in succession to Monsignor Keith Newton.

Please remember all the bishops-elect in your prayers. I will travel to Bristol on 8th May for the ordination and installation of the new Bishop of Clifton.

CLERGY

BISHOP'S ADVISOR ON HEALTH CARE

I have appointed Father Sean Henry to the diocesan role of 'Bishop's Advisor for Health Care'. Father Sean will arrange a meeting in the near future for those engaged in hospital chaplaincy. Part of his role will include negotiations of NHS Chaplaincy contracts which Canon Michael Gannon VG has undertaken for many years. Father Sean's background as a Senior NHS Clinical Manager will provide helpful experience for this new role.

FOR OUR CLERGY FROM OVERSEAS

A special gathering for priests from overseas who are generously serving in the Diocese, will be held at Wistaston Hall, Crewe on Tuesday 14th and Wednesday 15th May.

Invitations were sent from my office via email; if you are a member of our Diocese of Shrewsbury overseas clergy and have not received an email invitation, please

contact:

Theresa.stones@dioceseofshrewsbury.org



JUBILARIANS AND CHAPTER MASS

The annual Jubilarians and Chapter Mass will be celebrated at the Cathedral on the Diocesan Solemnity of Our Lady Help of Christians, Friday 24th May at 12 noon.

Our Jubilarians should have received a letter of invitation in the post this week, members of the Chapter have received a letter of invitation from Canon Stephen Coonan via email.

JUNIOR CLERGY

The priests recently ordained have been coming together at the Cathedral each month and will meet next month on 21st and 22nd May to reflect on the mission of the Diocesan Eucharistic Shrine and on liturgical life and practice in the Diocese.

DIOCESE

MASS WITH CHINESE CATHOLICS

It was a great joy to celebrate a Bi-Lingual Mass in English and Cantonese at Saint Hugh and Saint John's, Timperley, which gathered many Catholics who have recently arrived in the Diocese from Hong Kong and to welcome nine adults who were Baptised in the Diocese at Easter. We have been very blessed to have the French Missionary Father Bruno with us. Father Bruno is due to return to Hong King in June.

I was very grateful for the wonderful welcome and assistance of Father Tomasz and the people of the parish. It was a deeply prayerful celebration and moving to see the devotion of the people and to hear the singing of the Cantonese Choir.

DEACON JUDE NEWTON

Our Diaconate Team has received news that Deacon Jude Newton, who was ordained in the Shrewsbury Diocese shortly before moving to Hexham and Newcastle, has recently suffered a stroke. Deacon Jude has now been discharged from hospital and is making a good recovery. Please remember him in your prayers.

MISSIO RED BOX RESULTS 2023

The total Red Box donations figure for 2023, in the Diocese of Shrewsbury was a remarkable £127,801 to support the global mission of the Church. I would like to thank everyone who donated and also Father Tony Grace, our Shrewsbury Diocesan Missio Director, for his ongoing work and support for Missio.

MISSIO MASS INVITATION

I will be celebrating the Shrewsbury Diocesan Mass for Missio which will take place on Saturday 1st June 2024 at Saint Michael & All Angels Church, Woodchurch at 11.00 am.

I attach an invitation from Diocesan Missio Director, Father Tony Grace, which can be shared with Red Box holders and supporters in your parishes.

OTHER COURSES AND EVENTS

AID TO THE CHURCH IN NEED UK

Rosary for Peace

Aid to the Church in Need UK are asking all Catholic primary schools to pray the Rosary for peace this May and pledge their decades on 'Aid to the Church in Need | The Maisy Milk Rosary for Peace', joining the ACN schools' national campaign of prayer.

Additional information and resources for your parish primary schools can be found here: <https://acnuk.org/resource/the-maisy-milk-rosary-for-peace/>

SOCIETY OF SAINT GREGORY - ANNUAL SUMMER SCHOOL

This year's Summer School is titled 'A Symphony of Praise in Word and Music' and will be held from the afternoon of Wednesday 31st July to lunchtime on Saturday 3rd August at Liverpool Hope University L16 9JD.

The Society welcome both residential and day delegates and bursary funding is available.

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Further details, including the programme, and online booking are available at <https://www.ssg.org.uk/summer-school-2024> or by emailing summerschool@ssg.org.uk

ENDNOTE

We are expecting Pope Francis to formally announce the Holy Year 2025 on the Solemnity of the Ascension, Thursday 9th May. The Holy Father will offer guidance and indications regarding the celebration of the approaching Jubilee.

The month of May with its beautiful liturgical Feasts and the devotional theme of renewing our love for the Mother of God, will surely help us in Pope Francis's words "To rediscover the great value and absolute need of prayer in personal life, in the life of the Church and in the world." I hope my Pastoral Letter will be of help in renewing this call to prayer through the Rosary.

May the month ahead of us be greatly blessed with Our Lady's help,

+ Mark

Bishop of Shrewsbury

Enc:

- *On Human Dignity (Dignitas Infinita – Inglese)*
- *'Intricately Woven by the Lord' document and Executive Summary*
- *Pastoral Letter ~ On the Month of Mary*
- *Missio Mass Invitation*