

Diocese of
Shrewsbury
Ad Clerum

2024/10 October





Dear Fathers and Deacons

ASSISTED SUICIDE

A Challenge to the Sanctity of Life within a Matter of Weeks

A Bill is expected to be introduced into the House of Commons a week on Wednesday (16th October) to take the first step towards euthanasia by proposing that medically assisted suicide be legalised. A parliamentary debate on the principle of approving this fearful and momentous step to overturn both the Christian values which underpin our society and the legal safeguards which presently protect the sick and the aged, is expected within a matter of weeks.

It is hard to fathom the haste with which Members of Parliament may be asked to decide one of the greatest moral issues of our time, especially after a previous parliament overwhelmingly rejected legalising assisted suicide (largely on grounds of its dangers) nine years ago.

We certainly have no time to spare in alerting parishioners to the threat now on the horizon and in the next few weeks ask them to contact their Member of Parliament. I fear that the threat of this radical change to our society, could be hastily decided even before Christmas. I will send a Pastoral Letter for next Sunday 13th October to address this threat which calls us to give witness anew to the sanctity of human life.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

I sent a special message earlier this week asking you to alert parishioners to the Holy Father's call, at the beginning of the Synod of Bishops in Rome, for prayer and fasting for peace in the world. The Holy Father will go to Saint Mary Major on Sunday to pray the Rosary for peace. Let us be united with Pope Francis in this prayer of intercession for our troubled world.

INTERNATIONAL SYNOD OF BISHOPS

The International Synod of Bishops on synodality began its meeting in Rome this week and I attach the homily preached by the Holy Father at the beginning of the Synod.

EPISCOPAL ORDINATION

Bishop Philip Moger will be Installed as the 10th Bishop of Plymouth on Saturday 9th November, the Feast of the Dedication of the Lateran Basilica, at the Cathedral Church of Saint Mary and Saint Boniface, Plymouth. Please remember Bishop Philip in your prayers as he begins his service of the Plymouth Diocese.

WORLD MISSION SUNDAY, 20th OCTOBER 2024

A message from Father Anthony Chantry National Director, Missio:

World Mission Sunday this year is on 20th October. On this day the whole Church unites in prayer for its missionary activity, and in collecting funds to support Catholic communities across the world experiencing situations of poverty and conflict.

'Go and invite everyone to the banquet!' is this year's theme chosen by Pope Francis. In his message, the Holy Father reminds us that the heart of our mission is to invite everyone to experience the joy of Christ's resurrection, a gift meant to be shared with the whole world. Everyone deserves to know that they are welcome at God's table – to experience God's love, grace and forgiveness.

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 to sustain faith communities, support vocations, and enable missionaries to carry out their mission in often dangerous and remote places.



This day of prayer, solidarity, and giving unites Catholics worldwide to share the Good News of God's love which has the power to transform lives and heal our world. Thank you for your ongoing support of Missio through prayer and charity. Please do all you can to encourage your parish communities to celebrate this special day in solidarity with the whole Church.

For more information about World Mission Sunday, please visit <https://missio.org.uk/wms>

THE JUBILEE YEAR 2025

The British Consulate in Rome has prepared the attached poster with top tips for British pilgrims travelling to Rome for the Jubilee Year. It contains important information on both preparing for your trip as well as practical information once in Rome, to ensure a safe pilgrimage. I also attach the General Calendar of events, including specific Jubilees for groups and associations.

CLERGY

FATHER ALBAN GREENWOOD RIP

Father Alban Greenwood's mortal remains were received into Saint Patrick's, Wellington on Tuesday 1st October and I celebrated the Requiem Mass for Alban on Wednesday 2nd October before he was interred in Wellington Cemetery.

Please keep Alban in your prayers. May he rest in peace.

DIOCESE

CONFIRMATIONS 2025/2026

If you have not already done so, please send your Confirmation date requests for the next cycle which runs from Easter 2025 to Easter 2026 to:

Theresa.stones@dioceseofshrewsbury.org

PRISONERS' SUNDAY, 13th OCTOBER 2024

On Prisoners' Sunday, the Catholic Church encourages everyone to reflect on and pray for prisoners and their families. It is an opportunity to consider how we, as individuals, as a Church, and as communities, are serving our brothers and sisters affected by imprisonment.

There are record numbers of people behind bars and too many people are released with no home, no job, no family and no hope.

For more information and to donate to PACT, a leading Catholic charity in prisons, visit: www.prisonadvice.org.uk/faith/events/prisoners-sunday/

2025 MISSION APPEALS IN PARISHES

SMA Society of Africa Missions have been allocated to Shrewsbury Diocese for 2025 mission appeals.

The mission appeal is a mandatory appeal directly from a missionary, religious or lay about the nature of the church as both universal and missionary. Secondly it is a chance for people to contribute financially to the work of that particular missionary society.

It is distinct from the 5 yearly red box recruitment drive (Mill Hill Missionaries/Missio) and the national marking of World Mission Sunday and retiring collection (Missio).

Please keep a note of this 2025 mandatory mission appeal in your parishes as you could be contacted at any time during the year.

RED WEDNESDAY, 20th NOVEMBER 2024

Aid to the Church in Need's annual **#Red Wednesday** is now a significant voice for persecuted Christians around the world.

This year's focus is on Christian children who are displaced and suffering due to targeted violence. In coming weeks, you will receive information about



how your parish can get involved, so please watch for ACN's Parish Red Alert envelope.

In the meantime, for more information visit: <https://acnuk.org/redwednesday-resources/>

As a Thank You, ACN would like to offer you a 25% discount on non-sale trading products. To request the discount code for ACN's website shop, email shop@acnuk.org or phone 0345 241 6068.

SHREWSBURY CATHEDRAL PRESENTS 'REQUIEM' BY GABRIEL FAURÉ

Gabriel Fauré's 'Requiem' and other sacred works will be performed at Shrewsbury Cathedral on Saturday 2nd November.

Tickets are £10 available from: <https://www.tickettailor.com/events/shrewsburycathedral>

I attach a flyer which you may wish to share with your parishes.

OTHER COURSES AND EVENTS

WALKING PILGRIMAGE

Hearts in Search of God ~ Pilgrim Ways

Phil McCarthy, a retired GP and former CEO of Caritas Social Action Network is leading a 3-year project called 'Hearts in Search of God' to promote walking pilgrimage in England & Wales by developing pilgrim ways between each Cathedral and one or more shrines in the same diocese. For more information see www.pilgrimways.org.uk

PUBLICATIONS

WALK WITH ME ~ ADVENT EDITION 2024

The theme for this special Advent Jubilee 'Walk With Me' edition is rooted in the theme of 'Pilgrims of Hope' and is available to order now from Alive

Publishing:

<https://shop.alivepublishing.co.uk/category/WWMADV>

ENDNOTE

It is hard to believe we are facing another threat to the sanctity of human life as legislation is being brought forward for medically assisted suicide that may be decided in principle before Christmas. It is less than a decade since Parliament wisely and decisively rejected the dangers of such legislation. However, our witness to the sanctity of human life in the context of this threat now posed to the sick and the elderly and to the values which have long underpinned our society, not least our medical and caring professions, will be one of the most important witnesses we give in our time.

In the short weeks ahead, we must not grow weary with the relentless assaults upon the sanctity of human life in doing all that we can to draw attention to what is now at stake in removing one of the central Christian foundations of society.

United with you in this witness,

+ Mark

Bishop of Shrewsbury

Enc.

- *Homily of Pope Francis ~ - Guardina Angels and Opening of the Synod Session*
- *Top tips on your Jubilee Pilgrimage*
- *Jubilee 2025 General Calendar*
- *Requiem by Gabriel Fauré ~ flyer*