

The Rector writes

Next Sunday is World Mission Day. It is one of those occasions for which a Papal Message is prepared, and as these are published well in advance, it is actually a message from the late Pope Francis. It can be found here: <https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/missions/documents/20250125-giornata-missionaria.html>. In this Jubilee year, not surprisingly, the message takes hope as its theme, this being the theme of the Jubilee itself. It is entitled "Missionaries of Hope among all Peoples". We read this: "By praying, we keep alive the spark of hope lit by God within us, so that it can become a great fire, which enlightens and warms everyone around us."

On World Mission Sunday, a collection will be taken after each Mass in support of the work of Missio, formerly known as the Pontifical Mission Societies. Envelopes are available to be taken away this weekend, and returned next weekend. (Cf. <https://missio.org.uk/what-is-world-mission-sunday/>).

Some have been asking when we will see a teaching document from Pope Leo XIV. In fact, his Apostolic Exhortation *Dilexi Te* was published last weekend (www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiv/en/apost_exhortations/documents/20251004-dilexi-te.html#_ftn77). It is about love for the poor, and the Holy Father tells us that his predecessor, Pope Francis, had been working on this document at the time of his death. Just as Pope Francis's first encyclical letter, *Lumen Fidei*, had been begun by Pope Benedict, so, we are told, this document had been begun by Pope Francis and has now been issued in the name of Pope Leo. It takes the reader on a masterly tour of Scriptural and patristic texts about the Church's concern for the poor, as well as many historical illustrations of the forms that concern has taken. Here is one of the gems, a quotation from St John Chrysostom: "Almsgiving is the wing of prayer. If you do not provide your prayer with wings, it will hardly fly."

Monday of this coming week is a great feast in the City of Westminster, as we celebrate the Solemnity of Saint Edward the Confessor, who was King of England in the 11th century, shortly before the Norman Conquest. His shrine is at Westminster Abbey, a church with which he is very much associated. Although not the actual founder, he was responsible for re-endowing and enlarging this monastery in the west of London, dedicated to Saint Peter. It ceased to be a monastery at the time of the Reformation, and is now formally known as the Collegiate Church of Saint Peter. Many coronations have taken place there, including that of the present king. As Saint Edward's Day is a Solemnity here in the City of Westminster, the 7pm Mass this Sunday should be celebrated as the first mass of the Solemnity, although it will still fulfil the Sunday obligation.

We have now received permission to spend money on the replacement of boilers - a considerable hurdle that has taken some years to surmount - but we do not yet have a start date for the work. A "pre-commencement" meeting is due to take place at the church next Thursday, after which we hope that a contract can be signed and dates can be established for the work. So there are good grounds to hope that it will begin soon.

The parish Jubilee pilgrimage to Rome is due to start a week on Monday - I shall be travelling there with a group of just over 20 pilgrims from Monday to Saturday of that week. We plan to visit the four principal basilicas, each of which has a holy door in this Jubilee Year, to visit the English College and the catacombs and to attend the Papal Audience on Wednesday 22 October. We will be joined on the pilgrimage by a few members of the Association known as the Friends of the Holy Father (<https://www.thefriendsoftheholylfather.org>), which has recently donated a studio to be used for the transmission of Papal events from Saint Peter's Square.

This weekend is the last of the four designated for the annual Mass count. It has been heartening to see higher numbers than in recent years. We have a good number of applications too from parents wishing to enrol their children in the First Holy Communion and Confirmation classes as well as people wishing to enrol for this year's RCIA. Deo gratias!

Requests continue to arrive for certificates of Catholic Practice. Do bear in mind that if you would like one, you need to tell us the full name, postal address and date of birth of your child, and it may be advisable also to provide evidence of Mass attendance for three consecutive Sundays. Newsletters signed by the celebrant of the Sunday Mass you attended would be sufficient.

Finally, I should mention a couple of talks that we have been asked to bring to your attention. One is on 1 November at the church in Warwick Street, and another at the Rosary Shrine in Haverstock Hill on Wednesday of this coming week. Please find details below. Prayerful greetings to all our worshippers and to all readers of the newsletter!

English Catholic Association Conference and AGM. Saturday 1 November 10.45 - 4pm Our Lady of the Assumption and St Gregory, Warwick St, W1B 5LZ. Mass and Talks from Michael Stokes (The Catholic Bishops under Elizabeth I and Henry VIII) and Joanna Bogle (Catholic London - History, People, Architecture and Heritage). £8 (members) £12 (non-members). See echa.org.uk for more details.

2025 Rosary Shrine Lecture next Wednesday, 15th October at 7pm. Sr Carino Hodder OP will speak on 'Our Lady: Preacher of -Human Dignity', with a response from the author and journalist Mary Harrington, at St Dominic's - the Rosary Shrine NW5 4LB. More information visit: <https://rosaryshrine.co.uk/join-us-for-the-rosary-shrine-lecture-2025/>.

Philip Whitmore

A special welcome to our visitors. Refreshments are served in the Social Centre (in the crypt) after the 9.00am and 10.30am Masses. Do please join us if you have the time.

The Church opens 8am on weekdays and 9am on Saturdays.
Confession between 12 noon and 1pm on weekdays.
On Saturday a priest is available from 4.45pm - 5.30pm
