

[View in browser](#)



THE ARCHDIOCESE *of* BIRMINGHAM

[Website](#)   [Events](#)   [News](#)

## As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world

Visit the Archdiocese website for more news, events and information for parishes, parishioners and communities: [www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk](http://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk)

Want this newsletter emailed to you? Go to [www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/enews](http://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/enews) to sign up.



### **This weekend: Pastoral Letter from Archbishop Bernard**

A Pastoral Letter from Archbishop Bernard Longley will be read out in parishes this weekend.

The Letter will include an update on the Diocesan Vision: Unfolding God's Plan.

Following our journey together on the Synodal Pathway the eleven deaneries across the Archdiocese have been tasked with developing an action plan outlining a clear sense of direction for each deanery and its parishes.

Archbishop Bernard has asked parish priests to reflect on how, within deaneries, our parishes can share resources to advance the mission of the Church.

Together we look to the future, where the Lord is calling us. To look at what we're called to do for evangelisation, formation, liturgy and worship and social outreach, and to work collaboratively with a sense of the responsibility for the Church's mission, which we all share thanks to our baptism.

Over the coming months we hope that your parish will provide opportunities for you to engage with its plan, to support your parish with your own gifts.

The Pastoral Letter will also be available on the Diocesan website this weekend.

[www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/vision](http://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/vision)



## Approaching the Fourth Sunday of Lent

***'He went off and washed himself, and came away with his sight restored.'*** (John 9:1-41)

*'We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.'* (John 9: 4-5)

The healing of the man born blind through the miraculous power of Christ offers much for reflection in our modern day. The lengthy account captures both the great potential for restoration through the merciful love of God as well as the many human obstacles to the healing ministry of Christ, both then and now.

*A Reflection for the 4th Sunday of Lent by Naoise Grenham, Policy and Research Analyst at the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.*

[www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/news](http://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/news)



## 'Love the Stranger' publication issued

"Those arriving from other parts of the world are our sisters and brothers. We are called to see Christ in them, for all people are created in His image. And we are called to see ourselves in them, for we all share this common humanity." - Pope Francis

In 2023, people making dangerous journeys across the Channel to reach the UK are called by various names: 'refugees', 'asylum seekers', 'migrants', and often by more derogatory terms.

'Love the Stranger' is a new publication by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales's Department for International Affairs that articulates our Christian duty to look beyond such labels and see the person who has left their homeland in search of a better life.

[www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/news](http://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/news)



## Happy Mothering Sunday

Mothering Sunday will be celebrated in the UK this **Sunday, 19 March.**

Many of our parishes traditionally hand out daffodils to the women in our lives on Mothering Sunday.

At St George's and Our Lady Queen of Peace parishes in Worcester, a Mothering Sunday card will be handed out which shows Mary, Untier of Knots, a painting which Pope Francis has special devotion to.

"Mothers are the very image of Mary in the life of the Domestic Church that is family life.

"On this day, as we give thanks for our mothers, let us pray a special prayer to Our Lady, Untier of Knots and ask her to intercede on behalf our mothers: may those

aspects of their lives that they are carrying, often silently, be gently teased open by the Lord.

"May those aspects of their lives that are a burden be taken by Our Lady and offered at the feet of Jesus that our mothers may be released of them."

Read the full reflection via the link below.

[www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/news](http://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/news)



## Óscar Romero: The Witness of Relics

Pembroke College, Oxford, **Friday 24 March**.  
Free event with drinks reception.

Dr Jan Graffius will describe her work in El Salvador conserving and displaying the powerful and poignant relics of Archbishop Óscar Romero, and of the Jesuits and their associates who were murdered in 1989.

Her work, at times harrowing, has thrown up some extraordinary insights into the life and death of Romero, and many others who lost their lives to the death squads in that brutal civil war.

[www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/events](http://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/events)



## Harvington History Festival

Tickets are now on sale for the first ever Harvington History Festival, taking place this July.

The Festival will take place in the grounds of Harvington Hall, in Worcestershire from **25 - 30 July**, featuring 16 talks from top historians, authors and broadcasters, as well as a concert by the Birmingham Oratory Consort.

This year is an important one for Harvington as it is celebrating the centenary of its purchase, which rescued it from ruin 100 years ago.

An Elizabethan manor house with medieval origin, Harvington was saved by Mrs Ellen Ferris, who bought the Hall in a dilapidated state and gifted it to the Archdiocese of Birmingham. The 'House of Secrets' reveals seven ingenious priest hides (more than any other house in England) and rare wall paintings.

[www.harvingtonhall.co.uk/history-festival](http://www.harvingtonhall.co.uk/history-festival)



## **Integral Ecology and Sustainable Agriculture**

**Saturday 25 March**, Pembroke College, Oxford.

The Laudato Si' Research Institute at Campion Hall in Oxford is running an exploratory dialogue with academics, practitioners (current and aspiring) and those with deep interest in the connection between agriculture and spirituality, from the viewpoint of Catholic Social Teaching.

There are a few spaces remaining to join this dialogue on 25 March, and especially welcome are young adults who work in agriculture or are facing barriers to doing so.

[www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/events](http://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/events)

## **Starts online next week! Being a Welcoming Church**

How parishes can live their faith and mission more deeply through charitable action, and equip parishes with new ideas and opportunities to serve those in need.

Father Hudson's Care (FHC) is working with the Archdiocese on a new project: Being a Welcoming Church, and the first session is next **Monday, 20 March**.



The initiative is a call for action around four areas of great need:  
Older People  
Disability  
Refugees  
Homelessness.

FHC has commissioned the making of four short films around these themes. The first is Older People.

This will be launched via Zoom on **Monday 20 March** at 7.30pm and will last for one hour.

**[www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/events](http://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/events)**



## Book now for the Lourdes Pilgrimage: 'time with the Lord, time with one another, in the company of Mary'.

Archbishop Bernard invites us to this year's Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes in a new video.

He says: "Every pilgrimage to Lourdes is very special for the individuals who come here, but to be here as a group is also really important because it's a place where we can witness to our faith to one another and also draw inspiration from all the other pilgrims who come here from around the world.

"Our Lady has invited us to come here to be close to Jesus Christ to strengthen our own mission as we go back to our homes and our churches.

"So here in Lourdes we never know exactly what we will encounter but the important thing is that it's time with the Lord, it's time with one another in the company of Mary."

The pilgrimage runs from **Saturday 27 May to Friday 2 June**. Don't miss your chance to join this very special trip.

[www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/lourdes](http://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/lourdes)



## Young Adults Crosswalk

An event for young adults during **Holy Week (1 - 6 April)** organised by the Lay Community of St Benedict (LCSB).

Make a pilgrimage from Wolverhampton (St Christopher at Codsall) to Cefn Lea in Wales, where the Lay Community have their Easter retreat.

[www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/events](http://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/events)



## Journeying through Lent

"Lenten penance is a commitment, sustained by grace, to overcoming our lack of faith and our resistance to following Jesus on the way of the cross."- Pope Francis

Prayers, reflections, family activities and more for your Lenten journey are now available on the Archdiocese website page for Lent and Easter.

[www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/lent-and-easter](http://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/lent-and-easter)

## Deadline fast approaching! Church magazine competition



The search is on for Britain's best church magazine.

Entries are now invited for the annual competition run by the Association for Church Editors (ACE), which is an independent, not for profit organisation.

The deadline is **Monday 3 April**. Awards will be made for any size of magazine using just black and white printing.

[churchmag.uk/2023-awards/](http://churchmag.uk/2023-awards/)



## Quick Wins to help reduce parish costs

The Property Team's Building Maintenance Surgery on **Thursday 30 March** at 2pm will be looking at providing your parish with the tools to make small changes to help save you money.

If you have any ideas or thoughts that have worked for your parish, which you would like to share with the group please bring them to the surgery.

If you wish to attend, please email [rcaobproperty@rcaob.org.uk](mailto:rcaobproperty@rcaob.org.uk) and we will send you a link



to join.

Tom and Tarnia are always available for any property related matters, just drop us an email:

Tom Stockwell: [tom.stockwell@rcaob.org.uk](mailto:tom.stockwell@rcaob.org.uk)

Tarnia McAlester: [tarnia.mcalester@rcaob.org.uk](mailto:tarnia.mcalester@rcaob.org.uk)



## Supporting your parish

You have asked us how you can continue giving to your parish.

Parishes still greatly need your support.

We do though recognise that many parishioners may be struggling financially, and there is no expectation to give where you are unable to do so.

You can donate via standing order or single donation.

[www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/support-our-work](http://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/support-our-work)



## Please follow us online

If you are on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram please follow the Archdiocese of Birmingham online.

Our accounts are being used more than ever before to share news, events and information.

We hope you are finding this e-newsletter useful. **Please share with anyone you think will benefit, and encourage them to subscribe via the website.**

If you have any news, events or information you'd like to share this way please email it to [communications@rcaob.org.uk](mailto:communications@rcaob.org.uk) marked 'For Newsletter'.

It's great to see information coming into us which we can share with others, please keep it coming!