

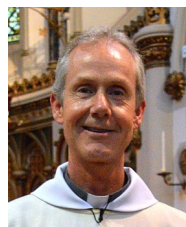


Catholic Parish of Eastbourne & St Leonards

Parish Magazine

Fear not, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, and from the west I will gather you. Is 43:5

Issue 1: Lent 2026



Fr Kevin Dring,
Single Parish Moderator

Dear friends

Welcome to the first edition of a new Parish Magazine for bringing together good news and helpful information from across the eight parishes of our deanery, on the journey to becoming a single New Parish. We have been trying different routes to support good communication, and we feel this will be a good balance of our own local church newsletters, with all the important local news people need, alongside this new quarterly Parish Magazine. This magazine will inform, celebrate, and help to bring together a sense of our individual communities being part of a larger community. Thanks to Andrew, Sandra and team, and to all who have and will contribute to it.

We have said farewell to Bishop Richard after eleven years with us, now installed as Archbishop of Westminster, and we await the appointment of a new shepherd for our diocese. Let's all keep this important intention in prayer. In the time we wait (during what the Church calls *sede vacante*, "vacant seat") we have a Diocesan Administrator, Canon Jonathan Martin, to oversee day to day life in the diocese. In this time all deaneries are asked to keep momentum in the work being done to implement the Pastoral Plan (becoming new larger parishes), but in a way that is prayerful and reflective so that we can see more clearly what the best steps are as we move forward.

A big thanks to our two excellent East and West Hub Leadership Groups, the clergy and lay reps who are working hard to discern and implement good ways for us to collaborate across our churches. Thanks also to all of you in our churches who volunteer and work

hard in the Church's mission to care and reach out to others.

We are in Lent and soon will celebrate the sacrifice and Resurrection of Jesus for us. This mystery of love defines everything we do and everything we are as Church. May we all be deeply renewed to continue walking together in hope in the service of the Lord.



Parish Mission Prayer

Loving God,
empower us through our Baptism
to live as vibrant
and welcoming communities,
centred on the Holy Eucharist.

Inflame us with your Holy Spirit
to encourage others
to a personal relationship
with Jesus Christ.

Recognising all things
as your gift to us,
to be treasured
and shared with love
give us a heart for the poor,
a passion for justice,
a concern for creation,
so that all may live
with peace and dignity.

Our Lady and all the Saints
pray for us.
Amen.

**You may need
to take this away to read it.**

**Please bring it back
for others to read too.**



Arundel & Brighton Diocesan Trust
Registered Charity 252878

www.abdiocese.org.uk

Regular news from our diocese
can be found on the website at:
www.abdiocese.org.uk/diocese/news

You can also sign up
to the weekly email update.

*Image:
Christ in the Wilderness,
Ivan Kramskoi (1837–
1887), 1872
Tretyakov Gallery,
Moscow*

From the Editor

Welcome to the first edition of our new Parish Magazine.

While our individual churches will continue to share local news through their own parish newsletters, this quarterly magazine is designed to bring together stories from across our whole deanery which will form the single parish community — highlighting what we are doing, celebrating moments of faith, and helping us see the bigger picture of our local mission.

We hope this magazine becomes a place where the life of our churches, schools, chaplaincies, and parish groups can be shared and celebrated.

Our planned publication cycle will be approximately quarterly: Spring (in March), Summer (in June), Autumn (in September) and Advent/Winter (in December).

Between issues, our temporary parish website www.eastbourne-stleonards.org.uk will continue to carry current news and events which have been sent in.

We would love to hear from you. If your parish, school, or group has something to share — a project, celebration, pilgrimage, outreach activity, or story of faith past or future— please send it to: news@eastbourne-stleonards.org.uk

Please include clear photos as JPEG images where possible, as good quality pictures help bring our stories to life. We can't accept photos embedded in another document, like a Word document.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this issue and helped make this magazine a way for our church communities to stay connected and encouraged in faith.

Please note: the deadline for the printed magazine is the first week of the month of issue. The website will be updated with new items as soon as possible following receipt.

The new Single Parish

Now we are without a bishop, some are wondering how this affects the journey of change we are all on in the diocese to become new larger parishes.

Already, before Archbishop Richard left us, three of the eleven deaneries of the diocese had legally become new parishes (Brighton & Hove, Guildford and Weybridge).

For the rest of us, we are asked to keep momentum on our journey of preparing, so that when a new bishop is appointed, we will be in good shape. Certainly, a new bishop will bring “fresh eyes and ears” to some of the detail of how we come together as new parishes, but he will no doubt be committed to keeping the spirit of the Pastoral Plan.

In our own deanery we have lots of work underway to help us share and collaborate together in good and helpful ways. Our new Single Parish stretches from Eastbourne to Rye, and is centred on two Hubs, West and East.

It will be overseen by a Clergy Team, moderated by Fr Kevin Dring. The team will work closely with Hub Secretaries, Hub Leadership Groups and lay representatives to support pastoral planning, governance and the shared mission of the parish.

The West Hub  covers Eastbourne, Hailsham, Hampden Park and Polegate; Battle, Bexhill, Hastings, Rye and St Leonards are in the East Hub .

Focus Groups – Creating a Culture of Invitation

The *Hub Leadership Teams* (HLT) have formed four Focus Groups which work across both hubs to create a consistent approach for the entire Single Parish. Each hub also has its own Stewardship Group. Working across our communities, they meet regularly and feed back to the HLT.

Their shared purpose is simple: to help create a culture of invitation across our Single Parish.

Prayer and Worship

Chaired by Ghislaine Cornfield

Formation

Chaired by Caroline Rother

Pastoral Care

Chaired by Sally-Ann Hart

Communications

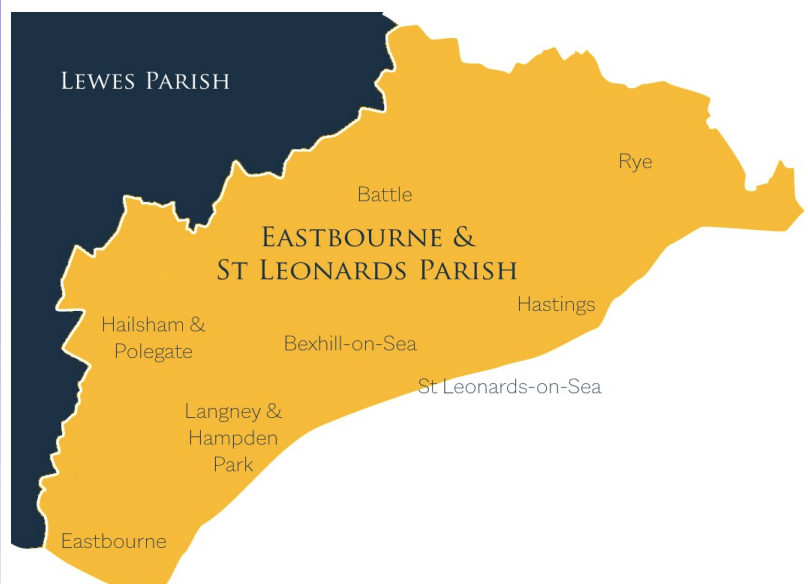
Chaired by Sandra King

Stewardship West

Chaired by Gerry Palmer

Stewardship East

Chaired by Solomon Ezobi



Here's a glimpse of one group's work:

Pastoral Care: Caring for One Another

One thing is clear: our parish communities are already caring generously.

The sick and housebound are visited. Holy Communion is taken into homes and care settings. SVP conferences offer friendship and practical help. Bereavement support, refugee outreach and charitable partnerships continue faithfully and quietly.

At the same time, we are asking: how do we ensure no one quietly drifts out of sight? How do we strengthen communication and support volunteers well?

The answer isn't heavy centralisation — it's clearer visibility, better communication and gentle collaboration.

This is an evolving mission. If you feel called to help — even in a small way — please step forward. So much of our outreach began with someone simply saying:

"I could help with that."

December's afternoon tea at St Wilfrid's



Tea @ 3 at St Martha's



Groups across the new Single Parish

Catholic Women's League



See the website for more on both Sections of the League in our Parish.

St Wilfrid's Over 50s Afternoon Tea

These meetings are always a lovely occasion, filled with warmth, laughter, good food, games, and wonderful companionship.

We're pleased to announce that the next meeting will take place at St Wilfrid's on Thursday 26 March at 2:00pm, with a St Patrick's theme. The cost is £10 per person, and booking is not essential.

These gatherings continue on the last Thursday of every month, and we would love to welcome you—please do join us!

SVP: Society of St Vincent de Paul

The February Tea @ 3 held at St Martha's Hall Bexhill as always proved to be a cheerful gathering for local guests. Even on a grey, overcast afternoon, many attended to enjoy a few hours of conversation and companionship.

The theme for the tea was "Chat & Natter", which included a fun picture quiz. While there were no winners, laughter and friendly chatter filled the room, creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere.

These monthly events, held on the second Monday of the month at St Martha's hall are made possible by the generous dedication of SVP volunteers, who ensure that everyone feels included and cared for. Members of the Youth SVP from St Richard's Catholic College often join in as well, adding extra energy and encouragement to the afternoon.

The next Tea @ 3 will take place on Monday 13 April, and we look forward to seeing both familiar faces and new friends at this popular parish gathering.

Knights of St Columba

Every Thursday this year, the Knights of St Columba are praying the Rosary for Vocations to the Priesthood and Religious Life.

They invite everyone to join them to pray for an increase in men and women joining Holy Orders, and also lay people joining Catholic organisations to assist in the Catholic Church and Community.

Please pray individually but if you would like to join others on a Zoom Rosary then please contact Bob on 07752 043009 for joining instructions.

Grandparents' Groups

Grandparents play a special role in passing on the gift of faith and help nurture it within their families. Many grandparents are discovering they are not alone in this vocation. Local Grandparents Groups provide a space for prayer, encouragement, and fellowship.

Groups in our deanery meet in: Eastbourne, second Wednesday of the month at 2.00pm St Agnes; and Hastings at St Mary Star of the Sea, contact David Giles davidcgiles@yahoo.com for details. New members are warmly welcome, and the diocesan team can help start new groups.

Grandparents are also invited to the Grandparents' Formation Day (see page 8 for more details)

Lenten Almsgiving

Lent Charity Lunches

Lent is a season of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, and across our deanery, parish communities are coming together to share fellowship while supporting good causes. A popular way to practice almsgiving is through Lent charity lunches, where proceeds are donated to local and Catholic charities.

One example is St Agnes, Eastbourne, where volunteers continue the tradition of Lenten soup lunches, this year supporting the much-needed work of St Wilfrid's Hospice. The lunches take place on Thursdays up to 26 March, and all are warmly welcome to attend.

Other parishes across the deanery are also holding Lent lunches or offering other ways to support charities during Lent—please see your local parish newsletters for details.

CAFOD Lent Challenge

This year, CAFOD is encouraging us to join the Big Lent Walk and raise vital funds to bring the gift of clean water to our neighbours who lack it. Find out more at <https://walk.cafod.org.uk/>

Teresa and Gerry Palmer from St Wilfrid's are taking up this challenge. If you can sponsor them, your support would be greatly appreciated. Scan the QR code to make your donation. Your sponsorship can and will change lives.



If your parish has taken part in any lunches or other charity events in Lent please do send details to us at news@eastbourne-stleonards.org.uk with high resolution JPEG images so we can add them to the website or even use in the next magazine.



Lenten lunches at St Agnes' Church and Our Lady of Ransom in Eastbourne



Icon of the Transfiguration by the Children's Liturgy group at OLR



Help Teresa and Gerry Palmer support CAFOD's Big Lent Walk with a donation



Learning the Faith

Children's Liturgy

Many churches in the new parish offer a Liturgy specially tailored for younger children who may find the main service difficult to follow. Those who lead this ministry are called catechists (pronounced "KAT-eh-kists") — people who generously give their time to help share the faith with the youngest members of our community.

Catechists at Our Lady of Ransom (OLR) in Eastbourne have written about their ministry in that church.

Children's Liturgy at OLR takes place each Sunday during term time at the 10:15 Mass. We cater for children aged three and above for as long as they find it helpful to them. Parents need to fill in a consent form before their children can attend. Around sixty children are registered, with between ten and twenty attending each week.

Six catechists lead the sessions, working in pairs on a rota. Through a simple *Sorry* prayer, an *Alleluia* song and the Gospel story — sometimes supported by video — the children explore the meaning of the Gospel through discussion and activities. Their work is often brought back to the church during the offertory procession so that the whole parish can share in what they have learned. New volunteers are always warmly welcomed.

First Holy Communion

Across the deanery this year, many children and their families have been journeying together in preparation for First Holy Communion. Through parish gatherings led by dedicated catechists, children and parents have been exploring the meaning of the Eucharist and the gift of Jesus present in this sacrament.

A key emphasis of the programme has been supporting parents in their role as the first teachers of faith. Through prayer, reflection and conversation, families have been discovering together how the Eucharist nourishes our life as Christians.

All the children preparing for First Holy Communion have now celebrated their First Reconciliation — an important milestone and a joyful moment of encountering God's mercy. Dates for First Holy Communion celebrations will be published in each church newsletter nearer the time.

Sherilyn Barrow from St Gregory's Church in Eastbourne shares:

"I started to help with children's liturgy after COVID when my children were old enough for me to give something back. Last summer I was asked if I could support the First Holy Communion (FHC). What a blessing to see children I have seen grow in faith from their time in the Children's Liturgy through to their FHC!"

"I was worried I couldn't do it, but the team are so supportive and caring. I feel I am growing into this role so hope I could support anyone else that might be thinking about joining us. With between fifty and sixty children, it is busy but so rewarding."

"As I have boys who play football, I never know what Mass I can attend, and it's been so lovely to see children with their families at all the different Masses."

Confirmation

This year the deanery will celebrate two Youth Confirmation services: Our Lady of Ransom Church, Eastbourne on Saturday 3 May at 2:00pm
St Mary Magdalene Church, Bexhill on Thursday 8 May at 7:00pm

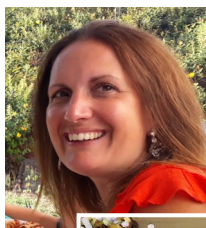
Candidates from across our parishes have spent several months meeting in formation groups, exploring the Catholic faith and reflecting on their journey with Christ. Many have also taken part in retreats and service projects, offering opportunities for prayer, reflection and service to others.

These celebrations will be a joyful moment for our parish communities as we witness our young people confirm their faith and be strengthened by the gift of the Holy Spirit.



First Holy Communion
© Mikhail Davidovich

Left: Sherilyn Barrow



Lots of Christingles prepared by the Bexhill Confirmation group as an act of service



Young people from the West Hub Lumen Christi group on their pre-Confirmation retreat at Ashburnham



RCIA formation group with their leaders at the Rite of Election at Arundel Cathedral this year



RCIA – Rite of Catholic Initiation of Adults

We are also blessed this year with a number of adults preparing to be received into the Church or to complete their initiation through Confirmation at the Easter Vigil. As a vital part of their formation, and in unity with Catholic cathedrals worldwide, our catechumens and candidates participated in the Rite of Election on Saturday 21 February, held at Arundel Cathedral. Over two celebrations that day, more than 250 individuals from across the Diocese gathered alongside their sponsors, families, and friends to take this important step toward full sacramental initiation.

The liturgy was presided over by Canon Jonathan Martin, Diocesan Administrator. In his homily he spoke warmly about his own journey of faith, recalling how he himself was received into the Church at Our Lady of Ransom in Eastbourne, which he described as remaining his spiritual home.

He encouraged the Elect to remember that their call is not simply to follow rules but to follow Jesus Christ Himself, the living person at the heart of our faith.

Anyone interested in exploring the Catholic faith is warmly invited to speak with one of our clergy or parish welcome teams.

Giving Thanks

Across our parishes we give thanks for our clergy, catechists, volunteers and families who accompany children, young people and adults on their journeys of faith. Our communities reflect a rich variety of ages, cultures and experiences, yet we are united in Christ as we walk together towards the sacraments.

Please keep in your prayers all those preparing for First Holy Communion, Confirmation and Reception into the Church, that these moments of grace may strengthen them and bring renewed life to our parish family.

Pupils raise £630 for CAFOD

At St Mary Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School in St Leonards, our Year 1 class recently took part in a joyful sponsored walk in support of CAFOD, and we are thrilled to share that the children raised an amazing £630. This is an outstanding achievement for such a young class, and we are incredibly proud of the enthusiasm, resilience, and kindness they showed throughout the event.

During their walk, our Year 1 pupils reflected on how even the smallest acts of love can bring meaningful change to others around the world. Their efforts were wonderfully supported by the generosity of parents, carers, friends, and our wider community, whose sponsorship helped turn this simple activity into a powerful act of charity.

We would like to offer our heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed. Your support not only empowers CAFOD's vital work but also helps our children understand and live out our Gospel values.

Together, our children have made a truly big difference — and we couldn't be more grateful or more proud of them.

Pupils visit St Mary Magdalene's Catholic Church

Pupils from Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 at St Mary Magdalene School Bexhill recently had the opportunity to visit and explore all areas of St Mary Magdalene Church.

The children greatly enjoyed visiting the church outside the usual celebration of Mass, which allowed them time to explore the building more fully and deepen their understanding of its meaning and significance. During the visit, they took part in a guided tour and learned about the key areas of the church, strengthening both their knowledge and their spiritual awareness.

We are especially grateful to Mrs Surman, one of our Foundation Governors, who generously gave her time to lead the visits. She provided

the pupils with an in-depth explanation of the Order of Mass and helped them to understand important practices and traditions of the Church. The children learned, for example, how and why we genuflect when passing the tabernacle, why the Gospel is proclaimed by a Priest or Deacon, and how the Sacrament of Reconciliation is celebrated. Mrs Surman also shared insights into the saints and the rich symbolism found within the church. One particularly memorable detail for the pupils was discovering the meaning behind the pelican depicted on the altar — perhaps parishioners might like to ask the children if they can recall its significance.

We are thankful for the warm welcome extended to our pupils and for the continued support of our parish community in nurturing their faith and understanding.

Read this article on the website to see more photos of classes at the church and find out more about the Pelican depicted on the altar as well. You can just see it in the photo at the bottom here.



Year One children and staff from St Mary Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School

Children at St Mary Magdalene Church



Living the Gospel at School

At St Thomas a Becket Catholic Primary School in Eastbourne, the start of 2026 has been a vibrant testament to Catholic Social Teaching in action. Our pupils are truly living out the Gospel, showing that even the smallest hands can make a significant impact on our "Common Home."

Spirituality remains at our heart. Year 5 led a moving Epiphany and Patronal Mass for St Thomas a Becket early in the year, while more recently Fr Barry guided KS2 through Reconciliation and Lent Masses, fostering a culture of reflection. Our Liturgy Leaders deepened their faith at a Spiritual Council Formation Day at St Richard's recently.

In service to others, we held our third Foodbank collection — a key part of our Jubilee Year pledge to support those in need. To promote dignity and inclusion, our World Friendship Ambassador assembly launched a mentor programme in Years 5 and 6, ensuring every child feels valued. We also celebrated the "Dignity of the Person" by welcoming our community for the KS1 Grandparents Tea and Read.

Looking ahead, Year 5 is preparing a powerful Passion Play for Easter and our Eco-Warriors are launching a grounds makeover to protect our environment, as stewards of God's beautiful world. With an upcoming KS2 Grandparents Mass and our ongoing Buddy Masses, we also continue to strengthen the bonds of our parish family.

Save the Date: FLAME 2027

We hope to bring an even bigger group of young people from across our deanery to the next Flame gathering on **6 March 2027**. Let's keep the momentum going!

flame CYMFED 2027

Pupils launch Youth Faith Fund

Pupils at St Richard's Catholic College in Bexhill are excited to be spearheading an ongoing Youth Faith Fund fundraising campaign in collaboration with deanery parishes. The fund hopes to help ensure that money is not a barrier for young people seeking to deepen their faith through pilgrimages and retreats.

This year six pupils from St Richard's will join the diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes in July — five serving as Year 10 and 11 Redshirts and one as a Year 7 family group participant. Thanks to a generous school benefactor, five of the six have received £200 towards their pilgrimage, while one has been awarded a full bursary from the Bosco Trust.

Grateful and eager to do more — not just for themselves but for future young people — the students, together with Lay-Chaplain Jo Doyle, Governor Samantha Vickers and parish youth leaders are working on launching a Youth Faith Fund. The ring-fenced fund will support current and future young people seeking faith experiences.

Fundraising will begin soon in school with a raffle and fun school event (details to follow), and parish fundraising is due to take place at St Mary Magdalene Parish, St Wilfrid Parish and Our Lady of Ransom Parish where the pupils are parishioners.

"We're really excited to get everyone involved — we're thinking of hosting a parish family quiz night soon so everyone can have fun while helping young people in church" said Oskar and Raizel from St Wilfrid Church.

Please keep this initiative in your prayers and support the young people and their leaders when you see them in action — a wonderful example of faith, collaboration and generosity across our schools and parishes.



Visit of St Mary Magdalene School to the church

Right: Learning new skills with Fresh Visions, on the project at St Thomas's in St Leonards

Fresh Visions help transform the John Fisher Room at St Thomas's

Before Christmas, St Thomas's Church in St Leonards welcomed *Fresh Visions*, a charitable organisation giving young people who are not currently in work, education, or training the chance to develop practical skills through community projects.

Liz, Parish Secretary, reflected: "We were delighted to welcome the team to the parish. The young people generously redecorated the John Fisher Room free of charge, greatly enhancing the space. The project concluded with a celebratory event on 23 January 2026, including certificates and awards recognising everyone's contributions. Huge thanks to all involved!"

Nicola from Fresh Visions added: "Our goal is to build more than just community spaces; we want to build confidence and careers. Seeing the young people transform the John Fisher Room while gaining practical skills, Health & Safety training, and CSCS cards for their futures is exactly why we do what we do. We also provide support with cv writing and finding long-term employment to ensure they have a clear path forward after the project ends."

This project shows the power of community, faith, and collaboration, as parish spaces are revitalised while young people gain skills, confidence, and employability.

All Fresh Visions courses are fully inclusive. For more information, visit www.freshvisions.org.uk.



World Day of Prayer Talk

The Eastbourne and Bexhill Newman Association, in conjunction with Our Lady of Ransom, will host a special talk inspired by the Eastbourne Women's World Day of Prayer group at Our Lady of Ransom Church in Eastbourne on 13 April, starting with refreshments at 6:15pm.

Prepared by women in Nigeria, it forms part of the 2026 World Day of Prayer celebrations. All are warmly invited to attend and join in this prayerful and informative evening.

40 Hours' Adoration at St Thomas'

Everyone is warmly invited and encouraged to join the Parish of the Good Shepherd at St Thomas' Church in St Leonards for 40 Hours' Adoration, beginning with the Mass of Exposition at 7pm on Tuesday 12 May.

This is a special opportunity to spend quiet time with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, offering your prayers for your family, our parish, and the needs of the wider world. Come for as long as you can — even a short time in His presence is a powerful gift.

The Forty Hours' Devotion holds profound significance in Catholic tradition as a powerful expression of reverence for Christ's Real Presence in the Eucharist. This practice, dating back to the 16th century, involves continuous prayer and adoration before the Blessed Sacrament, solemnly exposed on the altar for forty hours, symbolising the time Jesus spent in the tomb between His crucifixion and resurrection. It serves as a communal and personal opportunity to deepen faith, seek spiritual renewal, and offer reparation for sins, uniting the faithful in a shared act of love and devotion.

Regular adoration, Rosary, and prayer opportunities happen across our deanery—see your parish newsletter for details.

Corpus Christi in Arundel

After a successful West Hub pilgrimage in 2025, we are delighted to offer another coach trip to Arundel Cathedral for the Feast of Corpus Christi on Thursday 4 June.

For over 140 years, the Cathedral has celebrated this feast with a stunning Carpet of Flowers and a Blessed Sacrament procession to Arundel Castle, where Benediction is given.

The coach trip will allow time for those joining to admire the floral display, attend Mass at 5:30pm, and join the procession through the castle courtyard.

Entry to the cathedral is free; the coach trip is £20 per person, picking up at:

- Christ the King – 1:00pm
- Eastbourne Station – 1:15pm
- St George's, Polegate – 1:30pm

Spaces are limited. To reserve a place (or more than one!) email names, contact number, and your desired pick-up location to sandraforte40@gmail.com. Final details and payment will be confirmed at the beginning of May.

Local Corpus Christi Processions

Saturday 6 June — St Joachim's Church to Christ the King Church

The celebration of Corpus Christi continues in our local communities with a church-to-church procession through Hampden Park and Langney. This three-mile walk will start from St Joachim's Church at 2:30pm and finish at Christ the King around 4:30pm, where those present will receive Benediction and are then welcome to attend the Saturday Vigil Mass.

This procession is a wonderful opportunity to come together to pray and publicly witness our faith and devotion to the Blessed Sacrament.

Even if St Joachim's is not your church, you are warmly invited to join in this act of faith and fellowship.



The Cathedral's carpet of flowers at the 150th Anniversary in 2023: official photograph by Focus Photography, Shoreham

Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 June – Other parish processions

Many other of our churches will also celebrate the Feast with Blessed Sacrament processions after Saturday vigil masses and Sunday Mass. Check your parish newsletters for timings and local details.

Put these dates in your diary and join in this inspiring act of faith and fellowship through our streets!

Diocesan Formation & Events

Across the diocese there are regular opportunities to deepen faith, gain new skills, and meet Catholics from other parishes.

Grandparents' Formation Day Thursday 23 April: 10am–4pm St John the Evangelist, Horsham

Grandparents play a special role in passing on the faith to the next generation. This day promises to be inspiring and practical.

Guest speaker David Wells, a well-known Catholic evangelist, father and grandfather, will lead reflections on sharing faith within family life. Register via the diocesan events page: www.abdiocese.org.uk/diocese/events

Mental Health Awareness Training Saturday 9 May 2026: 10am–3pm St Philip Howard Centre, Crawley

£40 per delegate (normally £120) Mental health challenges affect many people today. This training explores the realities and impact of mental health conditions and helps participants respond with greater understanding and compassion.

Register via the diocesan events page: www.abdiocese.org.uk/diocese/events

For enquiries about either event contact Deacon Simon South Diocesan Marriage & Family Life Adviser simon.south@abdiocese.org.uk

Regular news from our diocese can be found on the website at: www.abdiocese.org.uk/diocese/news

Part of last year's procession in the blistering heat in Langney

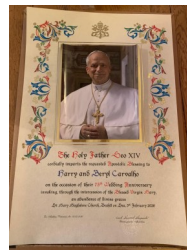


75 Years of Faithful Marriage

Congratulations to Harry and Beryl Carvalho, long-time parishioners of St Joachim's and now members of St Mary Magdalene, Bexhill, who have celebrated the remarkable milestone of more than seventy-five years of marriage.

The couple recently returned to St Joachim's for a special service of thanksgiving led by Deacon Eugene and a celebration with parish friends. They also received a Papal blessing and a congratulatory card from the King to mark the occasion — not their first!

Please keep Harry and Beryl — and all married couples — in your prayers. Read the full story and see more photos on our website.



St Wilfrid's Hailsham Spring Fair Saturday 28 March 10am–2pm

We're delighted to invite everyone to our Spring Fair at St Wilfrid's Church Hall Hailsham. Enjoy a fun-filled day with craft, plant, cake, and toy stalls, a tombola, and refreshments. We hope you'll join us to browse the stalls, meet friends, and enjoy —there's something for everyone!

St George's Charity Breakfasts

Since 2023, St George's Church, Polegate has been hosting monthly charity breakfasts on the last Sunday of each month (except August and December). The breakfast begins at 10am, following 9am Mass — or arrive from 9:45 am if you are not attending Mass — in the parish hall.

Bacon and sausage baps, pastries, and coffee are served, and there is no set price—donations only.

So far in 2026, we have supported Warming Up the Homeless (£180 raised) and Beachy Head Chaplaincy (£250 raised). Upcoming breakfasts will benefit Smile Train (29 March), Adam's Light (26 April), RNLI (31 May), Demelza Trust (28 June), Care for the Carers (21 July, one week early), Food Bank (26 September), CAFOD (25 October), and the Royal British Legion (29 November).

These breakfasts have been hugely popular, raising several thousand pounds for local and Catholic charities, while also providing a wonderful opportunity to meet new people and enjoy fellowship.

We warmly invite you to come along, bring friends and family, and join us in supporting good causes while enjoying time together!

Men's Group in Hastings

St Mary Star of the Sea hosts a Men's Prayer Meeting and Social in the church on most Mondays at 7:30. Full details are in the church news leaflet.

Seniors' Group in Eastbourne

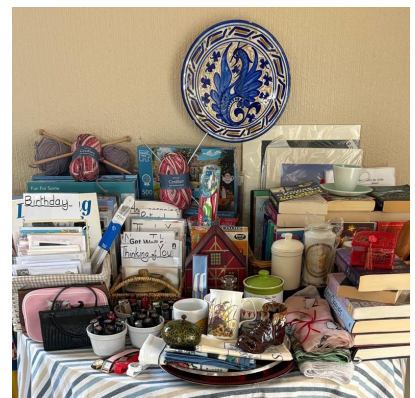
A meeting for seniors is held at Christ the King Church on the second Wednesday of each month at 11:30am (including lunch) and the last Thursday at 10:30am (with refreshments).

Pilgrimage to Poland 2026

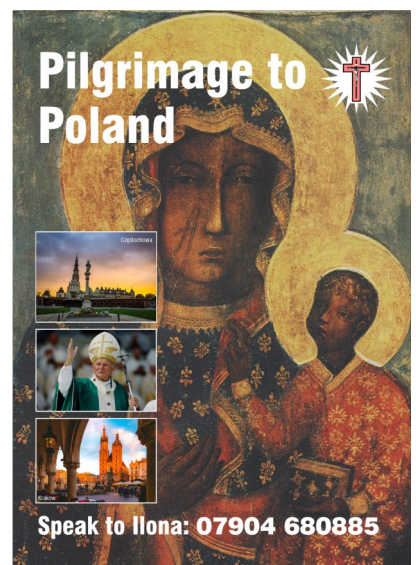
Christ the King is organising a seven day pilgrimage to Poland later this year, including the shrine in Częstochowa and the Divine Mercy Basilica in Krakow as well as visits to Auschwitz, Wadowice and the Wieliczka Salt Mine. Masses will be celebrated by Fr Neil in different churches each day. To express an interest and get more details, please contact Ilona on 07904 680885.

Supporting local charities

There are Honesty Tables at Christ the King (run by the Catholic Women's League there) and St George's as a fundraising venture to support various charities. Do you have small items at home that you would like to donate to this cause? Bring new or nearly-new jigsaw puzzles, books, cards, new tea towels, mugs, wool, costume jewellery, small toys, boxed games, books, CDs, DVDs, gloves, scarves, vases, glassware, crockery and new cosmetics in to be re-sold. The Tables are in the church hall where these items are sold for a voluntary donation.

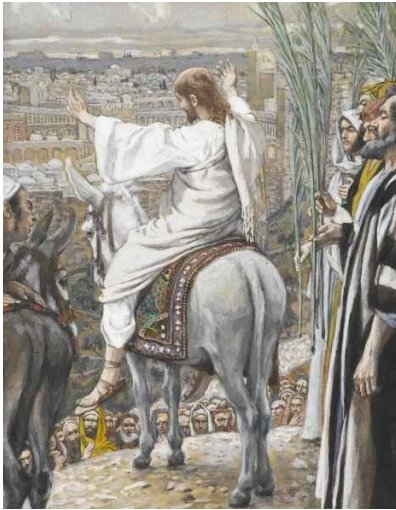


If you have any news from your parish or groups to share or an event coming up please send it to news@eastbourne-stleonards.org.uk. We would be delighted to include it on the website and, where time and space permits, in the next magazine due out in June.



Holy Week and Easter 2026

Palm Sunday: 28–29 March



Saturday Vigil:

- 4:00pm St Thomas of Canterbury
- 5:00pm Christ the King
- 6:00pm Our Lady of Ransom
- 6:00pm Our Lady Immaculate
- 6:00pm St Anthony of Padua
- 6:00pm St Mary Magdalene
- 6:00pm St Mary Star of the Sea

Sunday:

- 8:00am St Anthony of Padua
- 9:00am Holy Redeemer
- 9:00am St George
- 9:00am St Gregory
- 9:00am St Martha
- 9:00am St Teresa of Lisieux
- 9:30am St Joachim
- 10:00am St Mary Star of the Sea
- 10:15am Our Lady of Ransom
- 10:30am St Wilfrid
- 10:45am St Anthony of Padua
- 11:00am Our Lady Immaculate
- 11:00am St Thomas of Canterbury
- 11:00am St Martha S
- 11:00am St Mary Magdalene
- 11:30am Christ the King D
- 11:30am St Agnes
- 11:30am St Mary Star of the Sea
- 5:30pm Our Lady of Ransom

Wednesday 1 April

Chrism Mass

- 6:00pm Arundel Cathedral

- S Syro-Malabar liturgy
- D Divine Worship
- P Polish liturgy

Other liturgies may be available which were added after going to press. Check the website and websites of local churches.

Paintings by James Jacques Tissot (1836–1902), Brooklyn Museum, New York

Maundy (Holy) Thursday: 2 April



Mass of the Lord's Supper, washing of feet and watching

- 7:00pm Christ the King D
- 7:00pm St Anthony of Padua
- 7:00pm St Thomas of Canterbury
- 7:00pm Our Lady Immaculate
- 7:30pm St Mary Magdalene
- 7:30pm St Mary Star of the Sea
- 8:00pm Our Lady of Ransom
- 8:00pm St George

Good Friday: 3 April



- 10:30am Liturgy for children at Christ the King
- 12 noon Ecumenical Walk of Witness starts from St Anthony of Padua
- 8:00pm Taizé Service at St Thomas

Solemn Liturgy of the Day

- 3:00pm Christ the King D
- 3:00pm Holy Redeemer
- 3:00pm Our Lady Immaculate
- 3:00pm Our Lady of Ransom
- 3:00pm St Anthony of Padua
- 3:00pm St George
- 3:00pm St Joachim
- 3:00pm St Mary Magdalene
- 3:00pm St Mary Star of the Sea
- 3:00pm St Wilfrid

Stations of the Cross

- 9:00am *Following Mass at St Anthony of Padua*
- 10:00am *St Gregory with Churches Together Walk of Witness*
- 10:30am *St Thomas Family Stations*
- 10:30am *St Wilfrid Family Stations*
- 11:00am *St Martha Family Stations*
- 12:00pm Our Lady of Ransom
- 12:00pm St Teresa of Lisieux
- 7:00pm St Agnes

Holy Saturday: 4 April

Blessing of food baskets

- 9:30am St Mary Star of the Sea P
- 10:45am St Agnes P

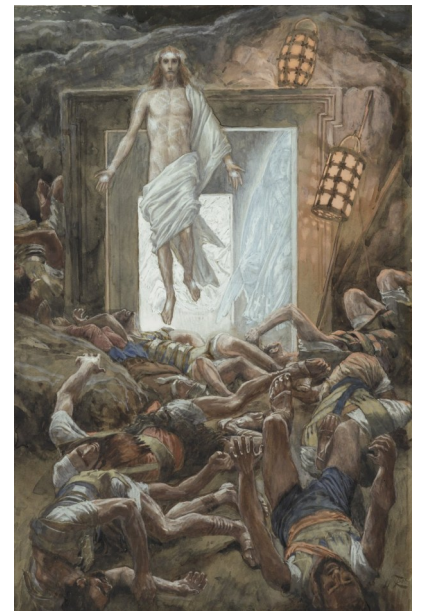
The Easter Vigil

- 7:30pm St Mary Magdalene
- 7:30pm St Mary Star of the Sea
- 8:00pm Our Lady Immaculate
- 8:00pm Our Lady of Ransom
- 8:00pm St Anthony of Padua
- 8:00pm St Thomas of Canterbury
- 8:00pm St Wilfrid
- 8:30pm Christ the King D

Easter Sunday: 5 April

Mass of the Day

- 8:00am St Anthony of Padua
- 9:00am St Agnes P
- 9:00am Holy Redeemer
- 9:00am St George
- 9:00am St Gregory
- 9:00am St Martha
- 9:00am St Teresa of Lisieux
- 9:30am St Joachim
- 10:00am St Mary Star of the Sea
- 10:15am Our Lady of Ransom
- 10:30am St Wilfrid
- 10:45am St Anthony of Padua
- 11:00am Our Lady Immaculate
- 11:00am St Thomas of Canterbury
- 11:00am St Martha S
- 11:00am St Mary Magdalene
- 11:30am Christ the King D
- 11:30am St Agnes
- 11:30am St Mary Star of the Sea
- 5:30pm Our Lady of Ransom



Our Deanery Clergy

Fr Charles Ezejide– A Birthday Celebration in Eastbourne

Since arriving at Our Lady of Ransom, St Gregory and St Agnes in February 2025, Fr Charles has quickly become a much-loved assistant priest in Eastbourne.

His birthday falls during Lent (5 March), and this year parishioners marked the occasion with two celebrations. A small gathering followed Mass at Our Lady of Ransom on the day itself, while a larger celebration took place after the Sunday 11:30am Mass at St Agnes, where more than fifty parishioners enjoyed a generous buffet and a delicious cake prepared by Annette.



Away from parish life, Fr Charles has another passion — football. A loyal Chelsea supporter (though he admits he is trying to follow Brighton while he is here!), he enjoys playing whenever he can and usually takes an attacking role wearing numbers 8 or 9. He is hoping to join a local grassroots weekday six-a-side team soon — so don't be surprised if you find yourself facing him on the pitch one day!

Deacon Simon South — Supporting Families and Faith

Serving the eastern end of our deanery, Deacon Simon South is well known for his enthusiasm for evangelisation and family ministry.

Since 2025 he has also taken on the diocesan role of Marriage & Family Life Adviser, helping develop formation opportunities and events to support families and strengthen faith across the diocese.

In his own parish of St Anthony of Padua in Rye, led by the Franciscan Friars under Fr Max, there are encouraging signs of quiet renewal.

Reflecting on parish life, Deacon Simon shared: “Our family ministry is being blessed with several new young families seeking to join the Catholic Church and build their relationship with the Lord. We also have a thriving youth group which meets monthly at St Mary’s Church Hall. Through the Holy Spirit we have seen our wider parish family grow threefold over the past year.

“We are also celebrating a steady stream of baptisms, with weddings planned for the year ahead — joyful signs of faith flourishing across generations.”

Farewell to Fr Eamonn Monson

The parish of St Mary Star of the Sea, Hastings, sadly said farewell to Fr Eamonn Monson, in November, who served the community faithfully for eight years. Parishioners gathered for his final Masses, giving thanks for his ministry, friendship and pastoral care.

In his farewell homily, which can be read on the parish website, Deacon Duncan Brown reflected on Fr Eamonn’s impact on the parish community, describing how his ministry had brought life and encouragement to many.

St Mary Star of the Sea is now in an interim period while the parish awaits the appointment of a new parish priest from the East African Pallottine Province. The Irish Pallottines who had been supporting the transition are no longer able to provide cover, so weekend Masses are currently being celebrated with the help of priests from across the diocese, including Fr Terry Martin, a retired priest who lives locally.

The parish life continues during this time of waiting and prayer with Holy Week to be celebrated in the usual way.

Please keep the community of St Mary Star of the Sea in your prayers as they await the arrival of their new priest.

Deacon Simon South and his wife Lynn



Our deanery priests:

While we prepare the full profiles of our deanery priests, you can discover more about them and their current parishes by attending Mass in their churches, tune into livestreams where available, or connect through their parish social media pages.

Fr Mícheál Beatty *The Good Shepherd*

<https://www.facebook.com/GoodShepherdStLeonards>

Fr Richard Blythen

Our Lady Immaculate & St Michael with St Teresa of Lisieux

Fr Neil Chatfield

Christ the King and St Joachim
Livestream Sunday 11.30am
<https://tinyurl.com/CTKLangney>

Fr Kevin Dring & Fr Charles Ezejide

Our Lady of Ransom, St Gregory, and St Agnes
Livestream Sunday 10.15am
<http://tinyurl.com/EastbourneCatholicChurches-YT>

Fr Rory Kelly

St George and St Wilfrid
Livestream Sunday 10.30am
<https://saintsgeorgeandwilfrid.co.uk/online-masses-and-recordings/>

Fr Maximillian McKeown OFMConv

St Anthony of Padua
<https://stanthonrye.com/>

Fr Stephen O'Brien

Our Lady of the Rosary
<https://www.facebook.com/stmmrbexhill>

Pray for a priest for
St Mary Star of the Sea
<https://www.facebook.com/stmarystaroftheseahastings/>



Fr Eamonn Monson

Churches in the New Parish

Our Lady of Ransom, St Gregory & St Agnes (Eastbourne) ^W

Parish Priest: Fr Kevin Dring
 Assistant Priest: Fr Charles Ezejide
 Parish office 01323 723222
eastbourneolor@abdiocese.org.uk
<http://ourladyofransom.org.uk/>

Churches:

Our Lady of Ransom, 2–4 Grange Road, Eastbourne, BN21 4EU
 St Gregory, Victoria Drive, Eastbourne BN20 8QY
 St Agnes, 10 Whitley Rd, Eastbourne BN22 8NJ

Weekend Masses:

Saturday 6:00pm at Our Lady of Ransom
 Sunday 9:00am at St Gregory
 Sunday 10:15am at Our Lady of Ransom
 Sunday 11:30am at St Agnes
 Sunday 5:30pm at Our Lady of Ransom
 Polish Mass ^P is held at St Agnes—every 2nd and 3rd Sunday 6:00 pm

St George & St Wilfrid (Polegate/Hailsham) ^W

Parish Priest: Fr Rory Kelly
 Parish Deacon: Deacon John Truman
 Parish office 01323 841504
hailsham@abdiocese.org.uk
<https://saintsgeorgeandwilfrid.co.uk/>

Churches:

St George, 110 Eastbourne Rd, Polegate BN26 5DF
 St Wilfrid, South Road, Hailsham BN27 3JG

Weekend Masses:

Sunday 9:00am at St George
 Sunday 10:30am at St Wilfrid

Our Lady of the Rosary (Bexhill/Little Common) ^E

Parish Priest: Fr Stephen O'Brien
 Parish Deacon: Deacon Simon Kirkdale
 Parish office: 01424 210263
bexhill@abdiocese.org.uk
<https://stmmmbexhill.co.uk/>

Churches:

St Mary Magdalene, Sea Road, Bexhill-on-Sea, TN40 1RH
 St Martha's, Little Common, Cooden Sea Road, TN39 4SL

Weekend Masses:

Saturday 6:00pm at St Mary Magdalene:
 Sunday 9:00am at St Martha
 Sunday 11:00am at St Mary Magdalene
 Sunday 11:00am at St Martha ^S

St Mary Star of the Sea (Hastings) ^E

Parish Priest: *Awaited*
 Parish Deacon: Deacon Duncan Brown
 Parish office 01424 421263
hastings@abdiocese.org.uk
<http://www.stmarvstarofthesea.net/>

Church:

Our Lady Star of the Sea, 1 High St, Hastings TN34 3EY

Weekend Masses:

Saturday 6:00pm
 Sunday 10:00am and 11:30am

The Good Shepherd (St Leonards) ^E

Parish Priest: Fr Míceál Beatty
 Parish Deacon: Deacon Ian Moon
 Parish Office: 01424 602077
stleonards@abdiocese.org.uk
<https://parishofthegoodshepherd.net/>

Churches:

St. Thomas of Canterbury, 31c Magdalen Road, St. Leonards-on-Sea, TN37 6ET
 Holy Redeemer, 24 Upper Church Road, St. Leonards on Sea, TN37 7AS

Weekend Masses:

Saturday 4:00pm at St Thomas of Canterbury
 Sunday 9:00am at Holy Redeemer
 Sunday 11:00am at St Thomas of Canterbury

Christ the King and St Joachim (Langney/Hampden Park) ^W

Parish Priest: Fr Neil Chatfield
 Parish Deacon: Deacon Eugene Adams
 Parish office: 01323 760048
eastbournectk@abdiocese.org.uk
<https://christthekingeastbourne.org/>
<https://eastbourneordinariate.org.uk/>

Churches:

Christ the King, 3 Princes Road, Eastbourne, BN23 6HT
 St Joachim 106, Brodrick Road, Hampden Park, Eastbourne, BN22 9NY

Weekend Masses:

Saturday 5:00pm at Christ the King
 Sunday 9:30am at St Joachim
 Sunday 11:30am at Christ the King ^D

Our Lady Immaculate & St Michael with St Teresa of Lisieux (Battle/Northiam) ^E

Parish Priest: Fr Richard Blythen
 Parish office: 01424 773125
battle@abdiocese.org.uk
<https://battlewithnorthiam.parishportal.net/>

Churches:

Our Lady Immaculate & St Michael, 14 Mount St, Battle TN33 OEG
 St Teresa of Lisieux, Horns Cross, Northiam TN31 6JQ

Weekend Masses:

Saturday 5:00pm at Our Lady Immaculate & St Michael
 Sunday 9:00am at St Teresa of Lisieux
 Sunday 11:00am at Our Lady Immaculate & St Michael

St Anthony of Padua (Rye) ^E

Parish Priest: Fr Maximillian McKeown
 Parish Deacon: Deacon Simon South
 Parish office: 01797 222173
rye@abdiocese.org.uk
<https://stanthonvrye.com/>

Church:

St Anthony of Padua, Watchbell Street, Rye TN31 7HB

Weekend Masses:

Saturday 6:00pm
 Sunday 8:00am and 10:45am

^E East hub ^S Syro-Malabar liturgy
^W West hub ^D Divine Worship
^P Polish liturgy

Everyone is welcome
 in all of our churches



New to the Parish?
 Ask a welcomer for a
 New Parishioner form to complete