

Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2021

Twenty Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Dear brothers and sisters,

Bishop John Sherrington, Lead Bishop for Life Issues for the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales has written an open letter inviting Catholics to pray for the defeat of the Assisted Dying Bill to be debated in the House of Lords in October

### **Full Letter from Bishop Sherrington on the Assisted Dying Bill**

*In the next weeks, we face an unprecedented attack on the sanctity of life with Baroness Meacher's 'Assisted Dying Bill 2021' which is due its 2nd Reading in the House of Lords with full debate on Friday, 22 October.*

*The term 'Assisted Dying' is euphemistic, the truth is that this bill seeks to introduce Assisted Suicide. If legalised, this Bill would allow a terminally ill adult with less than 6 months to live to be assisted in committing suicide. Catholic teaching opposes assisting suicide, since life is a gift to be cared for and preserved until its natural death. The Church is clear that we cannot directly choose to take the life of another, even if they request it. The solidarity of praying and caring for the most vulnerable at this fragile time of their lives is a profoundly Christian act which imitates Our Lady's prayer at the cross and Christ's service to the weakest.*

*Those in favour of the bill are making good use of language to confuse the issue and call it a compassionate and caring approach to redefine the question and obscure the actual reality and consequences of such legislation. As Pope Francis has said, "Physician-assisted suicide is part of a 'throwaway culture' that offers a 'false compassion' and treats a human person as a problem... True compassion does not marginalise anyone, nor does it humiliate and exclude – much less considers the disappearance of a person as a good thing." He criticised "those who hide behind an alleged compassion to justify and approve the death of a patient."*

### **Dangers of the introduction of Assisted Suicide**

*Importantly, at this stage we need to argue the dangers of the introduction of Assisted Suicide, which include the safety of people who are vulnerable due to external pressures, and the later liberalisation of the law which is evidenced by other countries which have introduced Assisted Suicide. Many voices from the world of disability-rights and other allies are also very fearful and fighting this bill. Whilst there are clear arguments to support Catholic teachings, it is important to remember that this position is not only a matter of faith but also human reason.*

*Later this month, the BMA will be debating whether to change their stance to support or neutrality on this matter. I hope that healthcare professionals will enter this debate and highlight the dangers of this Bill to change and skew the meaning of medicine.*

### **Take action**

*There are three important actions in the next weeks: praying, writing and sharing.*

*First, I ask you to pray that the Bill will be defeated.*

*Second, I ask you to write to the Peers from your personal experience and share stories which will argue the reasons for opposing the Bill as well as narrate the importance of precious time during the final stages of life.*

*The testimony of healthcare and legal professionals will also be important. This needs to be done before the Second Reading on 22 October.*

*Third, I ask you to engage and share stories and reasons against the Bill on social media.*

*Be assured of my prayers,*

+John

*Bishop John Sherrington*

*Lead Bishop for Life Issues*

*Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales*

## **Masses & Liturgies for the Coming Week...**

### **Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> September**

#### **5pm -5:50pm Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament**

The Holy Hour will be dedicated to praying for the defeat of the Assisted Dying Bill

#### **6pm Mass, Saint Matthew, Apostle & Evangelist (Feast)**

St. Matthew was born at Capernaum. He was a tax-gatherer when Jesus CALLED HIM. He wrote his Gospel in Hebrew and tradition has it that he preached the Faith in the East.

### **Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> September**

#### **10am Mass, Votive Mass of Saint Joseph**

'Joseph listened to the angel of the Lord and responded to God's call to care for Jesus and Mary. In this way he played his part in God's plan, and became a blessing not only for the Holy Family, but a blessing for all humanity.'  
Pope Francis

### **Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> September**

#### **10am Mass, Saint Pius of Pietrelcina (Memoria)**

St. Pius of Pietrelcina was born 25<sup>th</sup> May 1887. He entered the novitiate of the Capuchin Friars aged 16 and was ordained a priest in 1910. He lived a remarkable devotion to prayer and the sacraments. He committed himself to relieving the pain of many families, chiefly through the foundation of the "House for the Relief of Suffering". He died in 1968.

### **Friday 24<sup>th</sup> September**

#### **5pm – 5:50pm Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament**

The Holy Hour will be dedicated to praying for the defeat of the Assisted Dying Bill

#### **6pm Mass, Our Lady of Walsingham (Memoria)**

The lady of the manor of Walsingham, Richeldis de Faverches, was instructed by a vision of the Virgin Mary to build in her village a replica of the house of Nazareth in which the Annunciation had taken place. The vision occurred, according to tradition, in 1061 A.D.

The original house was destroyed at the Reformation, but during the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries pilgrimage to Walsingham was revived.

### **Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> September**

#### **9am – 9:50am Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament**

The Holy Hour will be dedicated to praying for the defeat of the Assisted Dying Bill

### **10am Votive Mass for Our Lady (Celebrated in the Lady Chapel)**

'Love our Lady. And she will obtain abundant grace to help you conquer in your daily struggle.'

*St. Josemaria Escriva*

### **6:30pm Vigil Mass for The Twenty Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time**

## **Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> September**

### **10am Mass for The Twenty Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time**

Following guidance from the diocese, we are still strongly encouraged to wear face masks in church Thank you for continuing to make St. Mary's a safe and prayerful place for the Glory of God.

## **Prayers & Blessings**

On Friday (17<sup>th</sup> Sept) one of our parishioners, Bridget Clarke, was accepted and enrolled as a Benedictine Oblate at Ampleforth Abbey in North Yorkshire. An Oblate is usually a lay person who chooses to live their Christian life in the light of Benedictine spirituality. They use the Rule of St. Benedict to guide their everyday lives at home, at work and within their local community. They daily pray with the Bible to listen to God as well as using the psalms to offer up prayers of praise, adoration and intercession. A Benedictine Oblate is also associated with a particular monastic community who they visit regularly. To be an Oblate is a vocation, a calling, and just as I'm sure Bridget will be praying for us, her parish family at St. Mary's, we also will be praying for her on this new stage of her faith journey.

## **Congratulations to Mr & Mrs Gilrane!**

On Saturday (18<sup>th</sup> September) we celebrated, at St. Mary's, the wedding of Mercedes Breslin and Luke Gilrane. May the Lord bless them, may Our Lady and St. Joseph always pray for them, and may the angels watch over them and keep their family safe. Amen.

## **First Holy Communion**

At the Friday evening Mass, Esmee, one of our younger parishioners made her First Holy Communion. Our prayer is that she will always treasure Our Lord's Body and Blood in the Blessed Sacrament throughout her life, realising what a privilege it is. God Bless you Esmee.

## **Holy Water Container**

At the weekend Masses we will bless a new and more substantial Holy Water container for church. As you will see it's a lot more accessible because of its height and the added feature of a tap. It's also a lot more hygienic because the water is properly contained and covered. Please feel free to take Holy Water back to your homes to bless yourselves and your families. If you bring an empty bottle to one of the stewards they will fill it up for you from the Holy Water container.

*'From long experience I have learned that there is nothing like holy water to put devils to flight and prevent them from coming back again. They also flee from the Cross, but return; so holy water must have great virtue. For my own part, whenever I use it, my soul feels a particular and most notable consolation.'* - St. Teresa of Avila

## **A fond farewell and a Welcome**

On Friday I was invited to St. Oswald's School to give a blessing for Mrs Debbie Marcroft, the school business manager, who retired after 17 years. We wish Debbie well and send her our prayers for the future. I also got to

meet and welcome Mrs Carolyn Mashiter to our parish. Mrs Mashiter is the new acting Headteacher at Sacred Heart School.

### **Christmas Crib Restoration update**

Lewis & Lewis have made contact about the restoration work on our three Shepherds and Ox.

They intend to *degrease and prepare all surfaces on the figures; Make good any repairs as necessary including hand & flute repairs; Repaint to a more natural appearance and add protective coatings.* The cost will be £1025. Thank you to all those who have so generously contributed towards this project. Next year, hopefully, we can send our three wise men away to be repaired and that would see the completion of our parish Christmas Crib set.

### **Diocesan Walk for our Climate**

On Sunday 10 October there will be a Walk for our Climate from Salford Cathedral to the Laudato Si' Centre. We will start with a prayer then depart from Salford Cathedral at 12.30pm, arriving at the Laudato Si' Centre around 3.30pm for a short service. The walk is approximately 8.6 miles long. En route, we will have the opportunity to take time to reflect on our care for our common home.

The reflections will take place in the churches listed below alongside the route and timings:

Route: <https://goo.gl/maps/SSy6VoL4Kf9AvsEE9>

Meet at Salford Cathedral piazza 12.15

Depart from Salford Cathedral 12.30

St James Church 13.00

St Peter and St Paul Church 13.45

St Charles Church 15.00

Laudato Si Centre 15.30

All are welcome to join us. You do not need to do the full 8.6 miles, you can meet us at one of the churches and walk part way or just come along for the reflections. For further information please contact [laudatosi@dioceseofsalford.org.uk](mailto:laudatosi@dioceseofsalford.org.uk)

### **The Covid Vaccine**

"Bishop John is urging all adults, who are able to do so, to be vaccinated. Pope Francis has reminded people of the duty to be vaccinated if they are able. The Church is clear that all Catholics can take any of the vaccines on offer with a clear conscience. Even if you are at a low risk of becoming seriously ill, being vaccinated will lower the risk of transmitting the virus to somebody else who might then have a severe reaction or even die. It is particularly important that those in our parishes, clergy and lay-people who visit those who are housebound or otherwise vulnerable are vaccinated."

### **Caritas Cornerstone's Big Sleep Out 2021**

It's not too late to sign up for Caritas Cornerstone's Big Sleep Out this September. The Big Sleep Out is returning this autumn with a special hybrid event, asking people to raise funds to support rough sleepers by sleeping outdoors overnight at Xaverian College, Manchester, from 7pm on Friday 17 September, or by "boycotting their bed" from their own home.

Due to the pandemic, last year's event was cancelled, and Caritas Cornerstone instead asked people to sleep somewhere other than their own bed. As a result, publicity and fundraising for the event was significantly affected, making this year's event even more needed to help continue its work supporting people who are street homeless, sofa-surfing, or without the security of a permanent home.

How to get involved:

Set up your Just Giving page at <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/BigSleepOut2021> This can be done whether you plan to be present on the night or at home boycotting your bed.

Register for the overnight event at Xaverian College at <https://cornerstonecds.org.uk/big-sleepout/> For further information, contact Rachel Taylor on 0161 817 2285, or email [fundraising@caritassalford.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@caritassalford.org.uk).

God Bless and keep praying.

Our Lady of Oswaldtwistle, pray for us.

Saint Joseph, pray for us.