

26<sup>th</sup> April 2026

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER – Year A

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC PARISHES OF MERTHYR TYDFIL

*Worshipping together*

St Aloysius, Chestnut Way, Gurnos, Merthyr Tydfil CF47 9SB    St Benedict's, Merthyr Vale CF48 4RF  
 St Mary's, Pontmorlais West, Merthyr Tydfil CF47 8RG    St Iltyd's, Dowlais, Merthyr Tydfil CF48 3BT  
**PRIEST IN CHARGE : FATHER FRANCIS ONU MSSCC**    TEL: 01685 723336.    Mobile 07376610747  
**ASSISTANT PRIEST : FATHER MORGAN OPARA MSS CC**    07806967503  
**Deacon: Rev. GARTH TASKER**    07939 310176

<b>Response to the Psalm:</b> <i>The Lord is my shepherd there is nothing I shall want.</i>	<b>Gospel Acclamation:</b> <b>Alleluia! Alleluia!</b> <i>I am the good shepherd, says the Lord. I know my sheep and my own know me.</i> <b>Alleluia! Alleluia!</b>	<b>Website: <a href="http://www.merthyrrc.co.uk">www.merthyrrc.co.uk</a></b> <b>Email: <a href="mailto:merthyr@cardiffmenevia.org">merthyr@cardiffmenevia.org</a></b> <b>Tel: 01685 723336</b>
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**A Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel,**

Defend us in battle.  
 Be our defense against the wickedness and snares of the Devil.  
 May God rebuke him, we humbly pray,  
 and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly hosts,  
 by the power of God, thrust into hell Satan,  
 and all the evil spirits, who prowl about the world  
 seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

**SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION**

*We will be holding penitential services on a Saturday morning at 11.30 in St Mary's Church*

<b>Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> April</b>		<b>Vigil – Fourth Sunday of Easter – Year A</b>
4.30 pm	St Benedicts	Bill Hughes; Claire Price; Pat Lee; Sheila Lewis; Bernard Donoghue; Ann and Jim Molloy; Gail Caviel; Connor Boggan;
6.30 pm	St Aloysius	Bernard & Mary Corcoran; Jimmy Mullan; Patricia Buckley; Angelo and Aldina Fulgoni;
<b>Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> April</b>		<b>Fourth Sunday of Easter – Year A</b>
9.30 am	St Iltyd's	Lilian Tomsett (Good Health); Stuart Phelps; Angela Jones;
11.30 am	St Mary's	Ron Morgan. Olive Mary McCormack; Bernard Walter McCormack; Paul and Stuart Bartz; John Druce; John and Ann Snell; John and Vera Strand; Margaret and Dave Jones; Thomas Bannon (Anniv);
<b>Monday 27<sup>th</sup> April</b>		
10.00 am	St Iltyd's	People of the Parish;
<b>Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> April</b>		<b>St Louis Grigon de Montfort</b>
10.00 am	St Mary's	
<b>7.00 pm</b>	<b>St Aloysius</b>	<b>Rosary at 6.30 pm followed by Mass</b>
<b>Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> April</b>		<b>St Catherine of Sienna</b>
10.00 am	St Mary's	
<b>Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> April</b>		<b>St Pius V, Pope</b>
10.00 am	St Mary's	
<b>7.00 pm</b>	<b>St Aloysius</b>	<b>Rosary at 6.30 pm followed by Mass</b>
<b>Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May</b>		<b>St Joseph the Worker</b>
10.00 am	St Iltyd's	Jeannette Herbert;
<b>Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> May</b>		<b>Vigil – Fifth Sunday of Easter – Year A</b>
4.30 pm	St Benedicts	Bill Hughes; Claire Price; Pat Lee; Sheila Lewis; Bernard Donoghue; Anne O'Sullivan; Michael Crotty;
6.30 pm	St Aloysius	Bernard & Mary Corcoran; Jimmy Mullan; Patricia Buckley; David and Beryl Keefe(72 <sup>nd</sup> Anniv.);
<b>Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> May</b>		<b>Fifth Sunday of Easter- Year A</b>
9.30 am	St Iltyd's	Maria Davies (Mothers Day); Nelly Mahoney (B'Day); Angela Maria Jones; Patrick Moran;
11.30 am	St Mary's	Ron Morgan. Olive Mary McCormack; Bernard Walter McCormack; Paul and Stuart Bartz; Michael Hurley; Louise Hopkins; Rebecca Hughes-Hall; Bess, Cliff and Carl Preece; Clive and Jason Watkins; David and Beryl Keefe(72 <sup>nd</sup> Anniv.);

**INFANT BAPTISMS**

*Registration for Infant Baptisms will take place after Sunday Mass at St Illtyd's and St Mary's. Baptisms will then take place after mass on a Saturday at St Illtyd's and on a Sunday at St Mary's.*

**Please remember in your prayers:** Peggy Vaughan, Tony Crawford, Beryl & David Keefe, Steven Denton Thomas, Teresa Jones, David Lewis; Veronica Rowlands; Paula Williams; Linda Sproles; Sylvia Williams, Jimmy Llewellyn; Mary Wade; Marlene Chambers; Phillip James Dennis Preece; Sheila Duffield; Josie Egan; Paddy Sullivan; Helen Golden; John Reynolds; Katie Coughlin; Jennifer Lewis;

**Requiescat in pace** Sandra Jones; Angela Jones; Patrick Moran; Paul Churchill; Marie Estelle Donovan; Timothy O'Sullivan; Gerald Harrington; Maureen Collins; Finbar Sullivan ; Pauline Lucy Giles; Stuart Phelps;

**Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in Peace. Amen.**

**FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER – YEAR A**

The 4th Sunday of Easter Year A is called Good Shepherd Sunday. On this day, we remember that Jesus is our Shepherd who leads and protects us. The readings tell us that those who listen to His voice find peace and new life. Peter calls people to turn away from sin and follow Jesus through baptism and faith.

Jesus says He is the gate for the sheep. He invites us to enter through Him and find safety, joy, and life in abundance. Like the early Christians, we are called to hear His voice and follow His way. This Sunday reminds us that we are never alone because our Shepherd always cares for us.

**COLLECTION THIS WEEKEND – PRIESTS TRAINING FUND**

There will be a Second collection this weekend - Good Shepherd Sunday - for the Priest Training Fund. Please support this worthy cause as you are able.

<b>St Illtyd's Lottery 19th April</b>	<b>St Mary's Lottery 19th April</b>
Numbers; 1, 10, 11, 14 Winner:	Numbers; 3, 6, 10, 23 No Winner
Next Draw 26 <sup>th</sup> April (£1125)	Next Draw 26 <sup>th</sup> April (£6050)

**MAY DEVOTIONS**

During the month of May, at 9.30 am the Rosary will be recited before each Mass along with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. Also, throughout May there will be Mass at 7.00 pm at St Aloysius with the Rosary at 6.30 pm

**WELSH NATIONAL PILGRIMAGE**

The Welsh National Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of the Taper, Cardigan, which will be led by the Rt Rev Peter Brignall – Bishop of Wrexham will take place on **Sunday 17 May 1.30pm – 5.45pm**

This event includes :- Confessions, Rosary Procession, Mass, Benediction and Blessing of the Sick

For further information contact Canon Pius Augustine on 01239 612 615

**BAPTISMS**

Congratulations to Florrie Marie Wilkshire, Sofiua Slaczka Maia and Alexandra Andrade Cassagne who will be Baptised today. Also congratulations to Ella Catherine Marsh who will be baptised on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> May.

**FOOD BANK**

Thank you for your continued support of the Food Bank..The food bank are looking for all food items i.e Tinned carrots, tinned meat, tinned fruit, tinned soup, tinned tomato, tinned rice pudding, long life milk, long life fruit juice, jams, mashed potato, cooking sauces, pot noodles, dog food

**VOCATION SUNDAY – A PASTORAL NEWSLETTER**

Archbishop Mark has written a pastoral letter to the Archdiocese of Cardiff, inviting all unmarried men who feel God may be calling them to the priesthood to take a first step in discernment. He invites every unmarried man who is open to this call to join him for **Evening Prayer at St David's Cathedral, Cardiff, on Sunday 31st May at 3:30pm**, followed by an opportunity to meet with the Archbishop and others exploring the same vocation. To watch Archbishop Mark read the pastoral scan the QR code below. To register your interest, please email [vocations@cardiffmenevia.org](mailto:vocations@cardiffmenevia.org).



ARCHBISHOP of CARDIFF-MENEVIA



ARCHESGOB CAERDYDD-MYNYW

**Pastoral Letter for the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter, the 25<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> April, 'Good Shepherd' - Vocations Sunday.**

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Since the age of 17 Jesus has exercised a particular attraction over my heart, which no other can replace. That attraction, the sense of being drawn to Him and wanting to respond in a concrete way, we describe as a Vocation. Today, we hear of the Good Shepherd who calls "his sheep by name and leads them" (John 10). The Lord invites each of us to follow Him in a particular way whether that is in marriage, the priesthood, religious life or as a single person living generously for others.

Today, I want to speak to you about something which is dear to my heart, namely vocations to the priesthood. We all know that without the priesthood there is no Mass, no sacraments. For this reason, priestly vocations are everyone's business. At present we have one seminarian preparing for the priesthood, with a significant number of others who are discerning a call to the priesthood with us. We are blessed to have priests who have come to minister among us from other lands. But it is not enough; we need to raise up more men for the priesthood from our own local Church.

Is the problem, that God is calling fewer to the priesthood? I think not. God is still calling; but many are not able to discern His call. When a vocation goes unanswered it is not only a sadness for the one who does not respond, but also a sadness for the entire Church, not to have that man as a priest. God, in His loving Providence, gives to the Church all the gifts she needs. The challenge today is not a lack of vocations, but rather a lack of responses.

We know that the joy of a priest is that he lends his voice to Christ at each Mass, as he says: "This is my Body. This is my Blood." It is the priest who is an instrument of Jesus' Mercy in the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. What a great privilege it is as a priest to visit the sick and dying and to anoint them in their suffering. As St John Vianney once said, "If we really understood the priesthood, we would die, not of fear, but of joy." It really is a wonderful life - challenging, yes, but truly joyful and bringing great fulfilment and happiness.

We cannot limit the horizons of the young by asking only, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" We must also ask "and what do you think God wants you to be?" We must help one another to look beyond careers and professions and to discern God's call to be holy, whether that holiness is to be lived out in marriage, in priesthood, in the permanent diaconate, in religious life, or in service of others.

In baptism, we are all called to holiness of life. A vocation to priesthood or religious life is a call to a radical form of discipleship that aspires to follow Jesus' teachings and example ever more closely. Priests are a varied and diverse group, and unmarried men can offer themselves for this vocation at different ages.

I am asking every unmarried man who is listening to this pastoral message – could Jesus be calling you to the priesthood? Would you like to take a first step in hearing more about this possibility? I invite you to join me on Sunday, 31<sup>st</sup> May for Evening Prayer (Vespers) at St David’s Cathedral in Cardiff at 3.30pm. Afterwards, there will be an opportunity to meet with me and other men interested in this vocation, 10 of whom recently attended a discernment retreat in St Non’s in Pembrokeshire. If you are 16 or 17 and would like to attend, then you can do so if you are accompanied by a parent or guardian. I ask all men who plan to attend to register their interest by emailing Fr Matt Roche-Saunders, the Vocations Director, on [Vocations@cardiffmenevia.org](mailto:Vocations@cardiffmenevia.org) The details are also on the diocesan website and in the parish newsletter. Alternatively, you can write to me directly at Archbishop’s House.

I invite every person listening to this pastoral message to pray earnestly for vocations to the priesthood in our Archdiocese. Too many vocations fall by the wayside due to peer pressure, or lack of encouragement. Parents, priests, catechists, teachers and fellow parishioners all have a part to play in encouraging vocations in our parishes, our schools, and especially in the accompaniment we offer to our young people.

May many be open to hearing Christ’s call in their lives and especially that many men, young and not so young, will be willing to offer themselves for the priesthood in our diocese. I ask you, too, to pray for me.

Yours devotedly,

Most Rev Mark O’Toole  
Archbishop of Cardiff-Menevia