



# The Parish of the Holy Family



Holy Ghost Church, Exmouth EX8 2JH  
St Peter, Prince of Apostles, Budleigh Salterton EX9 6RZ

www.holyghostexmouth.org.uk  
exmouth@prcdtr.org.uk

Registered Charity 213227

The Parish Office	The Presbytery, 11 Raddenstile Lane, Exmouth EX8 2JH	
The Parish Priest	Fr. Philip Austen	01395 263384
The Parish Office Manager	Jane Cheyne	01395 263384 fax 263594
The Deacon	Rev. Terry Enright	07977 446479
St Joseph's School		01395 264875
Chaplaincy Team Exeter Hospitals	Exeter	01392 642389

## WEEK 5 EASTER PS1

<b>Friday 1 May</b>	2.00 pm	Archibald Dominic & Eliza Smith Sligo RIP (F)
<b>Saturday 2 May</b>	8.00 pm	John Dawson Happy birthday
<b>Sunday 3 May</b>	10.00 am	Parish
<b>Tuesday 5 May at St. Peter, Prince of Apostles</b> <i>St Richard Reynolds Pr M</i>	11.00 am	Lily Savage RIP (F)
<b>Wednesday 6 May</b>	11.00 am	Jean Powell
<b>Friday 8 May</b>	<b>NO MASS</b>	
<b>Saturday 9 May</b>	5.00 pm	Parish

## WEEK 6 Easter A PS2

<b>Sunday 10 May</b>	10.00 am	Jim & Dorothy Gegg RIP
<b>Tuesday 12 May at St. Peter, Prince of Apostles</b>	11.00 am	
<b>Wednesday 13 May</b>	11.00 am	Jean Brooke RIP
<b>Thursday 14 May</b> <i>The Ascension of the Lord</i>	11.00 am	
<b>Friday 15 May</b>	2.00 pm	
<b>Saturday 16 May</b>	5.00 pm	Catherine Dogherty RIP

## WEEK 7 OF EASTER A PS3

<b>Sunday 17 May</b> <i>World Communications Day</i>	10.00 am	Parish
<b>Tuesday 19 May at St. Peter, Prince of Apostles</b>	11.00 am	
<b>Wednesday 20 May</b>	11.00 am	
<b>Friday 22 May</b>	2.00 pm	
<b>Saturday 23 May</b> <b>Vigil of Pentecost</b>	5.00 pm	Denis Mears RIP

## ORDINARY TIME AFTER EASTER (WEEK 8) A2 PS 4

<b>Sunday 24 May</b> <b>PENTECOST SUNDAY</b>	10.00 am	Parish
<b>Tuesday 26 May at St. Peter, Prince of Apostles</b> <i>St Philip Neri Pr</i>	11.00 am	
<b>Wednesday 27 May</b> <i>St Augustine of Canterbury Bp</i>	11.00 am	
<b>Friday 29 May</b>	2.00 pm	



## WELCOME TO OUR PARISH

*“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor.” Luke 4:18*

*A very warm welcome if you are visiting Exmouth and welcome back if we have not seen you for some time. Do pop into the hall after mass on Sunday for a complimentary cup of coffee. Fr. Philip*

**Please pray for** parishioners, family & friends, especially those who are sick, those undergoing medical procedures and in hospital and those feeling isolated in these challenging times. Please let me know if you are aware of anyone that would like to receive Holy Communion at home

**The Sacrament of Reconciliation** (Confession) is available by making an appointment with me, via the Parish Office.

**Sacramental Preparation in our Parish** – Baptism, First Communion & Confirmation. Please speak to Fr. Philip if you and your child is ready to take the next step of their Sacramental journey. My thanks to those catechists who give their time & support to our young people.

**Anyone wishing to receive the Blessed Sacrament at home, due to illness, should in the first instance please contact the Parish Office. Thank you.**

**The Feast of the Ascension** falls on the fortieth day after Easter Sunday. Saint John Chrysostom and Saint Augustine make reference to it, but it was probably Saint Gregory of Nyssa who influenced the propagation of the feast. **We will celebrate this Holy Day of Obligation on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> May at 11.00 am.**



*“The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had ordered them. When they saw him, they worshiped, but they doubted. Then Jesus approached and said to them, “All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.” (Mt 28:16-20)*

**The Feast of Pentecost** is celebrated on the 50th day after Easter and it commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles of Jesus, Mary, and other followers of the Christ, while they were in Jerusalem celebrating the Feast of Weeks, as described in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 2:1–31). Pentecost marks the "Birthday of the Church" and is our parish Feast Day

**COME AND MEET OUR GOSPEL SHARING GROUP...** *“You are invited to join us at Gospel Sharing in which we read through the readings for the following Sunday Masses and then share our thoughts on what “these readings say to us”. The discussions that follow are friendly and informal and very helpful to our understanding of the scriptures. We meet in St. Anne’s Cloister on **TUESDAY AFTERNOONS at 2.00pm** for about an hour.*



# The Diocese of Plymouth Summer Camps 2026

This Summer 2026,  
Junior Camp 26th-30th July

## 'Dilexi Te'

*I have loved you*

**Revelations 3:9**



The catechetical camps of The Diocese of Plymouth will be back in 2026—MARK YOUR CALENDARS! For further details and booking forms, keep an eye on our social media, the Diocesan youth newsletter or email us on [summercamps@prcdtr.org.uk](mailto:summercamps@prcdtr.org.uk)

### **Diocesan Newsletters:-**

<https://email.workwithgusto.co.uk/t/t-F236B443DD092B5F2540EF23F30FEDED>

<https://email.workwithgusto.co.uk/t/t-EB016AF080443C792540EF23F30FEDED>

*Thank you all for your donations for Easter flowers. Our small team did a tremendous job and I hope you were as pleased as I was. Thank you ladies for all the hours you spent planning, shopping, re potting, conditioning, arranging and watering the living arrangements. They were perfect to reflect the 800 anniversary of St. Francis.*

**Thank you to our wonderful Cleaning Team** – if you would like to help them once a month the next date is on Maundy Thursday morning at 11.00 am. Please come and help if you can spare an hour.



**ARE YOU GOING INTO HOSPITAL?** The Hospital Chaplaincy telephone number: 01392 402024. A message can always be left there. The Blessed Sacrament Presbytery number can also be used: 01392 274724. It is now more difficult for members of the clergy to request information regarding your stay in hospital, including which Ward you are in. This is now regarded as confidential information and will not readily be supplied to any caller without the specific permission of the patient. If you are

admitted to hospital and would like a member of The Chaplaincy Team to visit you –

**DO .....** Please inform the Chaplaincy Department which ward you expect to be on and when you will be there, if you know in advance that you are going into hospital. Specifically inform a member of the ward staff that you would like to be visited by a chaplain ensuring that you state which denomination you belong to. Inform your relatives about your wishes concerning visits from a chaplain if you are taken into hospital unexpectedly. Your relatives can then notify the Chaplaincy Department

**DON'T....** Just presume that the chaplains will hear about your stay in hospital – they probably won't. DON'T expect ward staff automatically to let the chaplains know you are in hospital.

**ACT.....** If you wish to be visited by a member of The Chaplaincy Team during your stay in hospital, the Hospital Chaplaincy telephone number: 01392 402024. A message can always be left there. The Blessed Sacrament Presbytery number can also be used: 01392 274724.

**Marriage support** - Does your relationship need some TLC? Need help with deeper issues? Next programme starts 17th October [www.retrouville.org.uk](http://www.retrouville.org.uk) Tel: +44 7887 296 983

**Dates for the Craft Club is March 7th. 10.00am start - - coffee and cake available. All most welcome**



**The Knit & Natter group** invite you to join them on 4<sup>th</sup> May, 1<sup>st</sup> June and 6<sup>th</sup> July. All very welcome to come and see, and have a cuppa & cake as well!

**Please come and help** our little cleaning team for an hour. They meet after the 11.00 mass and the next dates are: 6th May. 3rd June. 1st July.

**The Holy Family Ladies Group** meet on the 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month in the parish hall between 2.00 pm and 4.00 pm. Why not drop in and have tea with them. All welcome.

7th May. CD by Ronald Rolheiser

21st May Bingo

4th June June's DVD - part three

18th June A talk by Coast Watch

2nd July The pilgrims tales from Assisi

16th July TBA



**Coffee is being served! Do join us after mass on Sundays and at St. Peter, Prince of Apostles** on the first Tuesday of the month. We are working hard towards being a coin-free parish so on the occasions where refreshments are paid for, a pre-paid loyalty card (costing £10.00.) will provide for coffee-tea-biscuits for 6 occasions.

Thank you to our hospitality team for welcoming you each week.

**An invitation to survivors** We have two survivor groups in the diocese that have now been running for over a year, which provide an opportunity for anyone with lived experience of abuse to share their thoughts and ideas about survivor support work in our diocese. We are grateful to all those who so generously give of their time to attend these meetings. The diocese would welcome the opportunity to hear from others who have a lived experience of abuse, so that we can involve them in the work we are doing to support survivors. If you would like to help us with this work, or you would like to find out more, please contact: Sophie Scagell (Survivor Support Caseworker) on 01364 645436 / [sophie.scagell@prcdtr.org.uk](mailto:sophie.scagell@prcdtr.org.uk)

**Following the most recent instructions from the Diocesan Safeguarding Team** and in line with the CSSA 'Creating a Safer Environment', entry to the Sacristy from the Church must be recorded. In our situation, only liturgical ministers and servers have the right of access and regrettably, passage to the Presbytery via the Sacristy is no longer available to anyone else, when there are servers present.

**Health & Safety Notice** When you are in church, or on parish premises, please make sure that you are aware of the exits. In the unlikely event of having to vacate the church unexpectedly, during a service, please follow the instructions of the priest and our stewards. They will direct you to the nearest exit. Please vacate promptly. Thank you for helping us keep you safe

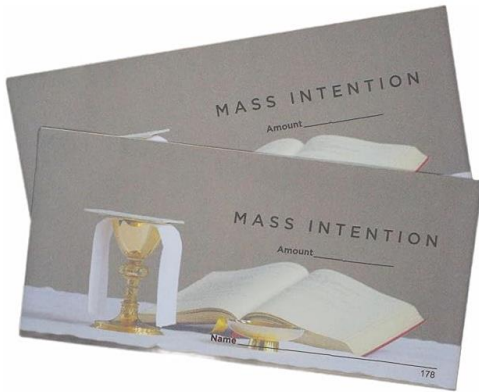
**As a Parish, the safety of our children is paramount. Please accompany your children at all times.** Sad though it may seem to have to point out, there could be dangers when children are left unsupervised in the parish grounds. Sad though it seems to have to draw attention to this, there is not only the risk of a traffic accident if a youngster were to run into the road but we must also be aware that there are individuals who do not have the wellbeing of children as a priority.

**Thank you for your support of our parish through your monthly donations.** If you give regularly by bankers order, please can you consider increasing your donation - at the moment our income from monthly donations does not cover our outgoings and just a small increase from everyone would make a huge difference to meeting our costs. If you are a taxpayer, please speak to Wendy Davis who will be happy to explain how your donation can be boosted, at absolutely no extra cost to yourselves. If you would like a copy of the end of year accounts please contact the parish office. Thank you for your support.

**Diocese of Plymouth newsletter:** We have created a special edition newsletter sharing images and reflections from Holy Week & Easter <https://email.workwithgusto.co.uk/t-t-A79280C8C13121D82540EF23F30FEDED>.

## A Deeper Dive into the Catechism of the Catholic Church

Monday evenings at 7pm online, from Monday April 13, 2026. Spend just one hour a week with others online, going gently but deeply and prayerfully into the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Sessions are for catechists, those who hope to be catechists, those seeking to know more about their faith, anyone interested in discovering more about the teaching of the Church, in fact anyone who is interested. To find out more, or receive a link please contact [deborah.vankroonenburg@prcdtr.org.uk](mailto:deborah.vankroonenburg@prcdtr.org.uk)



**Mass Intention Envelopes** now available in the Cloister. Please complete the details on the reverse of the envelope and drop into the office with plenty of notice of your preferred date.

It is customary to include a donation for the support of the priest.

Thank you



## WE'RE HIRING A CLEANER - ST. RICHARD REYNOLDS CENTRE, BLESSED SACRAMENT, EXETER

We are recruiting a Cleaner for the St. Richard Reynolds Centre in the Blessed Sacrament Parish, Exeter reporting to the Parish Priest.

The purpose of the role is to maintain the cleanliness of the St. Richard Reynolds Centre so that it is a clean, safe and pleasant environment for parishioners and other users.

If you have some cleaning experience, an understanding of the requirements of Health & Safety legislation and the ability to manage time effectively, we would love to hear from you!

**Hours: 6 hours a week (Monday & Friday)**

**Location: St. Richard Reynolds Centre, 29 Fore Street, Heavitree, Exeter, EX1 2QJ**

**Salary: £13.45 an hour**

**Closing date: Monday 27 April 2026**



**To apply, please contact [recruitment@prcdtr.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@prcdtr.org.uk) to obtain an application form and job description.**

**Applications are by application form to [recruitment@prcdtr.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@prcdtr.org.uk)**

**Churches Pray in May with Mary's Meals** **Mary's Meals** – named after Mary, the mother of Jesus – is a mission built on a foundation of prayer. Today more than three million precious children will receive life-changing school meals in some of the world's poorest communities thanks to the prayers and generosity of our supporters and volunteers. This May, please join us in praying for the hungry children who rely on Mary's Meals, and for all the children and families around the world who live in poverty. Visit [www.marysmeals.org.uk/prayinmay](http://www.marysmeals.org.uk/prayinmay) to access our prayer resources.

St. Rita's Centre, Honiton, Devon

## **FEAST OF ST. RITA OF CASCIA**

**Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2026**

Mass at 12 noon  
followed by the Blessing and  
Distribution of Roses for the sick  
3 pm Benediction

**Principal Celebrant:**

**Father JOSE ROMERO OAR**

You are all very welcome to join us, hot drinks are available all day. Please bring a packed lunch.

Two shops will be open that day for sale of religious articles; you can also make your order on our website and collect your items on site on the feast day.



admin@stritascentre.org | Tel: 01404 42635 | [www.stritascentre.org](http://www.stritascentre.org)



**PRAY  
IN MAY**



Mary's Meals is a movement of people who are committed to tackling world hunger through one simple solution: providing a daily meal for every child at school. During the month of May, we'd like to invite you to join us in praying for this work and for all those connected with Mary's Meals around the world.

### The Mary's Meals Prayer

Our Father,

Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us for the times when we take more than our share of the bread that belongs to all.

Let us help You fill the starving with good things, and not with scraps from our table.

Teach us how to share what is not ours to keep.

Clothe us with Your love that we may complete each good work You created us to do.

Place in our hearts Your compassion for each starving child and use our little acts of love so that they may starve no more.

Amen

### Prayer points



#### Week one: Families – *Ephesians 3:14-19*

**Pray** that God the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, will reach out in mercy to all the families Mary's Meals serves across the world.



#### Week two: An end to world hunger – *John 6:1-13*

**Pray** that God, who fed the five thousand with only five loaves and two fish, will feed all the children around the world who are hungry today.

**Pray** especially for the children of Haiti – who are living through the worst hunger crisis in the country's history – and for all those suffering from natural disasters, such as flooding or drought.



#### Week three: Peace – *Luke 1:76-79*

**Pray** that God will bring peace to troubled situations around the world, remembering especially children and families in South Sudan, Lebanon, and Haiti.

**Pray** that God will guide our feet into the way of peace.

**Pray** for Mary's Meals staff, volunteers and partners working tirelessly in the midst of conflict to provide the lifeline of daily school meals.



#### Week four: Generosity – *2 Corinthians 9:10-12*

**Pray** to God for the gift of generosity, that we may be generous in every way and so produce thanksgiving to God.

**Pray** that God will open the hearts of people across the world to the needs of children and the cries of the poor, inspiring them to get involved in missions such as Mary's Meals.



#### Week five: Hope – *Romans 12:11-13*

**Pray** that Mary's Meals may bring hope to more children and communities in apparently hopeless situations.

**Pray** that we may bring hope in our own communities.

**Pray** to God that we too may rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, and be constant in prayer.

Find out more about the story of Mary's Meals and how you can support our work on our [website](#), or by requesting a free copy of our Founder's book '[The Shed That Fed 2 Million Children](#)' for your church or group.



## Great West Run Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2026 Half marathon

### PARISHIONER FUNDRAISING APPEALS

#### Liz's story



My son Dan and I are running the Great West Run half marathon. We are running in support of **Open Door Exmouth** - a local charity that has been caring for our community for over 30 year's. Open Door provides safe, welcoming spaces for people of all ages who need support, connection or simply someone to listen. Through services like the Community Cafe, Youth project, Support Service, Parent Hub, Craft Room and Men's Shed, they walk alongside people facing homelessness, loneliness, mental health struggles and those facing life's toughest moment's.

As a volunteer, Open Door is an organisation close to my heart as I get to see all of the amazing work they do first-hand. EVERY donation helps them continue offering compassion, practical help and hope in Exmouth.

Thank you for supporting our run and this amazing charity.  
Liz McFadden

<https://www.justgiving.com/page/elizabeth-mcfadden-1?newPage=true>



#### Elisabeth's story



Hi everyone!

I'm running this half marathon to support FORCE Cancer Charity, a cause that is very close to my heart. Close family and special friends of mine have faced cancer, and throughout their journeys they received invaluable support that helped them through treatment and recovery. Seeing first-hand the difference that compassionate care and specialist services can make has inspired me to give something back.

By taking on this challenge, I hope to raise funds and awareness so that FORCE can continue helping individuals and families affected by cancer. Every mile I run is in honour of those close to me, and for everyone currently navigating their own cancer journey.

Thank you so much for supporting Force and the tremendous work they do.

[https://www.justgiving.com/page/elisabethforce?utm\\_medium=FR&utm\\_source=CL&utm\\_campaign=021](https://www.justgiving.com/page/elisabethforce?utm_medium=FR&utm_source=CL&utm_campaign=021)



and even more fundraising....

## Geoff's story

*Rowcroft Hospice is an incredible charity, supporting those suffering from life-limiting illnesses and their families, at home or at Rowcroft itself free of charge. Staff dedicate themselves to supporting others, giving specialist nursing care to over 2,500 people each year.*



*Through my work at Buckfast Abbey, I have met many of these wonderful staff and heard stories from the loved ones of those who have benefited from everything Rowcroft has to offer. As I get older and begin to lose some of those dear to me, the efforts of Hospices like Rowcroft become even more of an inspiration.*

*As a keen runner, approaching my 50th birthday, I felt that I needed a special challenge to mark this milestone. An inspiring first competitive run abroad in Palma Majorca was the catalyst for this goal and if all goes well, I will be returning back to Majorca to compete in my 50th half marathon just days after my 50th birthday. In order to achieve this, I will need to run a half marathon nearly every week. A few of these will be competitive runs but the majority will be just me, Devon lanes and 13.1 miles (and this winter, a headtorch!) **THANK YOU***









*Geoff Pring, Director of Visitor Experience, Buckfast Abbey*  
[Geoff Pring is fundraising for Rowcroft Hospice](#)



By supporting CAFOD's this Lent, you're being the good neighbour Jesus calls us to be – loving others as we love ourselves

### Ways to give hope ...

You can.....

-  Donate by post
-  Donate by phone
-  Donate by bank transfer
-  Donate by direct debit
-  Text to donate
-  Please see [cafod@cafod.org.uk](mailto:cafod@cafod.org.uk)

Tel +44 (0)303 303 3030

CAFOD Romero House 55 Westminster Bridge Road London SE1 7JB (Please make cheques payable to CAFOD)



We can help with fundraising ideas! Reach out to learn more



7 DAYS

# Pilgrimage to Lourdes

TRIP 1  
Fri 25 Sep - Fri 2 Oct '26

TRIP 2  
Fri 16 Oct - Fri 23 Oct '26

**£1,695\*** pp, includes volunteer support  
**£1,270\*** pp, no volunteer support required

\*single supplement applies if applicable

### INCLUDED

- All transport
- 5 nights' accommodation
- Breakfasts
- Dinners
- Activities as shown

### ACTIVITIES

- Candlelight mass
- Visits to churches & surrounding town
- Day trip to Gavarnie

### ADDITIONAL COSTS

- Lunch & drinks

### SERVICE STATION PICK UPS CLOSE TO:

- TRIP 1 LEEDS, BIRMINGHAM, MILTON KEYNES, NORTH LONDON, ESSEX
- TRIP 2 EXETER, BRISTOL, READING, SOUTH LONDON, SUSSEX, KENT

scan for enquiry form



email  
[info@jumbulance.org.uk](mailto:info@jumbulance.org.uk)

call  
**01702 419 128**

### COACH FEATURES:

- Experienced driver assistance
- Can travel in wheelchair
- Lift access
- Accessible toilet
- Kitchen facilities

**MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE LEO XIV  
FOR THE 60<sup>TH</sup> WORLD DAY OF SOCIAL COMMUNICATIONS**



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**Preserving Human Voices and Faces**

*Dear brothers and sisters,*

Our faces and voices are unique, distinctive features of every person; they reveal a person's own unrepeatable identity and are the defining elements of every encounter with others. The ancients understood this well. To define the human person, the ancient Greeks used the word "face" (*prósōpon*), because it expresses etymologically what is before one's gaze, the place of presence and relationship. The Latin term "person" (from *per-sonare*), on the other hand, evokes the idea of sound: not just any sound, but the unmistakable sound of someone's voice.

Faces and voices are sacred. God, who created us in his image and likeness, gave them to us when he called us to life through the Word he addressed to us. This Word resounded down the centuries through the voices of the prophets, and then became flesh in the fullness of time. We too have heard and seen this Word (cf. *1 Jn 1:1-3*) — in which God communicates his very self to us — because it has been made known to us in the voice and face of Jesus, the Son of God.

From the moment of creation, God wanted man and woman to be his interlocutors, and, as Saint Gregory of Nyssa [\[1\]](#) explained, he imprinted on our faces a reflection of divine love, so that we may fully live our humanity through love. Preserving human faces and voices, therefore, means preserving this mark, this indelible reflection of God's love. We are not a species composed of predefined biochemical formulas. Each of us possesses an irreplaceable and inimitable vocation, that originates from our own lived experience and becomes manifest through interaction with others.

If we fail in this task of preservation, digital technology threatens to alter radically some of the fundamental pillars of human civilization that at times are taken for granted. By simulating human voices and faces, wisdom and knowledge, consciousness and responsibility, empathy and friendship, the systems known as artificial intelligence not only interfere with information ecosystems, but also encroach upon the deepest level of communication, that of human relationships.

The challenge, therefore, is not technological, but anthropological. Safeguarding faces and voices ultimately means safeguarding ourselves. Embracing the opportunities offered by digital technology and artificial intelligence with courage, determination and discernment does not mean turning a blind eye to critical issues, complexities and risks.

*Do not renounce your ability to think*

There has long been abundant evidence that algorithms designed to maximize engagement on social media — which is profitable for platforms — reward quick emotions and penalize more time-consuming human responses such as the effort required to understand and reflect. By grouping people into bubbles of easy consensus and easy outrage, these algorithms reduce our ability to listen and think critically, and increase social polarization.

This is further exacerbated by a naive and unquestioning reliance on artificial intelligence as an omniscient “friend,” a source of all knowledge, an archive of every memory, an “oracle” of all advice. All of this can further erode our ability to think analytically and creatively, to understand meaning and distinguish between syntax and semantics.

Although AI can provide support and assistance in managing tasks related to communication, in the long run, choosing to evade the effort of thinking for ourselves and settling for artificial statistical compilations threatens to diminish our cognitive, emotional and communication skills.

In recent years, artificial intelligence systems have increasingly taken control of the production of texts, music and videos. This puts much of the human creative industry at risk of being dismantled and replaced with the label “Powered by AI,” turning people into passive consumers of unthought thoughts and anonymous products without ownership or love. Meanwhile, the masterpieces of human genius in the fields of music, art and literature are being reduced to mere training grounds for machines.

The question at heart, however, is not what machines can or will be able to do, but what we can and will be able to achieve, by growing in humanity and knowledge through the wise use of the powerful tools at our service. Individuals have always sought to acquire the fruits of knowledge without the effort required by commitment, research and personal responsibility. However, renouncing creativity and surrendering our mental capacities and imagination to machines would mean burying the talents we have been given to grow as individuals in relation to God and others. It would mean hiding our faces and silencing our voices.

*To be or to pretend to be: simulating relationships and reality*

As we scroll through our feeds, it becomes increasingly difficult to determine whether we are interacting with other human beings or with “bots” or “virtual influencers.” The less-than-transparent interventions of these automated agents influence public debates and people’s choices. Chatbots based on large language models (LLMs) are proving to be surprisingly effective at covert persuasion through continuous optimization of personalized interaction. The dialogic, adaptive, mimetic structure of these language models is capable of imitating human feelings and thus simulating a relationship. While this anthropomorphization can be entertaining, it is also deceptive, particularly for the most vulnerable. Because chatbots are excessively “affectionate,” as well as always present and accessible, they can become hidden architects of our emotional states and so invade and occupy our sphere of intimacy.

Technology that exploits our need for relationships can lead not only to painful consequences in the lives of individuals, but also to damage in the social, cultural and political fabric of society. This occurs when we substitute relationships with others for AI systems that catalogue our thoughts, creating a world of mirrors around us, where everything is made “in our image and likeness.” We are thus robbed of the opportunity to

encounter others, who are always different from ourselves, and with whom we can and must learn to relate. Without embracing others, there can be no relationships or friendships.

Another major challenge posed by these emerging systems is that of bias, which leads to acquiring and transmitting an altered perception of reality. AI models are shaped by the worldview of those who build them and can, in turn, impose these ways of thinking by reproducing the stereotypes and prejudices present in the data they draw on. A lack of transparency in algorithmic programming, together with the inadequate social representation of data, tends to trap us in networks that manipulate our thoughts and prolong and intensify existing social inequalities and injustices.

The stakes are high. The power of simulation is such that AI can even deceive us by fabricating parallel “realities,” usurping our faces and voices. We are immersed in a world of multidimensionality where it is becoming increasingly difficult to distinguish reality from fiction.

Inaccuracy only exacerbates this problem. Systems that present statistical probability as knowledge are, at best, offering us approximations of the truth, which are sometimes outright delusions. Failure to verify sources, coupled with the crisis in field reporting, which involves constantly gathering and verifying information in the places where events occur, can further fuel disinformation, causing a growing sense of mistrust, confusion, and insecurity.

### *A possible alliance*

Behind this enormous invisible force that affects us all, there are only a handful of companies, whose founders were recently presented as the creators of the “Person of the Year 2025,” or the architects of artificial intelligence. This gives rise to significant concerns about the oligopolistic control of algorithmic systems and artificial intelligence, which are capable of subtly influencing behaviour and even rewriting human history — including the history of the Church — often without us really realizing it.

The task laid before us is not to stop digital innovation, but rather to guide it and to be aware of its ambivalent nature. It is up to each of us to raise our voice in defence of human persons, so that we can truly assimilate these tools as allies.

This alliance is possible but needs to be based on three pillars: *responsibility*, *cooperation* and *education*.

First of all, *responsibility*. Depending on the role we play, responsibility can be understood as honesty, transparency, courage, farsightedness, the duty of sharing knowledge or the right to be informed. As a general principle, however, no one can elude personal responsibility for the future we are building.

For those at the helm of online platforms, this means ensuring that their business strategies are not guided solely by the criterion of profit maximization, but also by a forward-looking vision that considers the common good, just as each of them cares for the well-being of their own children.

The creators and developers of AI models are invited to practice transparency and socially responsibility in regard to the design principles and moderation systems underlying their algorithms and the models they develop, in order to promote informed consent on the part of users.

The same responsibility is also required of national legislators and supranational regulators, whose task it is to ensure respect for human dignity. Appropriate regulation can protect individuals from forming emotional attachments to chatbots and curb the spread of false, manipulative or misleading content, safeguarding the integrity of information as opposed to its deceptive simulation.

Media and communication companies, for their part, cannot allow algorithms designed to capture a few extra seconds of attention at any cost, to prevail over their professional values, which are aimed at seeking the truth. Public trust is earned by accuracy and transparency, not by chasing after any kind of possible engagement. Content generated or manipulated by AI are to be clearly marked and distinguished from content created by humans. The authorship and sovereign ownership of the work of journalists and other content creators must be protected. Information is a public good. A constructive and meaningful public service is not based on opacity, but on the transparency of sources, the inclusion of those involved and high-quality standards.

We are all called upon to *cooperate*. No sector can tackle the challenge of steering digital innovation and AI governance alone. Safeguards must therefore be put in place. All stakeholders — from the tech industry to legislators, from creative companies to academia, from artists to journalists and educators — must be involved in building and implementing informed and responsible digital citizenship.

*Education* aims to do precisely this: To increase our personal ability to think critically; evaluate whether our sources are trustworthy and the possible interests behind selecting the information we have access to; to understand the psychological mechanisms involved; and to enable our families, communities and associations to develop practical criteria for a healthier and more responsible culture of communication.

For this reason, it is increasingly urgent to introduce media, information and AI literacy into education systems at all levels, as already promoted by some civil institutions. As Catholics, we can and must contribute to this effort, so that individuals — especially young people — can acquire critical thinking skills and grow in freedom of spirit. This literacy should also be integrated into broader lifelong learning initiatives, reaching out to older adults and marginalized members of society, who often feel excluded and powerless in the face of rapid technological change.

Media, information and AI literacy will help individuals avoid conforming to the anthropomorphizing tendencies of AI systems and enable them to treat these systems as tools and always employ external validation of the sources provided by AI systems — which could be inaccurate or incorrect. Literacy will also allow for better privacy and data protection through increased awareness of security parameters and complaint options. It is important to educate ourselves and others about how to use AI intentionally, and in this context to protect our image (photos and audio), our face and our voice, to prevent them from being used in the creation of harmful content and behaviours such as digital fraud, cyberbullying and deepfakes, which violate people's privacy and intimacy without their consent. Just as the industrial revolution called for basic literacy to enable people to respond to new developments, so too does the digital revolution require digital literacy (along with humanistic and cultural education) to understand how algorithms shape our perception of reality, how AI biases work, what mechanisms determine the presence of certain content in our feeds, what the economic principles and models of the AI economy are and how they might change.

We need faces and voices to speak for people again. We need to cherish the gift of communication as the deepest truth of humanity, to which all technological innovation should also be oriented.

In outlining these reflections, I thank all those who are working towards the goals delineated above, and I cordially bless all those who work for the common good through the media.

From the Vatican, 24 January 2026, Memorial of Saint Francis de Sales

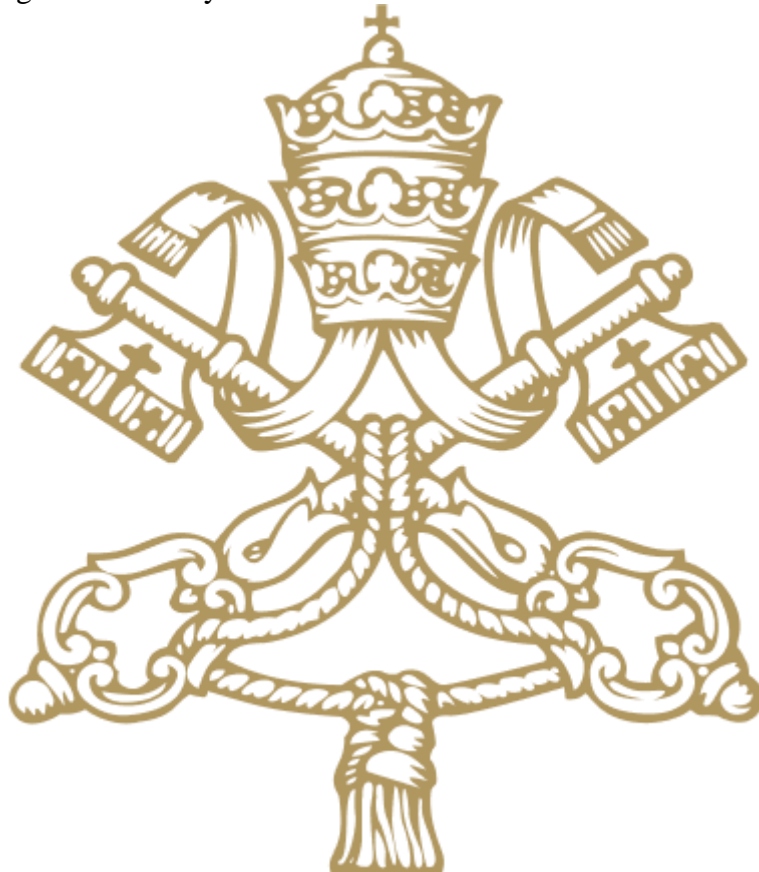
LEO PP. XIV

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[1] “The fact of being created in the image of God means that, from the moment of his creation, man has been imprinted with a regal character [...]. God is love and the fount of love: the Fashioner of our nature has made this to be our feature too, so that through love — a reflection of divine love — human beings may recognize and manifest the dignity of their nature and their likeness to their Creator” (cf. Saint Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Making of Man*: PG 44, 137).

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**THE HOLY SEE**

# RESIDENTIAL RETREATS

Diocese of Plymouth 2026

INDIVIDUALLY GUIDED RETREATS ARE LED BY EXPERIENCED MEMBERS OF THE  
PLYMOUTH DIOCESAN IGNATIAN SPIRITUALITY GROUP WHO HAVE RECEIVED  
TRAINING IN IGNATIAN SPIRITUALITY

## SUMMER - RESIDENTIAL RETREATS

Jun 26<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> Jun (Fri - Sun) Weekend Retreat

Jun 26<sup>th</sup> – 1st July (Fri - Wed) Extended Weekend



An Individually Guided Retreat offers each person the opportunity to step back from everyday life to help review their journey in faith, offering space and SILENCE for prayer. - Each retreatant meets a Spiritual Companion daily and together they discuss how best to use the time of retreat. The Companion will help you to pray using scripture and your own experience of life. Together you will try to discern what God is saying to you at this time. The retreat is made in SILENCE to help you to pray and to leave other retreatants equal opportunity for reflection. These SILENT RETREATS in the Ignatian tradition are open to Christians of any denomination.

### VENUE: SCLERDER RETREAT HOUSE (Chemin Neuf)

The retreat house with its large garden and pleasant rural walks nearby is situated near Looe. (Sclerder Lane, Looe, Cornwall PL13 2JD)

Once a Carmelite Monastery, it offers simple accommodation, but not suitable for those with mobility issues.

Retreat cost includes full board & lodging.

Recommended donation: Weekend Retreat £160;

Extended Weekend Retreat £350.

**Residential Retreats** - for further information, to check availability, or to book

telephone Wendy on: 01752 769164 or 07823447637 or email: [Plymouth Diocesan Ignatian Spirituality Group](mailto:Plymouth Diocesan Ignatian Spirituality Group) [diocesan-ignatian-retreats@prcdtr.org.uk](mailto:diocesan-ignatian-retreats@prcdtr.org.uk)

### Laudato Si Week

Laudato Si week will be celebrated on 17<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> May this year. To celebrate, why not hold a picnic with your community to enjoy the beauty of Creation around you. You may like to hold this on the 16<sup>th</sup> of May as a moment of reflection before the week begins, so that your hearts will be in a disposition to enjoy the wonders of Creation that God reveals to you during the Laudato Si week.

### God's Wild Acre

Caritas invites you to take part in a new project – God's Wild Acre. Do you have a little space in your garden, a window box, or any area you can give to encourage nature to do what it does best? We would like to reach an acre of land that has been set aside to celebrate creation's wild growing. Please send us your stories, images and size of your plot so that we can share them on our media streams [caritas@prcdtr.org.uk](mailto:caritas@prcdtr.org.uk)

Zoom out



DIOCESE OF PLYMOUTH



caritas

diocese of plymouth

*God blessed them and told them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth; subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the seas and over the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves upon the earth." Genesis 1:28*

CARITAS DIOCESE OF PLYMOUTH INVITES YOU TO  
PARTICIPATE IN A NEW PROJECT:

## God's Wild Acre



**In this year of St. Francis we invite you to make a renewed commitment to care for creation.**

We are seeking those who would be happy to leave a little space for creation to go wild. This could be in your garden, a window box, or any space you can give to encourage nature to do what it does best. We want to encourage the biodiversity in our diocese to thrive.

**If you would like to help, then leave a space for nature to get started.**

**We would love to collect stories and images of the wonderful new beauty that you will find. If you are happy for them to be shared on our media streams then please do send us your photos with measurements of how big a space you have grown. We would love to add the sizes together to give a whole acre back to God. We will start to share the results during Laudato Si week 17 - 24<sup>th</sup> of May.**

You can send your images and measurements to [caritas@prcdtr.org.uk](mailto:caritas@prcdtr.org.uk)

CARITAS DIOCESE OF PLYMOUTH  
REGISTERED CHARITY: 1205486  
ST. BONIFACE HOUSE, ASHBURTON, NEWTON ABBOT TQ12 7JL TEL:  
01364 645360  
EMAIL: [CARITAS@PRCDTR.ORG.UK](mailto:CARITAS@PRCDTR.ORG.UK)

A project inspired by Bidford OCIA  
Whose prayerful preparation for being  
received into the body of Christ led to this  
wonderful idea.

## Pictures tell the story!!



Sr. Clare would like to thank everyone who made her anniversary so very special, the prayers, cards, gifts and to all those who helped make the day so wonderful. It was a truly memorable occasion. **Congratulations Sr. Clare.**



Convent girls' reunion!



## **We're Hiring a Communications Officer!**

We are recruiting a Communications Officer working 35 hours a week based at St Boniface House with regular attendance at Cathedral House.

The Diocese of Plymouth is looking for a creative, hands-on Communications Officer to lead and deliver engaging communications across Devon, Cornwall & Dorset. This role will support the Diocese in telling the Church's story, demonstrating Catholic witness and highlighting the Church's contribution to society across Devon, Cornwall & Dorset.

This is a varied role combining strategy and delivery, taking ownership of digital content, social media, newsletters and website communications. You will work closely with the Bishop, clergy, staff and parish communities to ensure messaging is clear, timely and aligned with the Diocese's mission. The role requires strong relationship management alongside the ability to create compelling content using tools such as Canva and social platforms.

We are seeking a self-motivated and experienced communications professional, ideally with not-for-profit experience, who understands and supports the values of the Catholic Church and can engage a wide and diverse audience. Please note that this role requires travel across the Diocese and so a driving licence and access to a personal vehicle is essential.

- **Hours:** 35 hours a week (a request for slightly reduced hours is welcome)
- **Location:** St Boniface House, Ashburton, Newton Abbot, TQ13 7JL, with regular attendance at Cathedral House, 45 Cecil Street, Plymouth, PL1 5HW, plus some out of hours work
- **Salary:** £45,000-£49,000 per annum, depending on experience
- **Closing date:** Monday 11 May 2026 at 12pm

For more information and/or an application form, please contact Avocet Commercial Careers. Email: [sophia@avocetlegal.co.uk](mailto:sophia@avocetlegal.co.uk) Telephone: 01392 642518

## 'Finding yourself in Assisi'

We have just returned from our parish pilgrimage to Assisi, in the 800<sup>th</sup> Year commemorating St. Francis. We were also able to visit the tomb of our newest saint, Carlo Arcutis and had a fascinating introduction to the young saint by a local expert, Gwen Wiseman.



Our pilgrims met daily for meals, morning, evening & night prayer and we celebrated mass together. Fr. Philip and Monsignor Keith Mitchell led the liturgies and this provided a framework for our days together. Our 4 groups were given the space and time to visit the places associated with St. Francis and St. Carlo at their own pace and this seemed to be appreciated by the group, ranging in age from 10 – 80ish!!

Fr. Philip carried with him the prayer intentions of the children from St. Joseph's School and they were presented at the mass in the convent chapel and at the mass at the tomb of St. Francis.



Please see the reviews sent in by the pilgrims so far and read for yourself about the time they had in Assisi.....

*'This year's pilgrimage was our fifth visit to Assisi. Some pilgrims have managed all five and some were new to the town. It seems that regardless of the number of visits, the experience is always fruitful and 'new'.*



*Everyone enjoyed the hospitality of the joyous and lovely Francescane Alcantarine Sisters whose convent we stayed in. The accommodation was very comfortable and the food gets better with every visit!*

*People appreciated getting to know others better and as one pilgrim put it...“finding a common bond in the faith...(was)...pleasantly surprising!”*

*All of us were imbued with the Franciscan values of Pax et Bonum or Peace and Goodwill.*

*Our leisurely time-table and the excellent weather allowed plenty of recourse to savour the beautiful surroundings of Assisi. The plains and hillsides of verdant flora and fauna such as swifts, swallows, butterflies, wild flowers, trees and even the occasional green lizard!*

*The town of Assisi itself is famously steeped in historic and religious significance. Basilica, cathedrals, churches, chapels and religious houses abound alongside other special sites which inevitably evoke some very moving personal experiences. (e.g. the Carceri or Hermitage on the hillside of Mount Subasio where St. Francis and his fellow brothers spent much time).*

*Another important location in the town is the new shrine dedicated to the teenage and first ‘Millennial Saint’, namely St. Carlo Acutis, whose presence is attracting thousands of young people and visitors to the town which now greedily proclaims three saints to its’ name!*

*We were treated to an introduction to St. Carlo’s life and influence by a local expert and venerated his mortal remains which are movingly displayed in a glass coffin inside the Santa Maria Maggiore.*

*For the first time on pilgrimage we visited the hilltop town of Orvieto with its’ magnificent and imposing Cathedral or ‘Duomo’. This Cathedral has two side chapels. One is adorned with some exceptional murals depicting the Last Judgement or ‘Apocalypse’ of the end times. The other chapel was built to accommodate the Host and Corporal relics of a ‘Eucharistic Miracle’ which occurred in 1223 in the nearby town of Bolsena, and which were fortuitously being exhibited during the time of our Pilgrimage.*



**To summarise some pilgrims' comments:-**

*"Assisi involves a lot of uphill walking, but what goes up must eventually come down and usually with a refreshing drink at the end, not to mention the Italian ice-cream!"*



*"Assisi is both sacred and profound in one life-affirming package."*

*And most importantly, a glowing review from our youngest pilgrim and budding geologist, Sue's Grand-son William..*



*"I loved it. I never want to go back home, and the best part was that they had a fossil and mineral shop. My room will look like a geology exhibit."*

*One final word..... There was unanimous appreciation for the organisation of the Pilgrimage and the smooth running of the whole trip which was ensured by Father Philip and Jane. This meant that none of us were aware of any "ducks' feet" paddling like mad under the water, whilst the visit glided smoothly along, as always!*

*These Parish pilgrimages are "Journeys not to be missed!" '*

*Carol on behalf of Group Bernardo x*





## PILGRIMAGE TO ASSISI

We all met up in Exmouth  
For our trip across the sea  
We're going on a Pilgrimage  
To my favourite place – Assisi  
Travelled up to Bristol  
For to catch a plane  
Praying for good weather  
As long as it doesn't rain.

Up to us to plan our days  
Deciding where to go -  
Shall we go here...shall we go there ? We  
really didn't know.

Which Basilica shall we go to –  
St Francis or St. Clare's?  
A walk down to St. Damiano  
To learn more about St Clare.  
The walk through the meadow  
we could only stand and stare  
there all around us  
the beautiful olive trees  
with the poppies and the grasses  
blowing gently in the breeze.

The old Cathedral of St Ruffino  
where St. Carlo's heart can be found  
He's inspiring many youngsters  
it's really quite profound  
Let's pray that many young ones  
will be inspired by St. Carlo  
and follow in his way.

Our group lunch in La Rocca  
we were treated very well  
lots of lovely food to share





Many stories we could tell  
about our times in Assisi  
different trips we all had done  
comparing all the times we've  
had  
it was so much fun.

Popped into the Chiesa Nova  
as we were walking home  
It's where beloved St. Francis  
used to live and roam.  
We also said some prayers  
before the tomb of St. Clare  
Beautiful singing from a Mass  
as we were standing there.

Father Keith preached a  
sermon  
from his holy book  
That life is very precious  
if we stop – listen – and look.

The love we've found for one another  
as we spent our time away  
We will do it all again ...  
but that's for another day!





‘We all ‘found ourselves in Assisi’ enjoying another wonderful pilgrimage thanks to the great organisation of Father Philip and Jane, staying at the Casa Madonna Della Pace convent where we were warmly welcomed and fed by the nuns who were always smiling! Because the sun shone constantly we were able to enjoy some fantastic walks through olive groves, meadows and woodland (following St Francis’ footsteps) enjoying birdsong whilst spotting so many creatures like butterflies, caterpillars and tiny lizards.

These walks led us to places like St. Damiano where St. Clare led her religious life and the beautiful Church with a Church – the Basilica of Santa Maria della Angelis. Everyone had a favourite place like the Chiesa Nova church (site of St. Francis’ home) and the Ermo delle Carceri, a place of meditation where St. Francis prayed intensely. (and several of our own pilgrims managed the challenging walk down through the woods back to Assisi!).

We all learnt more about the new young saint Carlo Acutis (canonised in 2025) thanks to a very interesting and enthusiastic talk by Gwen Wiseman at the Santa Maria Maggiore church where his tomb can be visited. From a very young age he was dedicated to Jesus and the eucharist creating a website listing the eucharistic miracles around the world. There certainly was a much greater presence in Assisi of large groups of young people obviously influenced by his faith.

We also had a lovely day out (stunning views on the journey) visiting Orvieto where we could visit the beautiful Cathedral and some went into the caves.

Finally, a great highlight for us all was the privilege of celebrating Mass at the tomb of St Francis in the Basilica on our last day. A fitting end to our wonderful week in Assisi. ‘ Anna for Jacopa Group



*Follow the ‘yellow brick road’ and you will find Assisi on the hill. I was so pleased that Fr. Philip led us back to this peaceful oasis scattered with churches that Francis would have prayed at, and the wonderful basilicas of Francis, Clare and Mary of the Angels in the valley, housing his original Porziuncola, and where he died.*

*This year the peace was ‘shattered’ by the increased numbers of pilgrims visiting this usually quiet town. Inspiringly many were young people, drawn to Assisi by the newest saint, Carlo Acutis, who died when only 15 and whose body is in the church of St Maria Maggiore, for them all to visit.*

*Personally to ‘find myself in Assisi’ I needed to search the town for the peace I needed to feel St. Francis and through him, pray to God. My prayers for those friends and family I had brought with me were heard*

*firstly when I entered the chapel Francis built at St. Damiano and knelt there in conversation with our Lord. I then revisited Carlo’s tomb and prayed special prayers for the sick – this was when St. Maria Maggiore was quiet at the end of the day – a very special time. But also my prayers were heard in St. Francis’ gardens, in the woods on the way to the Carceri, and in the Bosco.*

*Finding myself in Assisi, I found peace.* An individual pilgrim review

