



Parish of St Wilfrid, Widnes

*Incorporating the churches of St Bede, St Michael,
St John Fisher and St Basil*



Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Times (Year C)

23rd February 2025

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Psalm Response

'The Lord is compassionate and gracious'.

'What would we do without our faith?'

We have had an abundance of funerals in the past few months, and funerals are so important – for the person who has died as we gather to pray for their soul, for their families and friends as we pray for the Lord's comfort and healing and for us as a community as we mark a person's life and death within our community of faith.

Some deaths are sudden, some are an answer to prayer, yet grief and loss surround every death. Regret, questions, peace, grief, loss, feeling overwhelmed are just some of the range of emotions we can feel when a loved one dies. All these feelings have their place and need to be honoured. Yet we who have faith, have the knowledge of His promises, we have **HOPE**.

When I look into the eyes of a grieving family, I want them to know this truth, I want their faith to be increased so that they have a place to begin to make sense of their grief and loss. And the only place to begin is **JESUS**.

Yet so many people live without Him, He is there but they do not see Him, He is with them, but they are deaf to Him – I often ask myself; how do they manage?

I marvel at them. For I cannot manage with Jesus, I make no bones about it, I rely on Him for everything, in joy and in pain, in happiness and in sorrow, when things are clear and when life does not make sense. I am totally reliant on Him. So today, be grateful for the faith you have, and thank Jesus for it and spread your faith with others, with a prayer, an act of kindness in His name, in a word of faith in darkness and share what you know of Him with others.

*'Our faith does not take away the storms of life, but it gives us an anchor that holds us firm,
when everything is moving'*

Fr. Mark

St Wilfrid's Pastoral Statistics 2024

Each year every parish in the Archdiocese must report the statistics of their individual parish so that the central offices can have a picture of Catholic life across the Archdiocese. These figures are then sent onwards and upwards to Rome. I thought it would be interesting for you all to see them.

Baptisms – 156

First Holy Communion – 173 (number amended...again!)

Confirmations – 20

Marriages – 6

Funerals – 112 (not including Services at the Crematorium or Burial of Ashes)

Communion at Home – 68

Sunday Mass Attendance – Average 793

Aged 18-35?

Are you aged 18-35? Do you want to grow in faith? Would you like to meet other young catholics? If it's a 'yes, yes, yes', then come and be part of our new 18-35's group! You are invited to an initial 'vision meeting' on **Sunday 2nd of March at St. Bede's Presbytery (6pm - 8pm)**, to spend some time in prayer, share refreshments and decide on what we want to do. So, get thinking! Speaking personally, I know that being young and catholic can feel isolating. But here in Widnes, there is no reason to feel isolated, as there are, in fact, many of us young parishioners scattered across the town. So come along! I'll be there. You never know, it might be the best thing you ever do... **Fr Peter**

LGBT+ Catholics Archdiocese of Liverpool

The next gathering will be held on **Sunday 2nd March 2025** at All Saints, High Street, Golborne, Warrington, WA3 3BG. Holy Mass at 2.00pm followed by refreshments. All are welcome to attend.

Widnes Catholic Children's Choir

Calling all children in years 2-8 to join this exciting new **FREE** musical opportunity here in Widnes. The choir will rehearse weekly on a Monday, 4-5pm at St John Fisher Parish Hall, launching on March 3rd! To find out more visit <http://eepurl.com/i8AkqA>

Pilgrimage to Knock 2025

We are thinking of going on pilgrimage to Our Lady's Shrine in Knock from **Tuesday 14th October** till **Friday 17th October**. We will be staying at the Knock House Hotel, for 3 nights, bed, breakfast and evening meal. We shall be flying from Liverpool Airport. Cost is £550 for a twin room and £640 for a single room.

We need to know if there is any interest in this pilgrimage. If you would like to come, can you let Susan Warburton know asap, by either speaking to her or by passing your name and telephone number into the Parish Office so that we can secure the rooms in the hotel.

Parish Choir

If you have not sung before, or not sung for years, or haven't been part of this group previously, or are only able to come along occasionally, it doesn't matter, you would be most welcome. Sadly though, at this time, all members of the choir must be over 18 due to safeguarding guidance. Our next practice is on **Monday 24th February** at **7pm** in St John Fisher Church.

Marriage Preparation – Thank You

At the end of international 'Marriage Week' we welcomed seven couples for a marriage preparation day on Saturday 15th February in the Parish Hall at St John Fisher. Marriage Week is an annual celebration offering the opportunity to support and promote marriage and family life. A Christian marriage is rooted in faith; that means faith in God, as the giver of life and the one who promises eternal life to those who believe in him.

The couples spent an enjoyable day exploring how well they know each other, sharing their values and family backgrounds and deepening their understanding of the church's teaching on marriage and family life. Thank you to all the couples that took part. We are looking forward to you celebrating a beautiful sacramental marriage and promise to keep you in prayer.

Jane and Deacon Paul Rooney

Altar Server's Group update

Since our Altar Server's group was re-founded, there's been plenty happening. We have held several regular meetings, seeking to bring us together across the parish, along with several social occasions. More recently, many of our servers attended a formation day of safeguarding training at the St. Margaret Clitherow Centre, Liverpool. Our social events, on the other hand, have included a pizza night for all servers, a cheese and wine night for senior servers and most recently a trip to the Metropolitan Cathedral and the Convent of the Mother Teresa Sisters in Liverpool as part of a local saints walk. At the Cathedral, Fr Peter and Fr Derek Lloyd gave an insight into St John Paul II and his connection with our City, while at the Convent, Sr. Bethany, one of the sisters, told us about her time living with Mother Teresa and Mother's visits to Liverpool. So, if reading this gives you FOMO (fear of missing out), then please consider becoming an Altar Server! Jesus is calling YOU to serve him, yes YOU!

Fr. Peter

Parish Confirmation Programme – Update

Last week, I met at SS. Peter and Paul Catholic College, with Danielle Scott (Principal), Jim Wilson (Chair of Governors) and Matt Lorne (Lay Chaplain) to co-ordinate and plan our approach to confirmation preparation in Widnes. The result of our meeting is an exciting programme of six interactive sessions for our young people, culminating with a visit from Archbishop Malcolm McMahon, who will confer the sacrament at St Michael's on June 5th.

Animate Youth Ministries will also be visiting P&P on March 10th, to encourage our youth to sign up. While the programme will be held at SS. P&P, it is of course open to all Year 8 pupils across Widnes (including Wade Deacon High School and Ormiston Chadwick Academy). Fr Peter will be in touch with the other schools in the coming days. Please pray for our youth as they take the next step on their faith journey.

Fr. Peter

Thank you from Sister Mary and the Gift of Life for Zambia Group

Thank you to St. Wilfrid's parishioners for their continuous support of St. Francis Home Care in Livingstone, Zambia. Through your loyal support of our fundraisers and coach tours we were able send £5,000 to St. Mary. She has sent a message to you all.

"We are very, very grateful for your continuous thoughts of our less privileged. You're all really wonderful people to continue helping the needy here. We had rain but it is now disappearing again. People are digging and planting in the hope of a good harvest. May the good Lord bless each of you a hundredfold."

Parish Liturgy

Sunday	23rd February	Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Times	
09.00	Holy Mass	St Bede	Parishioners
10.15	Holy Mass	St Michael	Magaret (Peggy) Heaton
11.30	Holy Mass	St Bede	James Bebbington
16.00	Holy Mass	St Bede	Martin Wynne
Monday	24th February	Ferial	
12.30	Requiem Mass	St Michael	Terence O'Brien
Tuesday	25th February	Ferial	
12noon	Service of the Word with Holy Communion	St John Fisher	
Wednesday	26th February	Ferial	
11.45am	Requiem Mass	St John Fisher	Marie Sheridan
Thursday	27th February	Ferial	
11.30am	Requiem Mass	St Basil	Elisabeth Campbell
Friday	28th February	Ferial	
12noon	Deanery Mass	St Joseph, Penketh	Michael Stevenson
Saturday	1st March	Feast of St David	
16.30	Holy Mass	St Basil	Tom Baker
18.00	Holy Mass	St John Fisher	Geoffrey Garner
Sunday	2nd March	Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Times	
09.00	Holy Mass	St Bede	Mary Reilly
10.15	Holy Mass	St Michael	Parishioners
11.30	Holy Mass	St Bede	Mass Association Members
16.00	Holy Mass	St Bede	Thomas Jackson

Sanctuary Lamp

The sanctuary lamp burns for 7 days for your intentions.

St Bede:	Special Intention
St Basil:	Pope Francis
St John Fisher	Archbishop Malcolm
St Michael:	Erin Power

Rest in Peace

Ann Layland, Robert Mason, Jean Magee,
Cecilia Morris, Ann Carney, Margaret Palin
Christine Owens, Kathleen Yates, John Ellis
Stephen Lea, Anne Follon,
Maureen Robinson & Brian Hobson
May the Angels lead them into Paradise!