



Parish of St Wilfrid, Widnes

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



Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Times (Year C)

2nd March 2025

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Psalm Response

'It is good to give thanks to you O LORD'

What are you giving up for...?

I am often bereft when Lent comes to an end. I love Easter, it's great. But Lent is probably my favourite liturgical season. During Lent we live our Christian faith in a fuller sense. The season encourages us to be more prayerful, to live a simpler lifestyle and to be kinder. Lent is a 'spa for the soul', ridding us of spiritual toxicity and rejuvenating us for our mission as disciples of Jesus. In Lent, we become the best versions of ourselves.

This is all in full swing and then Easter Day comes along. All the things we took on, well, we give them up for Easter. Normal programming resumes, which usually involves less prayer, less simplicity, less charity. It happens every year. As a child, I had a very glum view of Lent. 'Giving up' your favourite things doesn't ring well with most folks, but especially unwell with children. But now I see Lent in terms of 'gain and grace'.

In reality, the aim of Lent is not to 'give things up for a few weeks' but always to receive more from our generous God. A treasure chest of grace is opened to us on Ash Wednesday and it's down to us to grab what we can and run. Let us grab the precious jewels of prayer, of simplicity and of love and take them forward through Lent, to Easter and beyond into everlasting life.

May we support each other in this great venture. From now on, maybe we should ask each other; "what are you gaining for eternity?"

Fr Peter

A Message from Archbishop Malcolm

Dear brothers and sisters,

We hold the Holy Father very close in prayer as he continues to suffer - as the psalmist says- may the Lord help him on his bed of pain. May Our Lady, Mother of the Church, intercede for him.

With my prayers for you and those you love.

+Malcolm

Parish Choir

We will be practicing music for the Easter Services at the times listed below. As usual, 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 practices for Easter are on **Tuesday 25th March, Monday 31st March, Tuesday 8th April.**

All at 7pm in St. John Fisher Church.

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

Parish Pilgrimage to Lourdes 2025

Thank you to all who attended the initial meeting to express interest in our parish pilgrimage to Lourdes this year. We have now received further information from the tour operator and can progress the group booking arrangements. The revised dates for the pilgrimage are confirmed as **Wednesday 23rd July to Thursday 31st July 2025**. We will travel as **one group** on these dates.

We have block booked rooms for the parish in the **Hotel Roissy**, located 100 metres from the entrance of Lourdes Sanctuary. This 4-star hotel offers soundproofed and air-conditioned rooms with free Wi-Fi and a flat-screen satellite TV. The cost (without single room supplement but including the extra night due to the changed dates), is £1,075.00. We require a **deposit of £350.00** by cash or cheque made payable to 'Northern Star Travel Ltd' to secure your place.

To progress our group booking we ask that all pilgrims attend a short meeting in St Bede's presbytery at **7pm on Wednesday 12th March** to fill out a 'completion of booking' form and to pay the deposit. There may be an opportunity for anyone who hasn't expressed an interest so far to join us. Please come along if you are interested.

St Bernadette, pray for us.

Dcn. Paul and Denise Roberts

Mary's Meals

A Mary's Meals "Loose Change Collection" will take place throughout LENT . This will be starting on Ash Wednesday 5th March to Easter Sunday. Boxes to take home for the collection will be available to pick up at the back of all 4 churches.

Thank you in anticipation of your support.

Elaine and Nina.

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

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.

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>

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.

Parish Liturgy

Sunday	2nd March	Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time	
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
Monday	3rd March	Feria	
12.30	Requiem Mass	St John Fisher	Robert Mason
Tuesday	4th March	Feria	
10.00	Requiem Mass	St Michael	Jean Magee
Wednesday	5th March	Ash Wednesday	
07.00	Holy Mass	St Bede	The Moran Family
09.30	Holy Mass	St Basil	Tony Baker
12noon	Holy Mass	St Michael	Frank Smith Jnr
19.00	Holy Mass	St John Fisher	John Mullarkey
Thursday	6th March	Thursday after Ash Wednesday	
12noon	Requiem Mass	St John Fisher	Cecillia Morris
Friday	7th March	Friday after Ash Wednesday	
09:30	Holy Mass	St John Fisher	Terry Prendergast
Saturday	8th March	Saturday after Ash Wednesday	
10.00	Holy Mass & Confession	St Michael	Roy Capener Thomas McDermott
<i>(Enrolment at all Masses for sacramental Programme)</i>			
16.30	Holy Mass	St Basil	John Joseph O'Brien
18.00	Holy Mass	St John Fisher	Fr Peter Fox
Sunday	9th March	First Sunday of Lent	
09.00	Holy Mass	St Bede	Marie & Arthur Boden
10.15	Holy Mass	St Michael	Mary Rimmer
11.30	Holy Mass	St Bede	Parishioners
16.00	Holy Mass	St Bede	Anthony Goulding

Sanctuary Lamp

The sanctuary lamp burns for 7 days for your intentions.

St Bede:	Pope Francis
St Basil:	Pope Francis
St John Fisher	Pope Francis
St Michael:	Pope Francis

Rest in Peace

Margaret Palin, Stephen Lea, Brian McVey,
Ann Carney, Christine Owens, Brian Hobson,
David Roberts, Patricia Fallon, Kathleen Yates,
John Ellis, Elsie Finch, Maureen Robinson,
Colin Worsley, Edith Fairhurst & Margaret Colford.

May the Angels lead them into Paradise!