



ST FRANCIS XAVIER'S CATHOLIC CHURCH HEREFORD

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Dear Friends, with the death of Pope Francis on 21st April and before his successor has been elected by the College of Cardinals, we are in a period called Sede Vacante; the Chair of the Bishop of Rome is empty. This is a time when we're called to intensify our prayer, deepening our relationship with God. It is not just the few minutes we try and set aside every morning and evening; it is about our whole life. We have an opportunity to think about our life of prayer. Dom David Foster in his book Deep calls to Deep writes that there are five different ways prayer can go. The five ways are asking God for things- for others as well as myself; thanking him; saying sorry to him; and praising him for what God is in himself. Dom David explains this by using the five fingers of the hand. The weakest fingers are for asking for people or things (me, on the last finger, being shorter than my neighbour on the fourth). Thanksgiving is on the middle and the longest finger; it is the kind of prayer there should be the most of. The index finger is for pointing, not to blame others but to acknowledge my own fault. This is the prayer of confession and contrition. The thumb, which can stand alone from the other fingers, is for God himself, the prayer of adoration and praise. This helps teach us that the most precious part of prayer is praising God just for being himself. The prayer of adoration teaches us to worship God, being in his presence and staying there for a while 'letting God be God.' **Fr James**

Waiting for a Pope...

Did you watch the funeral of Pope Francis last weekend? If so, you no doubt saw the long procession of cardinals who preceded the coffin at the entrance procession. It is the cardinals who will come together and, under the guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, to choose the next Supreme Pontiff during the 'Conclave.' The term is derived from the Latin words *cum* and *clave*, meaning 'under-lock-and-key.' The cardinals are literally locked in until they elect a successor.



Upon the death of the Pope Francis, the Camerlengo (the papal household chamberlain) declared 'sede vacante' (the Holy See is vacant) which lasts until white smoke billows from the chimney above

St Peter's Square, signalling the election of a new pope. In our sacristy at SFX, the prayer intention now reads: 'Pro eligendo Smo Pontifice' (for the election of the supreme Pontiff) and you will notice that mention of the pope is left out during the Eucharistic Prayer. During this time, the Church enters upon a period of quiet, prayerful waiting, where we are all asked to prayer for Church during this period of transition as we await the Conclave.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church describes how the pope is the "perpetual and visible source and foundation of the unity both of the bishops and of the whole company of the faithful" (CCC 882). Thus, sede vacante is not just about an administrative gap. It is a temporary pause that reveals how deeply the unity of the Church is entrusted to one man's office — not as a symbol of human power, but as a living witness to Christ's care for His people.

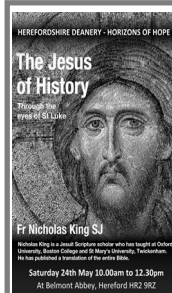
Though the absence of a pope can feel unsettling, it is also a time of prayerful trust. The Church belongs not to any one pope, but to Christ Himself. The sede vacante invites Catholics everywhere to pray for the cardinals, for the future pope, and for the Church's ongoing mission in the world. **Fr John**

May Fair – Change in Church opening times



With the May Fair on next week from Tuesday to Thursday the church **will be closed at 2.00pm** on these days.

Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist	Ministers of the Word
6pm Wendy Winterburn Sarah Williams Vigeetha Joseph	8pm Philip Dixon Stuart Fox
8am Vera McHale Frances Hetterley	8am Tracey Buckley Lorraine L Williams
10am Thomas Kottuppallil Moses Obanimoh Gerald Okafor	10am Gwenfair Gillick Liz Symonds



The Jesus of History: Through the Eyes of Luke. We are delighted that the Scripture scholar Fr Nicholas King SJ is coming to the deanery to look at the historical Jesus, particularly as presented by St Luke. All are welcome, so do join us to hear of this fascinating subject. **Saturday 24th May, 10.00am to 12.30pm at Hedley Lodge, Belmont Abbey.**



Red Missio Boxes - Please can you bring in your Red 'Missio boxes' in for counting please by Sunday 18th May and leave them in the sacristy. Many Thanks.

Peter Young –Funeral Wed 7th May 11.00am
Peter Young's Requiem Mass - Wednesday, 7th May, at 11am. There are only a few family members who can attend, so it would be good if parishioners can come and support them. Peter requested a dress code of "No black. Bright ties".

We remember all who have died and whose anniversaries occur about this time.

Lately Dead Maighread O'Donohue Anniversaries:

Shiela McPherson, Olive Jones, Joe Lawrence, Kieran Powell, Allen Flowers, Stephen Farr, Teodoro, Stephanie West.

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



Pray for the Sick: Fr Keith, Ania Kuzba, Jan Beavan, Robbie Bell, Brian Symonds, Meg Furber, Ann Currie, Midad Jasari, David Madgen, Lynne Howells, Sarah, Katherine Melia, Christina James, Ana Rudnicki, Nicola Merrick, Martin O'Connor, Patricia Moroney, Margaret Skelding, James Spradbery, Teresa Bord Ann Marie Hughson, Paul Kingston, John Moroney, Pauline and David Day, Mark Edmunds, Didit Buhain,

Priest Training & Discipleship Appeal: 10th/11th May

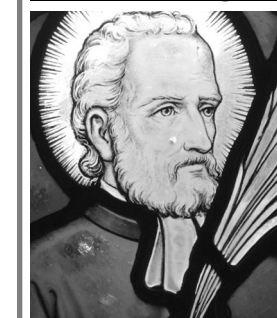
Next weekend there will be a second collection for the Priest Training & Discipleship Appeal. Following feedback from parishes, this year alongside supporting seminarians, the second collection will also be used for wider discipleship activity across the Archdiocese of Cardiff-Menevia. Please support this appeal to the best of your abilities.



Can you help? - A new resident at the "Blind College", Venns Lane has, asked if we can help them get to 10am Mass on Sundays. It would be good to get a number of volun-

teers to share the task. If you can help, even if only occasionally, please contact the office or speak to Fr James or Fr John.

Remembering St John Kemble: Talk in SFX



Parish Hall Saturday 10th May 2 pm. Followed by refreshments. Dr Simon Johnson, Director of Heritage at Downside Abbey, will give a talk on the life, times and death of Herefordshire's own martyr, St John Kemble. St John Kemble, a true Herefordian, is one of the Forty Martyrs of England and Wales. He was executed in 1679, at the age of 80, on Widemarsh Common

simply for being a Catholic priest. SFX has a proud association with St. John Kemble; parishioners will be familiar with his shrine to the right of the main altar, which features the reliquary containing his preserved hand. To accompany the talk, there will be a rare opportunity to view St John Kemble's vestment and his newly restored missal.

For any visitors unfamiliar with SFX church, there will be a short tour before the talk, starting at 1.40 pm. Everyone is warmly invited to attend this important Deanery event.

Welcome to new parishioners and visitors. Do introduce yourselves to the welcomers and **come along after the 10.00am Mass for coffee and cake.**



Collections 27/4/2025
1st £448.30 The Parish
2nd £385.25 Renovation



Advance Notice– Next weekend there will be a 2nd collection for the Archdiocese priest training and Discipleship appeal.

Parish Calendar – May 2025

Sat 10th	2.00pm	John Kemble Talk
Mon 19th	7.00pm	SVP meeting in hall
Wed 21st	6.30pm	ABC Bible Study
Sat 24th	10.00am	Talk at Belmont Abbey by Fr Nicholas King