



ST FRANCIS XAVIER'S CATHOLIC CHURCH HEREFORD

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Dear friends, Last week, while spending time in Connemara in the west of Ireland, I was struck by the sheer beauty of the landscape — the changing light, the rugged mountains, the wide skies, and the sense of quiet wonder that the place inspires. Even in winter, there was a deep sense of light breaking through, revealing something timeless and enduring. This Sunday's readings echo that experience. We hear in the Gospel words spoken by the prophet Isaiah of light dawning in darkness and of Jesus beginning his public ministry, calling ordinary people to follow him. It is a reminder that God often meets us in simple, beautiful, and unexpected ways, inviting us to see more clearly and to walk in a new direction. Sometimes it requires great strength from us to set out on this journey. We must be willing to leave something of ourselves behind, to be led, not by the persuasions of others, but to stay true to ourselves and our desire "to gaze on the beauty of the Lord, to enquire at his temple." (Ps 27) The Third Sunday in Ordinary Time is also the Sunday of the Word of God, encouraging us to pause and listen attentively to the voice of Christ speaking to us through Scripture. As a parish community, may we allow that Word to illuminate our lives, shape our choices, and draw us more deeply into the call to follow the Lord together. **Fr John**



Liturgical Calendar January/ February 2026 Yr A Psalter Wk 3

Sat 24th	10.30am	St Francis de Sales	Val Gittings RIP
Sat 24th	11.00am	Confessions & Adoration	
Sat 24th	6.00pm	3RD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	Antony Philip Anniv.
Sun 25th	8.00am	3RD SUNDAY	The Parish
Sun 25th	10.00am	3RD SUNDAY	George Bond RIP 50th Anniv.
Mon 26th	9.30am	Sts Timothy & Titus, Bishops	Holy Souls
Tue 27th		No public Mass. Mass at Our Lady's 9.30am	
Wed 28th	1.00pm	St Thomas Aquinas Priest & Doctor of the Church	Sue Forder RIP
Thu 29th	9.30am	Feria	Marie McDonnell
Fri 30th	1.00pm	Feria	Holy Souls Dennis Schiavon RIP
Sat 31st	10.30am	St John Bosco	Michael Davis RIP & family
Sat 31st	11.00am	Confessions & Adoration	
Sat 31st	6.00pm	CANDLEMAS	Mohan Singh
Sun 1st	8.00am	CANDLEMAS	The Parish
Sun 1st	10.00am	CANDLEMAS	Stephen Booth



Keeping you informed Parish Pastoral Council meeting. Wednesday 21st January

Last Wednesday we had one of our regular meetings and everything that was discussed will be made available soon on the parish WhatsApp group and put up in the Narthex. One of the main discussion areas concerned Lent and Easter. Fr James has decided our very popular Stations of the Cross will run again before the Friday 1.00pm Mass and an extra evening Mass will take place for Lent on a Thursday evening at 6.30pm. There will be 2 priests available every Saturday for confessions and an expansion of the regular Lectio Divina groups held on Monday after Mass.



We welcome into God's family **Theodore Martin** who will be baptized this Sunday at 12 noon. A warm welcome to **Theodore** and all his family.



We remember all who have died:

Val Gittings- Monday 26th Jan, Crematorium 12:15pm
Sue Forder-funeral at Belmont Abbey TBC

Anniversaries:

William Connell, Luigi Crisia, Mary Haines, Dom Christopher Jenkins, Joan Sheeran, Joan Brooks, Dennis Schiavon, Christopher Saunders.

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

Pray for the Sick: Ania Kuzba, Jan Beavan, Robbie Bell, Meg Furber, Ann Currie, Mídad Jasari, Lynne Howells, Katherine Melia, Christina James, Sarah, Ana Rudnicki, Nicola Merrick, Martin O'Connor, Patricia Moroney, Margaret Davis, Carola Morton, Margaret Skelding, James Spradberry, Teresa Bord, Patricia Marongiu, Sarah James, Ann Orchard, Pauline and David Day, Mark Edmunds, Kath Feely.

SAINT JOHN KEMBLE – 1599-1679

We are privileged to be the custodians of the relic of a martyr, one of the Forty English and Welsh Martyrs canonized by Pope Saint Paul VI in 1970. John Kemble was a 'Hereford man.' He came from a prominent local recusant Catholic family, which included four other priests.

John Kemble was ordained at Douai College on 23rd February in 1625. Later that year he came to England to work as a missionary priest in Monmouthshire and Herefordshire. He served as an itinerant priest for more than 50 years, often celebrating mass at Traego Castle.

Before he was led out to his execution on 22 August 1679 Kemble insisted on saying his prayers and finishing his drink, and the assembled party joined the elderly priest in a final smoke and a cup of sack.

Before his death Kemble addressed the assembled crowd, pointing out that no association with the 'plot' – Titus Oates -had been charged to him. The old priest went on to say: 'The failure of the authorities in London to connect me to the plot makes it evident that I die only for profession of the Catholic religion, which was the religion that first made this Kingdom Christian.' He consoled his hangman and forgave him.

Friday 30th January marks the second anniversary of the untimely death of SFX parishioner, Dennis Schiavon. Dennis had a great devotion to our local martyr, St John Kemble and it was his mission to raise the prominence of this great saint, not just within our parish, but more widely throughout Herefordshire. A small group has looked into the possibility of commissioning a statue, or some other permanent tangible memorial to St John Kemble either in the city of Hereford or at SFX church. However, difficulties with funding and protocols associated with any additions to SFX (which is a Grade II* listed building), mean that a statue is not feasible. Instead, the group is now working towards a range of low-cost projects to increase knowledge of, and devotion to, St John Kemble and other local Catholic martyrs of the 17th century.

Dorothy Kennedy & Fr James



Ministers of the Eucharist

6pm Jane Gennard
Kathy Weston
Angela Holmes

8am Cecilia Balestra
Vera McHale

10am Mary Cook
Mia Brennan
Noel Elegado

Ministers of the Word

6pm Fiona Stokes
Helen Booth

8am Tracey Buckley

10am Gabriel Gillick
Gwenfair



Parish Pilgrimage to Rome.

Monday 5th—Friday 9th October 2026
More information and booking forms are on the table at the back of church or use the online booking link

<https://www.my-holiday-booking.co.uk/availability/check/index/i/22/t/ROM-SFX>
Closing date 14th February

If you have any questions, do contact Rae at
Email: rae@tangney-tours.com t:01732 886666

SFX Parish Quiz-There will be a Parish Quiz on Saturday 14th February 7.15 pm in the Kemble Parish Hall. What better way to celebrate Valentine's Day? Tickets £5 per person to include tea/coffee and cake during the break. Bring your own snacks/drinks to share at the table. Tickets will be available for sale after weekend Masses this weekend and on 31st January/1st February and 7/8th February. Teams of up to 5 people but individuals/smaller group are very welcome and teams can be made up on the night. The number of available tickets is limited due to limited space in the Parish Hall, so buy tickets early to avoid disappointment!

Herefordshire Deanery

Horizons of Hope Talk with professor

John Loughlin. Saturday 21st February
Belmont Abbey 10.00am-12.30

Human Dignity: The catholic vision and why it matters. Professor Loughlin is senior research fellow at Blackfriars, Oxford. His forthcoming book is "Human dignity: Its roots and challenges in western thought."



Next Sunday we will be celebrating the feast of **Candlemas** with special readings, hymns and lighting of the candles.



St Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle, be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him we humbly pray: and do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly host, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.



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



Collections 18/1/2026

The Parish £739.49



What's on in January/February 2026

Mon 26th	10.30am	Lectio Divina
Sat 14th	7.15pm	Quiz Night
Sat 21st	10.00am	Talk at Belmont