



# ST FRANCIS XAVIER'S CATHOLIC CHURCH HEREFORD

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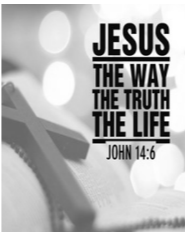


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**Dear All,** As we gather on this Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time, we are reminded that the call to discipleship is not always comfortable or easy. In today's Gospel, Jesus challenges us with words that may unsettle: that following Him might bring division even within our closest relationships. That can feel a little scary, but it's also a great reminder that being a follower of Jesus means being brave, honest, and loving, even when it's hard. Jesus teaches us that living the Gospel sometimes means standing firm in truth and love, even when the world around us resists. Jesus talks about bringing "fire" to the earth—not the kind that burns things, but the kind that lights up our hearts and helps us live with passion and purpose. This Sunday invites us to reflect deeply on our commitment to Christ. Are we willing to speak truth with compassion? To stand up for justice, even when it costs us? As we journey through these weeks of summer, may we open our hearts more fully to the transformative fire of God's love—burning away what is false, and igniting what is good and true. Let's keep encouraging one another to grow in faith, to pray together, and to be lights for Christ in our world. **Fr John**



## Biblical scholar comments on American National television on the Shroud of Turin

 Dr Jeremiah Johnston explained that testing from the Shroud identified the blood type AB on the cloth. 'The Shroud has type AB blood, identified as Semitic, present in only six percent of the population, confirmed as human and male, ruling out animal blood or a hoax,' Dr Johnston said. He also noted that testing showed it was human, male blood that was both premortem and postmortem. (blood from someone alive and dead) 'You would have to actually kill someone if you were trying to reproduce the shroud because we have premortem and post-mortem blood all over the shroud,' said Dr Johnston. The presence of both pre- and post-mortem blood on the Shroud is unusual, suggesting processes inconsistent with natural decomposition, interpreted by some as aligning with the resurrection accounts.

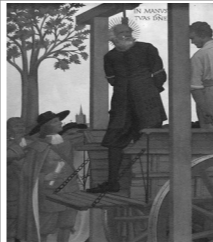


**We remember all who have died** and those whose anniversaries occur about this time  
**Anniversaries:** Mary Mussell, Gladys Floyd, Zacarias Balleza, Jennifer Hughes, Cuthbert Rosser, Andrew Thomas, Richeldis Paxton.



**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, Midad Jasari, David Madgen, Lynne Howells, Katherine Melia, Christina James, Ana Rudnicki, Nicola Merrick, Martin O'Connor, Patricia Moroney, Margaret Davis, Margaret Skelding, James Spradbery, Teresa Bord, Sarah, Ann Marie Hughson, Patricia Marongiu, Pauline and David Day, Mark Edmunds, Rita Rees, Didit Buhain, Margaret Davis, Sarah James, Kath Feely.



## St John Kemble (1599–1679): A Hereford Martyr

We are lucky here at SFX to have the relics of a true Hereford martyr in our midst. Saint John Kemble (1599–1679) was an English Roman Catholic priest

who lived during a time of severe persecution of Catholics in England.

John Kemble was born into a well-known Catholic family at a time when Catholicism was outlawed. Despite the dangers, the Kemble family remained steadfast in their faith. John pursued a vocation to the priesthood and travelled to Douai, France, where he studied at the English College—a seminary that trained Catholic priests for secret ministry in England. He was ordained in 1625 and returned to England to serve as a missionary priest in his native area, mainly in Herefordshire and Monmouthshire. For over 50 years, he ministered quietly and faithfully, administering sacraments and supporting the Catholic community.

During the latter part of the 17th century, anti-Catholic sentiment intensified, especially during the hysteria of the Popish Plot in 1678, a false conspiracy theory invented by Titus Oates, claiming that Catholics were plotting to assassinate King Charles II. Though he had no involvement in the plot, Fr. John Kemble was arrested in 1678 simply for being a Catholic priest. He was 80 years old at the time.

John Kemble was taken to London and imprisoned in Newgate Prison. Despite his age and frailty, he endured his trial with dignity. Ultimately, he was condemned to death under laws that made it a capital offense to be a Catholic priest in England. He was executed on 22nd August, 1679, in Hereford. Before his death, he famously said:

"I die only for professing the old Roman Catholic religion, which was the religion that first made this kingdom Christian."  
He forgave his executioner, calling him by name: "my friend Anthony, be not afraid, do thy office, I forgive thee with all my heart."  
Saint John Kemble remains a symbol of quiet faith, endurance, and forgiveness in the face of injustice.

**St John Kemble, pray for us.**

Ministers of the Eucharist		Ministers of the Word	
6pm	Sarah Williams Vigeetha Joseph Angela Holmes	6pm	Philip Dixon Stuart Fox
8am	Frances Hetterley Cecilia Balestra	8am	Tracey Buckley Lorraiene L Williams
10am	Lorena Auer Noel Elegado Moses Obanimoh Gerald Okafor	10am	Gabriel Gillick Bruno Alves

## Parish BBQ Sunday 31st August

Make the most of summer and enjoy the company of fellow parishioners at a Parish BBQ in the Presbytery Garden following the 10 am Mass on Sunday 31st August. Tickets cost £8 Adults, Children £3, Families £20 (2 Adults +2 under 16). All food and first drink included. Squash and water will be available, but otherwise please bring your own extra drinks. Veggie options will be available. Gather for drinks and nibbles in the garden from 11.30 am, with food being served from 1200.

**Tickets will be on sale after all Masses** this and next weekend (16th/17th and 23rd/24th August). Don't forget to buy your tickets! We can only cater for those who buy tickets in advance. Everyone Welcome, look forward to seeing you there.



## ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE to the GRAVE of SAINT JOHN KEMBLE SUNDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2025 10.15am Monmouth to Welsh

Newton Pilgrims set off to walk to Welsh Newton from St Mary's Church, Monmouth after 9.15am Mass. Everyone welcome – bring a packed lunch.

**3.00pm Welsh Newton** Rosary, readings & prayers at St. John Kemble's grave in the Churchyard at Welsh Newton.

**4.15pm Monmouth** Benediction in St Mary's Church and afterwards tea will be served in the garden, and produce sold.

The Annual Pilgrimage is a blessing for the Parish



## Healing and Hope: Mass with the Anointing of the Sick

(See Fr James or Fr John for more details)

**Friday, 29th August 2025 1pm SFX**

**Building News** Any visit to our hall toilets will show the damp and poor condition of this area. On Monday, we hope to have work done on the roof and guttering to address the damp issues, and once dry, we plan to refurbish both toilets to a good standard. More details to follow.



**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 10/08/2025**  
**1st £514.19 The Parish**  
**2nd £426.91 Renovation**



## What's on in August 2025

Sun 24th	3.00pm	Annual Pilgrimage to the grave of John Kemble
Fri 29th	1.00pm	Mass with the Anointing of the Sick
Sun 31st	12.00 Noon	Parish BBQ