

The Parish of St. Edward the Confessor

Registered Charity no. 234025

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Newsletter for the week of 8th February 2026 Sunday Readings Cycle A Weekday Readings Cycle II

Readings for the 5th Ordinary Sunday: Isaiah 58: 6-10 Psalm 112 (111); 1 Corinthians 2:1-5; Matthew 5: 13-16

Psalm's Response: A light rises in the darkness for the upright.

Saturday 7th Feb 5.30pm 1st MASS of the 5th SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME - Day of Prayer for Human Trafficking

Sunday 8th Feb 10.30am MASS of the 5th SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME - Day of Prayer for Human Trafficking

Monday 9th Feb 9.15am Mass

Tuesday 10th Feb St. Scholastica, religious founder

Wednesday 11th Feb 11.30am Mass (Optional: Our Lady of Lourdes)- Day of Prayer for the World's Sick

Thursday 12th Feb

Friday 13th Feb 1.00pm Mass (in Hospital Chapel)

Saturday 14th Feb 10.00am Mass FEAST: SS Cyril, religious, missionary & Methodius, bishop, missionary
10.30-11am Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday 14th Feb 5.30pm 1st Mass of the 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sunday 15th Feb 10.30am Mass of the 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Readings for the 6th Ordinary Sunday: Sirach 15:15-20; Psalm 119(118); 1 Corinthians 2:6-10; Matthew 5: 17-37

MARRIAGE WEEK 2026

Sat 7th -14th Sat Feb Marriage Week- annual celebration- offers the opportunity to support & promote marriage and family life. Jane Deegan, Director for Marriage and Family Life Vocation, is seeking to build a team of volunteers to support this vital ministry in the Diocese. Another Retreat Day is arranged for April: to volunteer in any way ,or to find out more contact *Monika Golembiewska*: monika.golembiewska@dioceseofshrewsbury.org Jane Deegan at: jane.deegan@dioceseofshrewsbury.org

MARRIAGE PREPARATION COURSES

3 Marriage Preparation course are offered this year by Shrewsbury Diocese. Each course runs over 2 consecutive Saturdays 9.30am to 4.30 pm each day: 1) St Clare's Church Parish Hall on the 7th & 14th February at Downsfield Road, Lache, Chester, GB CH4 8HH ; 2) St. Vincent de Paul Church Westleigh Parish Hall on 28th of February & 7th March 2026 at Groby Road Altrincham WA14 2BQ 3)Shrewsbury Cathedral Parish Hall on the 21st & 28th March : Entrance: Town Walls Shrewsbury SY1 1UE.Registration is essential: please contact MONIKA at: monika.golembiewska@dioceseofshrewsbury.org

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

Next Tues 10th Feb 7.00pm meeting of the PPC in the Community Room.

FIRST SACRAMENTS PREPARATION

Next Sat 14th Feb Parents Session with a DVD on 1st Reconciliation-the children's faith journey 10.30am-11.45am at the same time as the children have the weekly Saturday morning session- held in the presbytery.

LENTEN ONLINE COURSE "WE DARE TO ASK"

For parishioners either individually or in groups to prepare their hearts & minds in Lent to renew our Baptismal Promises at Easter: 5 online sessions to enable deepening of our baptisms and to ask the Holy Spirit's guidance to renew & restore our relationship with Jesus. The whole course is found at <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/we-dare-to-ask/> Each session has its page- click the link: <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/we-dare-to-ask-session-one> ; <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/we-dare-to-ask-session-two/> <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/we-dare-to-ask-session-three/>; https://www.cbcew.org.uk/we-dare-to-ask-session-four https://www.cbcew.org.uk/we-dare-to-ask-session-five

THANK YOU for YOUR GENEROUS GIVING

Last Sunday's Collection £282.30

GET IN TOUCH QUICKLY –IF YOU ARE SICK If you or your relative enters Macclesfield Hospital or East Cheshire Hospice let Fr. Peter C. know as soon as possible tel: 01625 423576 or by e-mail st.edmacc@gmail.com

DIARY OF EVENTS

Wed 18th Feb Ash Wednesday

Sat 7th March Planned date for 1st Sac. of Reconciliation

Sun 5th April Easter Sunday

Sun 1st March CAFOD Lent Fast Collection

Sun 22nd March Missionary Sisters' Appeal

Sun 17th May Planned date for 1st Holy Communion

EVIDENCE OF THE BENEFITS OF A STABLE MARRIAGE



Dave Brennan is the Director of *Brephos*, a project of pro-life group the *Centre for Bio-Ethical Reform UK*. Brennan sat down with *Dr. Tony Rucinski* to explain why, in his words, “so many of these roads lead back to marriage”.

This lands at a live political moment. On Monday (2nd February 2026), the House of Lords [continued committee stage scrutiny](#) of the *Crime and Policing Bill*.

The Bill contains Clause 191. [The Lords Library briefing](#) explains the effect in plain terms. It would dis-apply existing criminal law on abortion for women acting in relation to their own pregnancies at any gestation (i.e. abortion up to birth for any or no reason) in England and Wales. In practice, women who end their own pregnancies outside the current legal framework would not face investigation, arrest, prosecution or imprisonment, while the law governing the provision of abortion services in a healthcare setting would remain unchanged. The full Bill page for stages and other documents is [here](#).

Brennan’s central claim is that Law is not the only lever. Culture and ~~Commitment~~ matter, because most abortions do not happen in stable, married homes.

The Office of National Statistics [ONS conception statistics](#) for England and Wales in 2022 show that 29.7% of conceptions ended in abortion. Also the contrast by marital status is stark. 36.0% of conceptions outside marriage ended in abortion, compared with 11.1% within marriage.

The Dept of Health & Social Care [DHSC abortion statistics](#) tell the same story from a different dataset. In 2022, there were 252,122 abortions in England and Wales, and the DHSC tables record that 82% were for women whose marital status was “single”.

Brennan makes the stability point without compromise. He says, “whether it’s in the womb or out of the womb marriage makes life for that child safer at a physical level and emotional”.

There are wider national consequences. “At an economic level we are running into an absolute catastrophe”, Brennan warns, pointing to a deeper demographic fragility. [ONS reports](#) a total fertility rate of 1.41 in England and Wales in 2024, well below replacement level.

At Coalition for Marriage (C4M), we know that the erosion of real marriage – through redefinition and political neglect – lies at the root of our nation’s malaise. We exist to reverse this trend and restore marriage to its rightful place as the gold standard of our culture.





Preparing for the Mass of Sunday 8th February 2026

The Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time – Matthew 5: 13-16

Relax

Make the Sign of the Cross † and remain still for a minute of settling silence. Then read the Gospel — preferably aloud and slowly — paying attention to any words that stand out to you.



Read This Sunday's Gospel : SALT AND LIGHT



Jesus said to his disciples: 'You are the salt of the earth. But if salt becomes tasteless, what can make it salty again? It is good for nothing, and can only be thrown out to be trampled underfoot by men. You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill top cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp to put it under a tub; they put it on the lamp-stand where it shines for everyone in the house. In the same way your light must shine in the sight of men, so that, seeing your good works, they may give the praise to your Father in heaven.'

Did any words or phrases stand out to you in the Gospel? If so, take a few moments to meditate on them.

Reflect

Now read the Gospel again and consider what the Lord might be saying to you, or asking of you, through it. Then continue by reading Fr Henry Wansbrough's reflection...



Matthew here takes two piquant images from the words of Jesus which he found in Mark's Gospel and builds on them. This text follows immediately after the Beatitudes, with which he began the Sermon on the Mount; now he shows that these Christian attitudes are not just for our own benefit but are to change the world. The first teaching is a warning, the second a promise. Christians are to be salt for the whole world. Imagine a perpetual diet of food without any tang or taste, soggy and insipid! This would be the world if Christians did not spread the good news of Christ, did not impart to the world the flavour brought by Christ's message. What would the world be without that message and without the challenge of the generosity and salvation of Christ which we profess? Yes, of course much of the same message may come to the world through other great world-faiths, but the full challenge and the full promise is in Christ. The same is true for the second image, that of light. Imagine a world of darkness, where we had to feel our way and are never quite sure of shapes and purposes! And then what a difference occurs when the sun rises over the horizon or the light is switched on. Such is the difference which Christianity – and our Christianity – must make to the world.

What is the best way that I can share with my friends the joy of knowing Jesus?

Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB

Rest

Now call to mind the Lord's love for you, remembering that through this scripture the Lord is truly present. Then silently and prayerfully listen for God's voice and rest in God's love.



Respond & Request

Thank God for any insight you may have received, and respond by asking the Holy Spirit to bless you with a spiritual gift or help you to grow in a particular fruit of the Spirit.

You might pray for wisdom, courage, faithfulness, self-control, patience, generosity, joy, kindness, love, peace, faith, chastity - or another grace - to help you live out your faith this week.



Remember

This Wednesday's word for our families is **GOODNESS**
(To see the Family Version, please visit: wednesdayword.org)



As you pray for your loved ones, please remember to pray for the Church and for the families connected to our schools.

St Joseph, Patron Saint of Families and Protector of the Church, pray for us. Mary, Star of Evangelisation, pray for us. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.



First Reading: *Authentic Conversion*



Isaiah 58: 7-10

Thus says the Lord: Share your bread with the hungry, and shelter the homeless poor; clothe the man you see to be naked and turn not from your own kin. Then will your light shine like the dawn and your wound be quickly healed over. Your integrity will go before you and the glory of the Lord behind you. Cry, and the Lord will answer; call, and he will say, 'I am here.' If you do away with the yoke, the clenched fist, the wicked word, if you give your bread to the hungry, and relief to the oppressed, your light will rise in the darkness, and your shadows become like noon.

Look out! Lent is not far away! We need to start thinking again about genuine conversion, turning back to the Lord. This passage comes far on in the Book of Isaiah, written when the Jews had returned from exile in Babylon; but still things were not going right for them, still the favour of the Lord did not seem to be upon them.

This reading makes a good examination of conscience: do I invite the homeless poor to shelter; do I share my advantages with others? Am I at peace with my family? Do I seek to dominate by the 'clenched fist', the wounding word, the put-down which can shrivel someone up? Isaiah is contrasting genuine service of the Lord with the merely exterior practices of religion, the conventional ways in which we may seem to be 'holy' people. In fact, however, holiness is all a matter of the heart, and – at any rate in this text – mostly a matter of seeing and serving God in other people. That is the only way our light can really shine in the darkness, and our own wounds be healed over. As in the Beatitudes, this text reminds us that God's demands always have a promise attached.

Why not use this reading to make your examination of conscience?



Second Reading: *The Secret of Paul's Success*



1 Corinthians 2: 1-5

When I came to you, brothers, it was not with any show of oratory or philosophy, but simply to tell you what God had guaranteed. During my stay with you, the only knowledge I claimed to have was about Jesus, and only about him as the crucified Christ. Far from relying on any power of my own, I came among you in great 'fear and trembling' and in my speeches and the sermons that I gave, there were none of the arguments that belong to philosophy; only a demonstration of the power of the Spirit. And I did this so that your faith should not depend on human philosophy but on the power of God.

What was the secret of Paul's success? At times he seems to us boastful, 'Take me as your pattern' (4:16) or 'Be united in imitating me' (Philippians 3:17). He boasts of his faultless Jewish ancestry: 'Are they Hebrews? So am I' (2 Corinthians 11:22 etc.).

He claims to have undergone for Christ more sufferings and persecutions than others (2 Corinthians 12), to have been perfect in the Law (Philippians 3:6), to have outstripped his contemporaries in his zeal for the Law (Galatians 1:14). He claims that he speaks in tongues more than any of them, and yet he does not make much of it (1 Corinthians 14:18). Yet here he insists that he came among the Corinthians in weakness, in great fear and trembling in order to make known the power of the Spirit. In the same way he will later admit that he holds the treasure of the light of Christ in fragile pots made of earthenware (2 Corinthians 4:7). There are some wonderful rhetorical passages in Paul, where he exploits to the full the literary and oratorical training he had received, but in the last analysis one must admit that his power consists simply in the power of his message and the promises of Christ.

In this passage, St Paul mentions knowing Jesus as the crucified Christ. For you, what does it mean to know Jesus?

“The power of the message
and the promises of Christ.”