



ST FRANCIS PARISH

NEWSLETTER



St Francis Parish Halstead online:
<http://stfranchishalstead.org/home/welcome/>

Mass @ 11.00 am St Francis of Assisi – Before Mass each Saturday
 @ 5.15 pm The Sacrament of Reconciliation – Parish Rosary at 5:30, (Please contact Fr
 Felix directly to book a date/time for reconciliation)
 (Tel 01787 472477 / halstead@brcdt.org).

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time & Location</u>	<u>Intentions</u>
Saturday 10th May	6pm Vigil Mass	Eternal repose of the Lilies list and Marjorie Badham
Sunday 11th May Fourth Sunday of Easter World Day of Prayer for Vocations	9am Mass St Nicholas	Wellbeing of all
Sunday 11th May Fourth Sunday of Easter World Day of Prayer for Vocations	11am Mass Halstead	A successful pontificate for Pope Leo XIV
Monday 12th May Ss Achilles, Nereas, Pancras	No Mass	The sanctuary light prayer intention is for the health and blessings on Obert and Juliana Chipato
Tuesday 13th May Our Lady of Fatima	No Mass	
Wednesday 14th May St Matthias, Apostle	No Mass	
Thursday 15th May	No Mass	
Friday 16th May	Exposition and benediction of the Blessed Sacrament @ 8am and Mass @9.30	

First reading: Acts 13: 14, 43-52

Second reading: Revelation 7: 9, 14-17

Gospel: John 10: 27-30



IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT:

Congratulations to Pat and Dave Jeffcott on their 55th marriage anniversary. We wish you good health and happiness. Thank you for all you do to support our parish community.

- Our Parish Youth club takes place at the last Saturday of the month. The next one is coming up on the 31st of May 2025 at 11am. It is open to ages 5-18.
- We are calling for sponsorship for the sanctuary lights for 2025. Write your intention and hand it over to Fr. Felix.
- We need new choristers and youth club coordinators. If you feel disposed, please speak with Fr. Felix

The parish has a Facebook page that gets updated daily with Mass readings and other items of information.

<https://www.facebook.com/Stfranchishalsteadparish/>

- If you recently joined our parish, we would like to have your name registered in our records. Please pick up a form at the back, fill it and return it to me or drop it at the back of the church.
- It will be beneficial for you to identify with an aspect of our parish life by committing your time and resources to the good of our parish. We need reinforcements on our volunteer team. If you would like to join our Extraordinary Ministers of the Holy Eucharist, please speak to Fr. Felix.
- We are still in need of new Mass readers, a fundraising team, social organisers, church cleaners, gardeners, and youth club organisers. If you can, please help us.
- It is a wholesome thought to pray for the dead (2 Maccabees 12:46). Consider offering a Mass for your departed loved ones and also for the living. It seems the culture of offering Masses in our parish is fading. Pick a form at the church's back and fill out your intentions.

- There is a chance for communion of the sick at homes for the housebound. Please let me know if any parishioners require a visit.
- It costs approximately £4,000 monthly to run our parish. Please consider sending an offering or a standing order to the parish. You can also make a donation to St. Francis of Assisi Church. Sort code: 40-13-22. Account Number: 71387014
- Everyone is welcome to participate in the Sanctuary Light sponsorship for 2024. You have the option to contribute £5.00 towards our weekly prayers for your specific intentions. Many thanks to those who signed up last year.
- Candles/ votive: £0
- Halstead coffee: £35.15
- April Mass intention: £35.00
- Sanctuary light sponsorship: £10.00
- Jumble sales: £500.85
- Monthly draw: £25.00
- Weekend collection: £407.83
- Many thanks for your generosity to the parish.
- The Holy Water font is now available for us to use. From the tap, take some home for your use. Before using, please let Fr. Felix know. Feel free to bless yourself with the Holy Water font; however, sanitise your hands before use to minimise the risk of possible infection.

For your diaries:

- Youth Club: Every Last Saturday of the Month. Next one is coming up on 31st of May 2025.
- Wednesday May 14th 2025: Deanery meeting to be held at St Francis Halstead@11am.

Meditation: How secure is your faith and trust in God? Jesus speaks of the tremendous trust he has in God his Father and the tremendous trust we ought to have in him because he is our good shepherd (John 10:11). What is the significance of Jesus calling himself the Good Shepherd? Shepherds were very common in the land of Jesus' time. A shepherd could have hundreds or thousands of sheep under his care.



Sheep without a shepherd were vulnerable prey for predators, such as wolves and thieves. If a sheep strayed from the fold it could easily get lost, fall into a ravine, or become injured. Shepherds had to keep a constant watch over their folds by day and by night. That is why shepherds had to literally live with their sheep so they could lead them out to good pasture for grazing during the day and bring them to a safe place at night for rest and shelter. Shepherds got to know their sheep well and kept a careful count each evening. They also called their sheep by name so the sheep could recognise the shepherd's voice when he called them to follow him.

The Good Shepherd and Guardian of our souls

God used the image of a shepherd to

describe his covenant relationship and care for his chosen people who were called by his name (Psalm 80:1 and 100:3). God called David, who shepherded his father's flock in his youth, to be the anointed king and shepherd for his people Israel (Ezekiel 37:24). Jesus, God's anointed Messiah and King, born from the tribe of David, called himself the Good Shepherd of the people whom his Father had entrusted to his care (John 10:29).

Peter the Apostle tells us that the Lord Jesus is the *Good Shepherd and Guardian of our souls* (1 Peter 2:25). He keeps a close and personal watch over every one of his sheep - his followers (disciples) who belong to him. He calls each of us personally by name to follow him. And he promises to be our guardian and protector from the snares of our enemy, Satan, the father of lies and a murderer from the beginning (John 8:44). The Lord leads us each day to good pastures - places where we can feed on his word and drink from the well-springs of living water which is his Holy Spirit (John 7:38-39, John 4:14). If we feed on his word and drink from the living water of the Holy Spirit, we will find the nourishment and strength we need to live each day for his glory and honour. Do you recognise the voice of your Shepherd and Guardian who calls to you each day?



New Pope Elected: Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost Becomes First American Pontiff, Chooses Name Leo XIV

We pray for our new Pope Leo XIV, may he truly listen to the Holy Spirit and lead the pilgrim church through the world to final victory over the forces of darkness.

“Why are you afraid? Have you no faith? Faith begins when we realise we are in need of salvation. We are not self-sufficient; by ourselves we flounder: we need the Lord, like ancient navigators needed the stars. Let us invite Jesus into the boats of our lives. Let us hand over our fears to him so that he can conquer them...” – Pope Francis

Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost, a 69-year-old American Augustinian and canon lawyer, was elected Pope Leo XIV on May 8, 2025, becoming the first U.S. pope. Born in Chicago in 1955, Prevost has Italian, French, and Spanish ancestry. He joined the Augustinian order in 1978, was

ordained a priest in 1982, and earned a doctorate in canon law in 1987. His career includes over a decade of ministry in Peru, leadership roles in the Augustinian order, and significant Vatican appointments under Pope Francis, including bishop of Chiclayo, Peru (2014), prefect of the Dicastery for Bishops (2023), and cardinal (2023). Known for emphasising the joy of faith and closeness to Jesus, Leo XIV blessed crowds in St. Peter’s Square, proclaiming “Peace be with you all!” in Italian.

Saint Pancras was canonised due to his martyrdom at age 14 around 304 AD during the persecution of Christians under Emperor Diocletian. As a Roman citizen who converted to Christianity, he refused to renounce his faith and sacrifice to Roman gods, even when offered wealth and power. His steadfast courage and ultimate sacrifice by beheading on the Via Aurelia inspired early Christians. His cult grew rapidly, with devotion documented from the 5th century, particularly after Pope Symmachus built a basilica over his tomb. Miracles attributed to his relics, such as divine punishment for false oaths, further solidified his veneration. In the early Church, canonisation often occurred through popular acclaim rather than formal processes, and Pancras’ youth and heroic faith made him a powerful symbol, leading to his recognition as a saint.

Bible Study



There is a meeting on 21st May at 2pm at 35 Potter Street, Sible Hedingham

