



Saint George

# ST FRANCIS PARISH NEWSLETTER



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](mailto:halstead@brcdt.org)).

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time &amp; Location</u>	<u>Intentions</u>
Saturday 18th April	6pm Vigil Mass	Eternal repose of John McKiernan
Sunday 19th April Third Sunday of Easter	9am Mass St Nicholas	Eternal repose of our Easter listed deceased
Sunday 19th April Third Sunday of Easter	11am Mass Halstead	Eternal repose of Ian Hardcastle
Monday 20th April	No Mass	The sanctuary light prayer intention is for the repose of Father David Manson
Tuesday 21st April St Anselm	No Mass	
Wednesday 22nd April		
Thursday 23rd April St George, patron saint of England	No Mass	
Friday 24th April	Exposition/Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament 8.30am and Mass@ 9.30am	<i>First reading: Acts 2: 14, 22-28</i> <i>Second reading: 1 Peeter 1: 17-21</i> <i>Gospel: Luke 24: 13-35</i>



## IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

### ➤ Youth Day at Castle Hedingham – Saturday, 20 June 2026

We're excited to invite all young people in the parish to a special Youth Day at Castle Hedingham on Saturday, 20 June 2026. This day is designed to help our youth connect with their peers, grow in faith, and gain valuable life skills such as CV writing and more. Thanks to the remaining portion of the Our Lady of Ransom Grant, which will subsidise the trip. Each young person is asked to contribute £5.00 to help cover operational and staffing costs. All food and venue expenses will be fully covered by the grant. It's going to be a meaningful, fun, and enriching day — we'd love to see our young people there.

### ➤ Our Parish Youth Club takes place on the last Saturday of the month. It is open to ages 5-18.

#### Deanery Business

### ➤ Feast day of the National Shrine of Our Lady of Light, spouse of the Holy Spirit

You are all invited to join Bishop Alan and the priests of the Colchester Deanery for Mass in celebration of the feast day of Our Lady of Light on Saturday 16th May 2026. The day will commence with a walking procession on the sea front commencing at 10.00am. Bishop Alan will preside at the Mass at 11.00am. All attending are invited to bring some flowers to place at the Shrine during the Penitential Rite. A reception will be held in the parish hall following the Mass.

### ➤ We are calling for sponsorship for the sanctuary lights for 2026. Write your intention and "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.

- 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. 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 2026. 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: £0.00
- Weekend collection: £380.82
- Halstead coffee: £50.00
- Hedingham coffee: £17.30
- 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 Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> of April 2026
- Coffee morning on Friday from 10am to midday

## When Saints Confronted Power: Faith in the Face of Authority

Throughout the history of the Church, sainthood has often emerged not in quiet isolation, but in moments of profound conflict with worldly power. From the early martyrs of the Roman Empire to modern witnesses under oppressive regimes, many saints stood firm when conscience collided with authority.

In medieval England, Thomas Becket became a symbol of resistance when he opposed King Henry II of England over the freedom of the Church. His martyrdom in Canterbury Cathedral shocked Christendom and remains a powerful reminder of the cost of fidelity. Centuries later, Thomas More chose a similar path, refusing to endorse the demands of Henry VIII. His calm witness at execution continues to inspire those facing moral compromise.

Beyond England, the courage of Joan of Arc demonstrates how even the young can challenge unjust authority. Tried and executed amid political turmoil, her faith and conviction ultimately outlived her judges. Earlier still, figures like Ambrose of Milan showed that spiritual authority could call even emperors to account, insisting that rulers answer to God's justice.

In the modern era, the witness of Óscar Romero and Maximilian Kolbe reveals that such conflicts are not relics of the past. Romero's voice against injustice and Kolbe's self-sacrifice in Auschwitz testify to a faith that confronts evil with love.

These saints remind us that holiness is not passive. It is a courageous fidelity to truth, even when the cost is high. Their lives challenge us to consider how we, too, might stand firm in faith when faced with the pressures of our own age.



Leo PP. XIV

## Faith and Public Life: Reflecting on Contemporary Tensions

In recent times, commentary has often highlighted an apparent “conflict” between Pope Leo XIV and Donald Trump. It is important, however, to understand this not as a personal dispute, but as a difference in perspective rooted in faith and public responsibility.

At the heart of these tensions are questions central to Catholic social teaching. The Holy Father has consistently emphasised the dignity of every human person, particularly the poor, the migrant, and the vulnerable. His words echo the Gospel call to welcome the stranger and to care for those in need. In contrast, political approaches such as those associated with Donald Trump often place a stronger emphasis on national security, border control, and the responsibilities of government to its own citizens.

There are also differing views on global cooperation. Pope Leo XIV has spoken of the need for nations to work together in addressing shared challenges such as poverty, conflict, and environmental stewardship. Political leaders, however, must often weigh these ideals against national priorities and practical constraints.

For Catholics, these differences are not merely political—they are an invitation to deeper reflection. The Church does not align itself with any one political programme, but instead offers

principles to guide the conscience: the dignity of the human person, the common good, solidarity, and subsidiarity.

As members of the faithful, we are called to engage thoughtfully and charitably with the world around us. In doing so, we can move beyond division and seek to witness to Christ's love in public life, always striving to uphold truth with compassion and humility.

## Why St Anselm Was Canonised

Anselm of Canterbury was canonised because of his outstanding holiness, his deep intellectual contribution to the faith, and his courageous defence of the Church's freedom.

Born in 1033 in northern Italy, Anselm became a Benedictine monk and later Archbishop of Canterbury. He was renowned for his personal holiness, marked by prayer, humility, and pastoral care. Those who knew him recognised in him a genuine love for God and for the people entrusted to him, qualities that are central to the Church's understanding of sanctity.

Anselm is also celebrated as one of the greatest Christian thinkers. His famous approach, often summed up as "*faith seeking understanding*," showed how reason and faith work together. In works such as the *Proslogion*, he explored the nature of God with clarity and devotion, helping to shape the development of medieval theology. His writings demonstrated that intellectual inquiry, when grounded in faith, can lead to deeper knowledge of God.

His canonisation was further supported by his steadfast defence of the Church's independence. As Archbishop, Anselm came into conflict with secular rulers, particularly over the question of who had authority to appoint bishops. Despite exile and pressure, he remained faithful to the



St Anselm

the Church, showing courage and integrity in the face of political power.

Anselm was canonised in 1494 and later declared a Doctor of the Church, recognising the lasting importance of his teaching. His life reminds us that holiness can be expressed not only through prayer and service, but also through the pursuit of truth. In St Anselm, the Church honours a saint who united intellect, faith, and courage in the service of God.

## Jumble Sale

### JUMBLE SALE

Saturday 18th April 10-2pm

Any clean and saleable items would be greatly appreciated

Please leave at the church.

Do come along and support this fundraising event.

Ruth Lloyd-Jones



# Medjugorje Web