

The Catholic Parish of Our Lady of the Rosary, Bexhill-on-Sea

The Communities of St Mary Magdalene, Bexhill & St Martha, Little Common

PARISH NEWS

First Holy Communion Update

There will be

First Reconciliations

at 4pm in St Mary Magdalene Church
on: Mondays: 9th & 12th February.

No need to book.

Confessions will be on a first-come,
first-served basis.

FHC Mass date can be booked after
Reconciliation.

Monthly Churches Clean

Next weekend 7th / 8th February after all
Masses, please. The more the merrier,
the quicker the clean. Thank you.

The Parish Office

Unfortunately, we are still operating
without a complete telephone system,
due to the continued upheaval after the
sale of the presbytery and hall!

The best way of contact continues to be
by email only: bexhill@abdiocese.org.uk

To contact Fr Stephen:
stephen.obrien@abdiocese.org.uk

Sylvia Cousins Safeguarding:
sg1.bexhill@abdiocese.org.uk

Lone Working

If you need access to St Mary
Magdalene Church outside Mass times,
please be aware that due to our lone
working policy it is important to check
with the office or Fr Stephen first.

1st February 2026

FOURTH SUNDAY OF YR A

**Blessed are the poor in spirit;
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

In the nineteenth century, an idea grew up in the Church- that of the so-called *societas perfecta*- the Church as a “perfect society”, with its laws and customs taking precedence over those of the world around it. It is not hard to see why- in 1860, Pope Pius IX had lost most of his earthly kingdom in central Italy, the Papal States, to be followed by Rome itself in 1870. Meanwhile, the world had developed from the confessional hostility of the Enlightenment towards Catholicism to espouse new doctrines, such as Marxism, or the German nationalism of Bismarck and Wilhelm I, which proposed a utopia on Earth without God (such ideas often turned out to bring nightmares and horror, but that was later). The temptation to “pull up the drawbridge” and make an autonomous Catholic society was great.

Alas, such an idea has one great problem- it’s pure fiction. We could not and cannot opt out of the societies in which we live. In fact, also, we shouldn’t- the Great Commission of Jesus is to make disciples of all the nations. It’s a radically inclusive vision, and it is this concept, allied with the idea of the Church as the people of God, which has dominated Catholic thought in the past century.

However, while we are in the world, we must not adopt all the patterns of thought in the world. The Beatitudes in today’s Gospel remind us that those who are makarioi- blessed in a special way by God- are those whom society often neglects or despises- the poor, the humble, the downtrodden. Those indeed who suffer. The promise is that they will receive God’s love in a special way in this world, and then the reward of eternal life with him. Let’s not forget all whom society may overlook or oppress, and remember that the true Catholic *societas perfecta* is one where we all struggle to achieve God’s justice and love for all.

God bless, Fr Stephen.

We pray for those who have died: Thomas Williams, Jack Mawas (aka Jimmy), Neville Austin, Harry Beeney, Yseult Phillips RIP.

We pray for the sick: Dorothy Smyth, Margaret Hitchman, David Spooner, Samuel Barden, Pete Cornfield, Baby Neveah O'Leary, Cecila Weathers, Margaret Carley, Jackie & Laurence Keep, Stephen Doyle, Ron Harbin, Jean Clifford, Margaret McNamara, Elizabeth Doust, Pat Payne, David Ball, Fr Andrew Pinsent, Sian Stevens, John O'Brien, Kate Brignall, Sally Moore, Terence Phillips, Veronica Bennett, Jackie Malcolm, Bridget Bailey.

Arundel & Brighton Diocesan Website: <https://www.abdiocese.org.uk/>

News: <https://www.abdiocese.org.uk/diocese/news> & **Events:** <https://www.abdiocese.org.uk/diocese/events>

New Temporary Deanery Website & Newsletter: to help with regular communication across our deanery, especially relating to the formation of a single parish, a temporary website has been developed which can be found at www.eastbourne-stleonards.org.uk.

Liturgy & Prayer

Prayer for Priests: Every first Tuesday of the month, after 10am Mass, St Mary Magdalene (Rosary before the Blessed Sacrament and prayer).

Child Led Masses at 9am St Marthas: Our next Child led mass will be 8th February. Focusing on our Parish Motto "*You are the Light of the world*". Children are invited to Join Fr Stephen in the entry procession carrying small night (Provided). Children who would like to read a Bidding Prayer at this Mass, please see Sarah Surman after the 9am Mass, this Sunday 1st February.

Bereavement Support

Ministry of Consolation: if you are recently bereaved or still struggling with Bereavement, our Ministry of Consolation Bereavement befrienders are here to offer support. We also have trained counsellors who can offer support. In the first instance, contact our administrator: 07783 598238 or E: bexhill@svp.org.uk

Social & Pastoral

Next SVP Tea at 3: Monday 9th February, St Martha's Hall. Info: bexhill@svp.org.uk All Welcome.

Catholic Women's League (CWL): Meet at 7.30 pm on 1st Mon. of the month, in St Martha's Hall. Contact: 211717 or 221803. The next CWL meeting on Monday 2nd February will be a Beetle Drive.

Wild Goose Course: 7.30pm, Thursday 26th February, St Martha's hall. Topic: The Spirit convicts.

Bexhill Foodbank: They are looking for more volunteer drivers to help at the Bexhill and Battle Foodbank. Please get in touch if you are interested in finding out more and applying: info@bexhill.foodbank.org.uk, or 01424 322541 and leave a message for a call back. You can download their application form from their website - <https://bexhill.foodbank.org.uk/support-us/volunteer>

Sussex Catenians: A Catholic organization for men and their families in Hastings & Bexhill. More info: <https://sussexcatenians.org/> or scan the QR opposite,



Parish Priest: Fr Stephen O'Brien.

Parish Deacon: Rev. Simon Kirkdale.

Administrator: Bonita Osmond. Safeguarding: Sylvia Cousins.



Parish Offertory & Fundraising

Mass Intentions & other payments: BACS: Name: RCD St Mary Magdalene, Acct No. 21077139, S/C 40-05-20. (Please add a reference). **Contactless Payments:** To give by Card, please use the Dona Contactless Machines; select the appropriate category. **GIFT AID:** Some collections are Gift Aid-able.

Retiring Collections – 1st February – Racial Justice Sunday: Racial Justice Sunday is an annual event observed across Christian churches in the UK to promote awareness of racial inequality and celebrate the dignity of all people.

Weekly Collections 25th Jan: Offertory: £1037.59 / GA: £244 / Second Collection: £355.90

Formation & Sacraments

Journey in Faith: Adult Formation & RCIA - Adult Baptisms, Receptions & Confirmations:

For those on the course. Next Session: 4th February, 7pm, St Martha's Hall.

Please pray for our Catechumen for Baptism & Candidates for Reception, who now deepen their appreciation of the Catholic faith. The next event is the Rite of Election with Bishop Richard on Saturday 21st February, at Arundel Cathedral.

Confirmation: Retreat Day: Sunday 1st February, 11.45 am – 6 pm, Penhurst Retreat Centre.

Next Session: Sunday 8th February – 5pm, St Martha's Church and Hall.

First Holy Communion 2026: The next parents meeting for FHC candidates - 6.30pm, 10th February, St Martha's Hall.

Infant Baptism (Aged 0-6): Applications submitted via the website: <https://stmbexhill.co.uk/baptism/>

Baptism: Children of Catechetical Age (7+): These children must be individually prepared, and we will assess your needs on a case-by-case basis. Applications: <https://stmbexhill.co.uk/we-journey-together/>

Marriage: 12-months' notice required. Please contact the parish office if getting married in Spring 2026.

Home Visits: you need a non-urgent sacramental or pastoral visit, please use the form:

<https://stmbexhill.co.uk/visiting-the-sick-and-housebound/> or telephone 01424 210263 opt, 4.

Diocesan Grandparents Newsletter link: <https://www.abdiocese.org.uk/news/grand-news---new-issue-out-now>

Mass Intentions

Don't forget that every Mass celebrated in the parish can be offered for either the repose of the soul of your departed loved ones, or for the well-being and good intentions of yourself, or your family and friends. We have availability in the coming months, both on Sundays and weekdays. If you would like to book a Mass Intention (suggested donation £10) please email the parish office.

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| Saturday 31st January | Memorial | St John Bosco, Priest |
| St Mary Magdalene Church | 10.00am | Caroline, Patrick A'Herne & Family |
| St Mary Magdalene Church | 10.30am | Confessions on Request |
| St Mary Magdalene Church | 5.30pm | Confessions on Request |
| St Mary Magdalene Church | 6.00pm | Deceased Capaldi Families |

FOURTH SUNDAY OT YR A

Zep 2:3; 3:12-13, 1 Cor 1:26-31 & Mt 5:1-12a

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|---------------------------------------|---------|---------------------------------|
| Sunday 1st February | | |
| St Martha's Church | 9.00am | Maria Immacollatta Di Vito RIP |
| St Mary Magdalene Church | 11.00am | Hargan Family Living & Deceased |
| St Martha's Church | 11.00am | Syro-Malabar Mass |

Second Collection: Racial Justice Sunday (not our GA)

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| Monday 2nd February | Feast | Presentation of the Lord, Candlemas |
| St Mary Magdalene Church | 10.00am | Irene Herring RIP |
| Tuesday 3rd February | Ferial | Tuesday in 4th week OT |
| St Mary Magdalene Church | 10.00am | Price Family Living & Deceased |
| Wednesday 4th February | Ferial | Wednesday in 4th week OT |
| St Mary Magdalene Church | No Mass | - |
| Thursday 5th February | Memorial | St Agatha, Virgin and Martyr |
| St Mary Magdalene Church | 6.30pm | Fr Stephen Ortiger RIP |
| Friday 6th February | Memorial | St Paul Miki & Companions |
| St Mary Magdalene Church | 11.00am | Requiem Mass Jack Mawas RIP |
| Saturday 7th February | Opt. Mem | Saturday Memorial of the BVM |
| St Mary Magdalene Church | 10.00am | Deceased Langan, A'Herne & Cheasty Families |
| St Mary Magdalene Church | 10.30am | Confessions on Request |
| Memorial Garden | After Mass | Burial of Ashes of Yvonne Gibbs RIP |
| St Mary Magdalene Church | 5.30pm | Confessions on Request |
| St Mary Magdalene Church | 6.00pm | People of the Parish |
| St Mary Magdalene Church | After Mass | Church Clean (Transept) |

FIFTH SUNDAY OT YR A

Is 58:6-10, 1 Cor 2:1-5 & Mt 5:13-16

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|---------------------------------------|------------|-------------------------------|
| Sunday 8th February | | |
| St Martha's Church | 9.00am | Margaret Hanson RIP |
| St Martha's Church | After Mass | Church Clean (whole Church) |
| St Mary Magdalene Church | 11.00am | Allana McNamara GE |
| St Mary Magdalene Church | After Mass | Church Clean (nave & porches) |
| St Martha's Church | 11.00am | Syro-Malabar Mass |

Second Collection: Diocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage Fund (GA)

Sacrament of the Sick Urgent Visits

'Last Rites does not mean Last Minute! "As soon as a person begins to be in danger of death because of illness, injury or old age, the time for anointing has surely already come".

Home Visits

Office hours:

bexhill@abdiocese.org.uk

01424 210 263 opt 4.

Out of hours:

stephen.obrien@abdiocese.org.uk

For emergencies

i.e. Last Rites:

07872 396683

In Eastbourne or

Conquest Hospital:

Contact the Chaplaincy on 0300 131 5307 or 5308 who will coordinate the visits to both hospitals (out of hours ask the Ward to call the on-call Catholic chaplain).

In Bexhill Hospital: ask

the ward to contact the Parish Office on 01424 210263 opt. 4.

Going into Hospital?

Ask for the Sacrament of the Sick in Advance at your usual Sunday Mass.

Care Home Visits: Please

clear the visit with the Home before contacting the Parish.

Lost Property

We still have full boxes of lost property at both Churches, and they are constantly growing! We will keep them for two more weeks, after which we will take the items to the Charity shop. Thank you.