

St. Mary's Catholic Church
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Twenty-Fifth Sunday of the Year

Services this week

Day	Time	Location	Celebration
Saturday 19	6.30pm	Gainford	Twenty-Fifth Sunday of the Year
Sunday 20	9.30am	Barnard Castle	Twenty-Fifth Sunday of the Year
Sunday 20	11.30am	Barnard Castle (Ord.)	Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity
Monday 21	6.15pm	Barnard Castle (Lat.)	S. Matthew
Tuesday 22	10am	Gainford	<i>Votive</i>
Thursday 24	10am	Barnard Castle	Our Lady of Walsingham – family Mass with S. Mary's School
Thursday 24	7pm	Barnard Castle (Ord.)	OUR LADY OF WALSINGHAM
Friday 25	12noon	Barnard Castle (Ord.)	<i>Votive</i>
Friday 25	6-7pm	Barnard Castle	Holy Hour
Saturday 26	6.30pm	Barnard Castle	Twenty-Sixth Sunday of the Year
Sunday 27	9.30am	Gainford	Twenty-Sixth Sunday of the Year
Sunday 27	11.30am	Barnard Castle (Ord.)	Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity

Confessions: after Mass, by appointment, or Monday 5.30-6pm, Thursday 5.30-6pm, or Saturday 10-11am

Special Collection – There is a second collection today for the work of home missions

Mass Readings – Parish Mass Book, page 131

First Reading	<i>Isaiah 55:6-9</i>
Responsorial Psalm	The LORD is close to all who call him. (Ps. 144)
Second Reading	<i>Philippians 1:20c-24, 27a</i>
Gospel Acclamation	Alleluia, alleluia. Open our hearts, O Lord, that we may pay attention to the words of your Son. Alleluia.
Gospel	<i>Matthew 20:1-16</i>

Rota

This week: Welcomer –; Reader – Andrew

Next week: Welcomer – Jane; Reader – Jane; Bidding Prayers – Jane

Blessed Fulton Sheen

So often the Saints seem like super heroes from another age, but in each age God raises up new Saints to work as the times need. This Thursday, Archbishop Fulton Sheen is to be beatified, the step before being canonised as a Saint; a man widely recognised and admired, and unquestionably one quick to embrace the new media which were emerging to spread the Gospel.

Born in Illinois in 1895, he was baptised Peter John; however, he came to use his mother's maiden name of Fulton. His academic abilities were quickly recognised and immediately after he was ordained to the priesthood he was sent to Europe for further studies. He also taught for a time in Hertfordshire at S. Edmund's College, which combined a seminary with a boys' school; at the same time working closely with S. Patrick's Soho (still a centre of evangelistic work). He returned home to the U.S. in 1928, and quickly began the media ministry which would make him famous.

In 1930 he began a weekly radio broadcast, The Catholic Hour, which regularly gained a few million listeners. The gentle tone of his voice was widely acknowledged, but this didn't mean that his message was toned-down, he referred to Hitler as an example of the anti-Christ, for example. In 1940 there was one of the first television broadcasts of Mass, and Sheen was the natural choice for a commentator; in at the beginning he recognised the potential for television to be used as a tool of the Faith.

He was appointed as an auxiliary Bishop for New York, and ordained in 1951; however, this was not at the expense of his media work. In 1952 he started a weekly show 'Life is worth living' in which he would reflect on current moral issues; when the show became surprisingly popular, the host of the main competition broadcast at the same time on a different channel joked "If I'm going to be eased off the top by anyone, it's better that I lose to the One for whom Bishop Sheen is speaking."

Even those with apparently successful ministries in the Church do not find life easy, and there were clear tensions with the Archbishop of New York; it seems likely that the Archbishop pushed for Sheen to be appointed Bishop of Rochester so that he would be at a distance, and unable to continue to run his main evangelistic work 'the Society for the Propagation of the Faith'. Whatever the truth of the tension or quarrels, in his autobiography, Sheen took the time to praise Cardinal Spellman and never hinted at problems.

At the age of 74 he resigned as Bishop of Rochester; however, this was no retirement. He was given a personal title of Archbishop in recognition of his work, but he continued to speak and writing extensively. A mere two months before his death, Pope John Paul II happened to be visiting New York, and at S. Patrick's Cathedral embraced Sheen saying :you have written and spoken well of the Lord Jesus Christ. You are a loyal son of the Church."

Sheen's style was to speak clearly and straightforwardly and often with humour, but never at the expense of the truth he was preaching. At a time when there was still a large amount

of suspicion of Catholicism in the U.S., he was a popular figure on all sides, winning people over with charm and openness, without sacrificing any truth. But all of this flowed from a profound personal faith; he remarked several times that the key to all of his work was that he began every day with an hour's silent prayer in front of the Blessed Sacrament. May we take his example, to draw on the ancient truth of the Faith and proclaim it to the whole world. – Fr. Thomas.

Prayer List: Among the sick of the parish, please keep John Burgess, Anthony Cole, Norah Mackay, Izzy Herbert, Alice Musto, Diedre and Pat Estall, and Thomas Savage in your prayers. We pray particularly for the recently departed, including Tom Ball and for those whose anniversaries occur at this time, including Thomas Weightman Jnr. If you know of others who would like to be added to the parish prayer list, please let Fr. Thomas know. You may find the following prayer useful as a way of drawing our parish ever closer together round Our Lord. It is through his grace that we are turned from a gathering of people in the same place, into a parish, into a genuine community.

Loving Father, we the people of St Mary's Parish offer ourselves to you, to be your people in this place, to be your Church in our community, and to be instruments of peace, forgiveness and love. Help us grow in gratitude so that we can recognise and thank you for all our blessings.

Instil in us a deep sense of generosity so that we are willing to share our gifts, our talents, our time and our resources. Help us face whatever the future holds and to make new beginnings in your name.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, your Son our Lord. Amen.

Monthly giving As part of making financial matters clear and transparent, from now on we will publish the giving to the parish on a monthly basis (as this allows standing orders to be included).

August 2026: Loose plate (giving at the offertory during Mass) - £939.92

Weekly envelopes and monthly standing orders - £834.67

Total: £1774.59

Many thanks for your generosity.

Parish WhatsApp group “Therefore encourage one another and build each other up...” *1 Thessalonians 5:11* A Parish WhatsApp group is to be set up to allow Parishioners the opportunity to share and encourage one another in their faith. To share events, prayer petitions, news, reflections, etc, to build up our Parish community in a beneficial and positive way. If you wish to join, please add your name & mobile number to the list at the back of church or speak to Anne-Marie Kelly. Thank you!

Children's Liturgy There is a children's liturgy this morning. This is aimed at children of primary school age, please take children to the Garden Room directly from 9:20, they be safely escorted back into church during Mass.

Saint Vincent de Paul Society. The month of September is SVP awareness month. The St Vincent De Paul Society (or as it is known – the SVP) is an international Catholic voluntary organisation dedicated to tackling poverty by providing practical assistance to those in need – irrespective of faith, age or gender in other words Turning concern into action. The Society is a lay organisation initially formed in Paris in 1833 by Frederic Ozanam and active in

England & Wales since 1844. It was inspired by St Vincent De Paul a 17th century priest in Paris, famed for his works with the poor. Over the month of September, we will highlight our work and the initiatives we have started. We are also holding an open meeting on 19th October in the St Augustine's Parish Centre, and all are welcome. We will remind you of this date nearer the time.

Home Missions Mission Sunday. Today is Home Mission Sunday, and there will be a second collection for this work. Abbot Hugh Allen, Director of Mission at the Conference of Bishops writes:

"On Sunday 20th September, we will celebrate Home Mission Sunday, a day for us as the Catholic community in England and Wales to celebrate our faith in these lands, and our shared commitment to communicate the beauty and the joy of knowing Jesus Christ. Celebrating the Holy Father's first encyclical, the theme for this year is "*Magnifica Humanitas*" as the heart of mission. We can celebrate together the call the Holy Father has placed before us to live out our authentic humanity which finds its fullness in Christ. More details about this can be found on the Bishops' Conference website - Home Mission Sunday - Catholic Bishops' Conference

"The Second Collection on this weekend is to support the work carried out by the Bishops' Conference Mission Directorate. Through the Mission Directorate, we support our Church in a wide field of service and mission here in England and Wales.

"Please hold this important work in your prayers and give as generously as you can. Thank you."

Knit and natter – following Mass on Thursday a group to spend some time in fellowship together, whilst engaging in knitting, crochet, embroidery...or indeed any other similar craft.

Safeguarding The Parish operates in accordance with Statutory Safeguarding Guidance and Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA) and Diocese's policies and procedures at all times. Our Parish Safeguarding Representative is Fiona Bissell or alternatively the Diocesan Safeguarding Team can be contacted on 0191 2433305 or at safeguarding@diocesehn.org.uk

Prayer for England

As the jubilee year has finished, we return to offering the prayer for the conversion of England at the end of Mass.

O Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God and our most gentle Queen and Mother, look down in mercy upon England, thy Dowry, and upon us all who greatly hope and trust in thee. By thee it was that Jesus, our Saviour and our hope was given unto the world; and He has given thee to us that we might hope still more. Plead for us thy children whom thou didst receive and accept at the foot of the Cross O sorrowful Mother. Intercede for our separated brethren, that with us in the one true fold they may be united to the chief shepherd, the vicar of thy Son. Pray for us all, dear mother, that by faith and fruitful in good works we may all deserve to see and praise God together with thee, in our heavenly home. Amen.