



The Parish of the Assumption, *Holy Trinity*

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The Assumption is part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham Trust

Sunday 5th July 2026 – Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Readings: Year A

Dear Friends,

When I was a boy growing up in West Wales, I remember walking past the Catholic primary school. My father was a lapsed Catholic so we didn't go to St Francis but to the local State primary. St Francis seemed somehow very brown, it smelled of gravy and there appeared to be nuns popping out of every hole. Catholics seemed, well, different to us locals. They were all Irish, Italians with the odd Spaniard thrown into the mix. Wales had a decent share of Italian POWs after the Second World War who didn't go back home, presumably to poverty in Puglia or elsewhere. Mr Algieri tended his allotment at the back of our house, Frank Todaro ran the barber's, Rabiotti's sold great ice-cream. The point was... well, they were all foreign. The priests were mainly Irish and were popular "men's men" in a working-class community. A succession of them drank in my mother's hotel and one of them, Father Sartori, raised enough money to found a cancer hospice (ironically dying in there himself).

The Catholic community has come a long way since then, no longer "outside the Pale" to use that quaint expression from Southern Ireland when all the Protestant settlers lived along a strip down the country and the poor Catholic population with their priests lived inland. Boris Johnson was the first baptised Catholic Prime Minister (although technically he apostatised when he had Anglican Confirmation at Eton College) and if Andy Burnham does become Prime Minister, he will be the first Labour Catholic PM. The monarch can still not be a Catholic (discrimination laws...?) but just about every other position is now open to a community once considered "enemies of the State".

And there lies the danger which we can already observe. When you are a beleaguered minority, you huddle together, you stay close, common rituals and language are vital for self-preservation. In the words of the late Roy Hattersley, the Catholics were a "tribe" with a tribal identity. Now that the tribalism is diluted by social acceptance and "normalisation" what happens to those norms which have bonded the community so well and so tightly over the years of marginalisation? They begin to loosen, the teachings of the Church are not so prominent, dilution and compromise are the order of the day... integration into a secular society is the result, with all the abandonment of Catholic Faith and practice.

That is our challenge. No one wants to return to being "outsiders", but the price of integration must not be a desertion of our Catholic Faith. Abortion, euthanasia, same sex marriage... these are all now normalised in our country but are totally against the teaching of the Church, our Mother and our Guide. It can be very difficult in normal social situations to affirm Catholic teaching on these and other issues but if we want the Faith to survive in an increasingly hostile society, we must bear witness.

In 1681 St Oliver Plunkett was hung, drawn and quartered at Tyburn, a gentle learned Archbishop who was the last to die for the Faith in England. Let us ask for his prayers and strength so that we

can be part of the living chain of transmission and ensure that the " Faith once delivered to the saints" does not wither and die in our country.

St Oliver, pray for us.

P.S. This next week we see the Ordination of two young men, one in the *Syro-Malabar* and the other in the *Syro-Malankar* Rite, Jithin and Tenny. Please pray for them and also for Jonathan who was ordained this Saturday. All three for our diocese but they are the last for some years.

God bless everyone. Another heatwave on the horizon so stay hydrated!
Fr Clive

Last week's Second Collection for Peter's Pence raised £254.03 across the Parish.

Masses & Rosary as usual: Monday, Tuesday (*St Carlo's Coffee Club*), and Thursday (*Adoration & Benediction*) Mass 9.15am. Friday Rosary for Peace 9.15am.

There will be an Oxford Pro-life coffee social event on Saturday 11th July, from 2pm-4:30pm @ Love Coffee Co., 231 Banbury Road OX2 7HN. More info about this event and more can be found at oxfordprolife.org.uk/events/ or follow the QR below.

Aid to Venezuela: Please visit St Teresa's website (stteresachurch-charlbury.com) for information on the **ACN's** ongoing appeal for aid in Venezuela following the earthquakes.

In July, let us pray with the Holy Father for the respect and protection of human life in all its stages, recognizing it as a gift from God.

Please continue to pray for our sick, housebound and frail parishioners of both our Parish. In addition to your own daily prayers please remember: All those who mourn the loss of loved ones. The repose of the souls of those who have died. People whose anniversaries occur at this time. The people of Venezuela, the Middle East, Ukraine, Sudan, Afghanistan, and Pakistan.

The Parish operates in accordance with Statutory Safeguarding Guidance and the National and Archdiocese policies and procedures at all times. Our Parish Safeguarding Representatives are **Tina Short** (sg.holytrinity.chippingnorton@rcaob.org.uk) and **Sharnalee Foster** (sg.stteresaoflisieux.charlbury@rcaob.org.uk). Alternatively, the Diocesan Safeguarding Team can be contacted on 0121 230 6240 or at safeguarding@rcaob.org.uk if you have any concerns.

