



**The Parish of the Assumption
West Oxfordshire
Holy Trinity Chipping Norton
St Teresa's Charlbury**

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The Assumption is part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham Trust

Sunday 13th September 2026 – Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Readings: Year A

This Sunday we are asked to remember all our Catholic schools, their pupils, staff and parents. Archbishop Bernard has written a Pastoral letter to be read at Sunday Mass.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

In today's Gospel, when speaking about forgiveness, Jesus tells Peter, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven." This powerful teaching reminds us of the limitless and unconditional love of God. Through His mercy, we are offered forgiveness when we repent, and we are called in turn to be instruments of God's love, grace, forgiveness and peace.

Today, on Education Sunday, we celebrate the wonderful gift of Catholic education in our Archdiocese. In our Catholic schools, we strive to help young people grow in these virtues, forming communities where faith, compassion and reconciliation can flourish.

As Pope Leo XIV reminds us in the Encyclical Letter Magnifica Humanitas: "Schools are not called to follow the pace of the digital world, but to offer that which the digital sphere by itself cannot provide, namely a shared time for learning and developing trustworthy relationships."

This call to relationship is reflected in our diocesan mission: "To form Christ-centred pilgrims of hope with kind hearts, questioning minds, a thirst for knowledge and a hunger for justice."

Today, I invite you to help bring this mission to life in Catholic education, so that our children, young people and school communities may continue to experience the joy and wonder of our faith.

I am most grateful for the wonderful response to last year's Education Sunday appeal when I asked parishioners to consider becoming Foundation Directors and Foundation Governors for our academies and schools. As a result of the appeal, we filled over 140 vacancies – a significant and humbling achievement.

Being a governor at a school or a director of a Catholic multi-academy trust board is a true vocation and a practical way to serve Christ and His Church. By giving your time, skills and faith, you can help shape the present and future of Catholic education for thousands of children and young people. It is a generous expression of Christian service and a practical witness to God's love.

Every day, in our 236 flourishing Catholic state schools and academies and 5 excellent Catholic independent schools, children and young people are invited to encounter Christ and to grow as pilgrims of hope. Through prayer, learning and service, our schools nurture both faith and

excellence, helping each child to recognise their God-given dignity and potential. I would like to offer my sincere thanks to our school leaders, priest, deacon and lay chaplains, directors, governors, teachers and support staff whose commitment, generosity and witness make this mission possible.

Their faithful service supports not only the education of our young people but also the mission of the Church, and I am profoundly grateful for all that they do.

Many of our schools are part of Catholic multi-academy trusts, each led by a Board of Directors and supported by local and, in the case of our largest academy trusts, regional governing bodies serving individual schools and communities. Our voluntary-aided schools are supported by dedicated Boards of Governors, who also play a vital role in the life of the school. In every case, foundation directors and foundation governors, appointed by the Archdiocese on my behalf, help to ensure that the Catholic mission and identity of the school remain at its heart. I am deeply grateful for their generous service, leadership and vocation.

God's limitless love and merciful forgiveness offer us a powerful example. By volunteering as a director or governor, you would be responding to the Lord's call to share what you have received, allowing His mercy to shape your service and helping our schools to be places of compassion, forgiveness and hope.

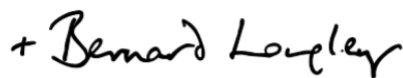
We welcome those with experience in Catholic life and mission, education, finance, law, HR, estates management, or any field that could strengthen our schools. You will receive full training and support to help you flourish in the role.

If you are a practising Catholic, demonstrated through regular Sunday Mass attendance, and your parish priest supports your application, I would ask you to consider this calling. Through your service, you can help our schools to flourish, ensuring they remain Christ-centred communities of learning, compassion, reconciliation and hope.

As we see in today's Gospel, forgiveness is rooted in acts of love. I therefore ask you prayerfully to consider whether the Lord may be calling you to offer your time, gifts and experience in loving service of the young people and staff in our schools. If you feel prompted to respond, please speak to your parish priest, who has also shared details of the application process in the parish newsletter. For information, directors and governors typically spend around 10 hours each month undertaking their duties.

May the Lord bless you for considering this opportunity and may the example of Christ inspire you to respond generously to this invitation.

Yours devotedly in Christ

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bernard Longley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

✠ Bernard Longley
Archbishop of Birmingham

Given at Birmingham on 3 September 2026 and appointed to be read in all Churches and Chapels of the Archdiocese on Education Sunday (12/13 September 2026)

Second Collection is for The Catholic Education Service.

Masses & Rosary:

	Holy Trinity	St Teresa's
Monday	9.15 Mass	
Tuesday	9.15 Mass (<i>St Carlo's Coffee Club</i>)	
Wednesday		9.15am Mass (<i>Adoration & Benediction</i>)
Thursday	9.15am Mass (<i>Adoration & Benediction</i>)	
Friday	9.15am Rosary for Peace	9.15am Mass
Saturday	6pm Vigil Mass	
Sunday	11am Mass	9.15am Mass

Hosting Fr Tony: if you are interested in hosting Fr Tony, a new list can be found at the back of church should you want to put your name forward.

Churches Together in Charlbury Street Fair Stall – “Home Grown and Home Made” Saturday 19th September. Support the stall (in aid of *Churches Together* in Charlbury and the Corner House) by providing Home Baked/Made Goods and Garden Produce. Bring them to the stall from 12.30p.m on the day or place them on the table inside **St Mary's Church, Charlbury**, in the afternoon of Friday 18th September. If anyone else is able to help with the stall, there is a sign up sheet on the noticeboard in St Mary's, Charlbury. Please sign up for a time slot there or email rachelgallagher@hotmail.com. Everyone is also warmly invited to come and buy something delicious on the day! Hope to see you there. If you have any questions, please contact Inez at: inez.lynn@sky.com or catch her after Mass.

CAFOD Event at St Chad's Cathedral – Join us on Saturday 19 September from 10am in the **Masterson Room, St Chad's Cathedral**, to learn more about CAFOD's work. Prayer will be led by *Archbishop Bernard*. Guest speaker *Teamrat Belai*, Country Director for CST Ethiopia, will share insights into the challenges facing communities in Ethiopia and the impact of CAFOD's work. Email birmingham@cafod.org.uk for more information. We look forward to seeing you.

Young Christian men needed for research interviews – Some surveys suggest that a growing number of younger men are engaging with Christianity. Our research team is looking for volunteers to tell us about their faith journey and help us understand their experiences better. We are looking for Christian men aged 18-30 who have found faith or the church in the last 5 years. If this describes you, you are invited to participate in a 40-60 min interview online or in person. You'll be asked questions about how you came to faith or church, your beliefs and practices, and the role Christianity plays in your life and identity. Your details will be kept confidential, and we will make every effort to ensure you are not identifiable in any reports or publications from the study. If you are interested and would like more information, please contact *Kristin Aune* or *Szilvi Watson* at Regent's Park College, University of Oxford at szilvi.watson@regents.ox.ac.uk.

In September, let us pray with the Holy Father for a just and sustainable management of water, a vital resource, so that everyone may have equal access to it.

Please continue to pray for our sick, housebound and frail parishioners of our Parish, in particular Hilda and Anne Clifton of St Teresa's. 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. For the Middle-East, Ukraine, Nepal, and Tibet.

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.