

Spiritual Thought

It may feel archaic to celebrate the feast of Christ the King – “not our king” is a cry heard whenever King Charles appears, and even in America there are “No King” protests, just in case anyone had ambitions in that area.

This feast day was begun 100 years ago by Pope Pius XI at the end of the Holy Year 1925. At that time there was growing secularism and nationalism on the global political stage. The Pope, by promulgating this feast, hoped to remind the world of the higher things.

Secularism is the ideology that says there must be a complete separation between the church and the state. Secularism says you may have your private faith, your little practices, but keep everything to yourself. This is fine when talking about railways and water supply, Bishops after all have no expertise in these, but becomes problematic with moral issues, family life, education and human dignity. The Gospels after all have much to say on these things.

Nationalism is also problematic, saying, as it does, that the nation has deeper and more important claims on an individual than any other allegiance. Family, faith, individual freedom and conscience, as well as love for the whole of humanity are, according to this ideology, less important than the nation. Deeply problematic.

Both these ideologies desire to remove from society the thought of God, his teachings, his claims, his desire for the world. Like the crowd in the Gospel of John, these ideologies cry out “we have no king but Caesar.” (19.15) However, in the Church we proclaim Christ is the King. For our taxes and public services we may look to the state – but for our conscience, our freedom, our deepest fulfillment, only He can help us. He created all people, and our individual and collective fulfillment can only be found in Him. His Kingdom is a constant, public reminder that we are all made for higher things, that we all have a dignity which no law or state can remove. His Kingdom breaks us out of our narrow, atomized lives, the echo-chamber of secularism which says “this is all, there is nothing else” and cries “There is more, there is much more – there is life with God and profound union with each other.” And for this cry the church has suffered much persecution for the sake of the Kingdom. Let us proudly say Christ is King of my life, and of the whole world which he created.

Parish Restoration Update

After the amazing news of Andrew Carmichael’s legacy, this is just a short update on the Parish Restoration Project. Great work has been done by our parish volunteers in uncovering the original church floor – this work will be completed after Christmas.

Fr Tom and Brian met with the conservation architect, the heritage advisor and the head of the Bishop’s patrimony committee, to narrow down the focus of our first National Lottery bid to a few essential works – the preservation of the main stained glass, the roofs and guttering and the uncovering of the original ceiling. I will write more as the bid is written and submitted, so we all know what is happening. But for now, thank you for your prayers and support. Much needs to be done, but all things are possible with God.

Christmas Hampers

Maggie has prepared the most wonderful hampers this year, which are being raffled for the Restoration Fund. Please see the table at the back of the church. Tickets are £2 a strip, and the raffled will be drawn after the 11am Mass on Sunday 7th December.

A Message from the Manna Centre

We have been given the wonderful opportunity to have our donations doubled up until 29th December – whoopee! The Aviva Community Fund (ACF) will match all donations made (up to a maximum of £250 per donation). Our page can be accessed via the red ‘Donate’ button on our website

<https://www.mannasociety.org.uk/> Our target is to raise £48,000 - one month’s running costs for the Manna Centre. The Manna Centre provides help, housing and meals for the London Homeless at London Bridge.

November Holy Souls Lists

At the back of the church you will find blank lists for our Holy Souls box, at the front of the church. Please fill these in with the names of your deceased love ones and they will be prayed for at every mass in November. Please do not put money into this box (the church is open throughout the day, so let’s not put temptation into anyone’s way). If you would like to have a Mass offered for the Holy Souls, or for anyone in particular, please fill in the Mass Envelopes at the back of the church and pop them in the letter box, or presbytery door.

Food Bank Collection Point

I have approached the Greenwich Food Bank about becoming a collection point (where we collect non-perishable food and toiletries, and take them to the distribution center). If anyone would like to join a rota to take our collections to the distribution center, please speak to me after Mass or send an e-mail.

Parish Calendars 2026

Brian and the restoration team have produced a beautiful parish calendar. They are available, at only £5 each, at the back of the church. Any profit will go toward the restoration fund. They can be paid for in cash, at the DONA machine, or by scanning the adjacent QR code.

Date for your Diary

Fr Tom’s induction as Parish Priest of Our Ladye Star of the Sea will happen at the 6pm Mass on the 6th December. Followed by a reception in the School Hall. If you would be free to help with the reception after the Mass please speak to Fr Tom, all help will be greatly appreciated.

Greenwich Deanery Advent Service

The Greenwich Deanery Pastoral Council has organised an Advent Service, of prayers, readings and opportunities for confession. The service will begin at 3pm on Sunday 30th November at Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church in Charlton. All are welcome.