

St Francis of Assisi, Llay
PARISH NEWS

Mid – May 2025



The content in this Parish News is in addition to that in the Parish Bulletin, the Parish Website and the Diocesan newsletter, The Wrexham Clarion.
If you have news or opinions that you'd like to share here, would you please let our parish secretary know of them.

SUPPORT FOR UKRAINE

The Wrexham Leader reports that Matthew Williams, helped by his father Greg, has instigated collecting £6,000 to buy a 4x4 vehicle and drive it to Ukraine for it to be used as an evacuation vehicle for the wounded at the frontline, in a scheme promoted by the charity DrivingUkraine.

The article declares that his interest grew from members of our "Llay and Rossett" parish, hosting Ukrainian refugees, and on learning first-hand the distressing stories of hardship and loss, he wanted to find a way he could help.

They raised the funds to buy the vehicle and after its full service drove it, with a team of other vehicles, to hand it over in Odessa on 1st May; they're now back home, safe and sound.

FATIMA

May has been set aside for centuries as the month of Mary, Mother of God, and in 1917 she appeared to three shepherd children in Fatima in Portugal on six occasions between 13th May and 13th October, urging the children to pray the Rosary.

Fatima has since become a major pilgrimage centre, dedicated, as is Lourdes in France, to the honour of Our Lady.

The shrine receives about five million pilgrims every year and several Popes have visited: Paul VI in 1967, John Paul II in 1982, 1991 and 2000, Benedict XVI in 2010 and Francis in 2017 and 2023. The shrine accommodated half a million during each of the recent Popes' visits.

Do pray the Rosary as implored by Our Lady if you can, and it will be prayed in church before each Sunday 10:00 Mass throughout the month, led by Geraldine Downing.

HCPT – fundraising for 2026

HCPT is a registered charity offering pilgrimage holidays, to Lourdes in the south of France, for disabled and disadvantaged people from around the UK and further afield. The letters "HCPT" stand for the Hosanna House and Children's Pilgrimage Trust.

Every Easter around 1,000 disabled and disadvantaged children enjoy a fun and safe week in Lourdes, staying in hotels with their volunteer helpers.

The Wrexham Diocese HCPT group – "Group 155" – organise a trip to take a small group of children every two years to this amazing event.

There was a bit of disruption to this due to COVID – a group was supposed to go in 2020, but this was obviously not possible, and it took until 2024 for the group to get back up and running. Helen Zammit-Willson of our parish was one of the helpers that year and found it an inspirational experience.

Planning is now underway to raise funds to organise the 2026 event – which will be the 70th anniversary of HCPT – and so will be even extra special.

As you will see from the article from St Joseph's Catholic and Anglican High School, Year 7 raise funds for this charity every year. And with their help the group has already raised £10k towards a target of £20k that is needed.

There is a poster and other information at the back of Church about HCPT, together with a collection box for any ad hoc donations – and a coffee morning is planned for 15 June after our 10am Mass in the hall.

Please speak to Helen if you would like any more information about how the group plans to raise the necessary funds to ensure that this trip can go ahead.

ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Crowning Our Lady



May is the month of Mary

During this special month dedicated to Mary, our Messengers of Christ led a beautiful service in honour of Our Lady, Mary.

Together, we prayed, sang hymns, and remembered how much Mary loves and cares for us all.

As part of the celebration, we held a whole school procession and gathered in our prayer garden, where Anaisha (our May Queen) lovingly crowned the statue of Mary with beautiful flowers.

It was a wonderful way to show our love and devotion to the Mother of Jesus.

Honouring the Memory of Pope Francis at St Mary's



To honour the memory of Pope Francis, our school community joined together in prayer, reflection, and gratitude for Pope Francis' service and dedication to the Catholic Church, and for his tireless work to support the poor and marginalised of society.

A Book of Condolence was made available for pupils, staff, and parents to offer their messages of sympathy, love, and gratitude for his life and leadership.

On Thursday 8th May, our Reception and Year 4 classes and their families together with members of the parish family, came together for Mass in the cathedral.

The Mass was especially offered for Mr and Mrs La Polla and their family, and was focused upon the theme 'The Good Shepherd.'

The readings and prayers served as a purposeful reflection of Pope Francis' life and legacy and Jesus' call for us all to be 'good shepherds' seeking to welcome everyone, regardless of difference.

As always, the children behaved impeccably and their conduct at Mass was complimented by parents and parishioners alike.

80th Anniversary of VE Day



On Thursday 8th May, representatives from Years 1, 2, 5 and 6 attended a service and parade to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of VE day which took place in St Giles Church and leading to the Wrexham Cenotaph.

What a moving celebration and a very fitting memorial to those lost or affected by the pain of war, and an opportunity for our local community to join together to commit to work for future peace and justice in our broken world.

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC AND ANGLICAN HIGH SCHOOL

St Joseph's Fundraising

Throughout their five years the pupils support local, national and international charities and are informed of the work they are helping to fund.

At St Joseph's each year group has a charity who they focus on for fund raising:

- Year 11 - Reaching the Unreached in India
- Year 10 - Hope House and Nightingale House Hospices
- Year 9 - The British Red Cross
- Year 8 - CAFOD and Christian Aid
- Year 7 - HCPT

Every year group has a half-term to raise money to give to their charity and the pupils have, over the years, found very creative ways of raising money.

Most popular are cake and sweet sales, sponsored silences and other sponsored events, games and tournaments, challenges and non-uniform days and sometimes they are able to persuade a member of staff to do something "silly" to add to their funds!

The pupils raise huge amounts often amounting to thousands of pounds for their charities and along the way they discover how important it is to think of others less fortunate than themselves.