



nostra autem conversatio in caelis

September 2026

To the Priests and Deacons of the See of Richborough

Peace be with you!

I do hope that you have managed some time for rest and refreshment over the summer. If not, then I hope that you have some planned soon. Time for rest, prayer, reading, and refreshment with family and loved ones is a gift of re-creation.

Earlier this year I was privileged to ordain Fr Nicolas Boisson and Fr Ben Almond to the priesthood. In October, God willing, I will ordain Fr Michal Kmet as a priest in the Church of God.

The Wellingborough Festival in July was a votive mass of the Precious Blood offered for an increase of vocations to the Sacred Ministry. It was wonderful to welcome Fr Harri Williams, Principal of St Stephen's House, as the preacher and for the afternoon Rosary to be led by several ordinands from across the See.

Our Richborough vocation group - currently twelve in number - will be meeting online twice a year and having a further residential meeting. The intention is that this will serve those at various stages of the discernment process and offer input from a variety of people involved in the discernment, selection and formation process as well as providing mutual prayer and encouragement. Please ensure that you regularly pray for our ordinands and for an increase of vocations. If you have a potential ordinand in your parish, please put them in touch with Fr Glen who, with me, oversees our vocations group.



Some of the ordinands from across the See with the serving team in St Mary, Wellingborough, July 2026



Fr Nicolas Boisson ordination, Ascension Day 2026

Fr Ben Almond, ordination, Petertide 2026

The Walsingham Youth Pilgrimage was, as always, a joyful and exuberant week of catechesis, worship rooted in the daily celebration of mass, and the wonder of pilgrimage. Our Lady did indeed welcome us to her home in England's Nazareth, as she has welcomed countless pilgrims across the centuries. She continues to point us to her Son, in whom we find fulness of life, and joy, and peace. This pilgrimage is a great gift to all of us who live out our vocation as Catholic Christians in the Church of England and it was very good to join an increased number of young pilgrims from our Richborough Family as well as a privilege to celebrate one of the pilgrim masses.



The National Pilgrimage, Walsingham, 2026



Richborough Pilgrims at the 2026 Youth Pilgrimage

The Shrine continues to stand at the spiritual heart of our life and I hope that we will all continue to be refreshed by the graces received there in parish pilgrimages as well as the retreats and pilgrimages offered by the Shrine throughout the year. It was a particular privilege to be the principal celebrant at the National Pilgrimage this year.

You will all know this annual pilgrimage season leaflet ([FINAL 2026 Season Leaflet](#)) and that the Shrine maintain their [website](#) with regular updates to help with planning ahead for the coming year.

Pilgrimage is a vital part of our ongoing formation and growth as disciples of Jesus Christ and as his priests and deacons. Attending to the imperative of ongoing formation is essential. Our vocation is fed, and nourished, and so we grow in faithfulness and joy as we “faithfully minister the doctrine and sacraments of Christ” (ordinal).

As previously circulated, we have a clergy study arranged on November 5th in St Andrew, Holborn. Please register to attend, if you haven’t already done so, by following this link

<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/inZEL4swwS?origin=lprLink>

The programme for the day will be:

10.30-11.30 *The Public Voice of the Church of England* This will be a lecture and discussion by the Dean of Chichester, Dr Edward Dowler who has written a chapter on this subject for the recently published book, *A Voice in the Wilderness: Why should we listen to the Church of England* (eds. Hordern and Tomlin)

12.00 Mass and lunch

1.15-2.45 *The Church of England and the Quiet Revival* This will include input from the writer and broadcaster Emma Trimble, who frequently broadcasts on religious subjects and has recently finished a doctorate which explores in detail the establishment of the Church of England, and Esmé Partridge who has recently written the Theos study: *Understanding Young Adult Journeys to Faith in the Church of England* [Understanding-Young-Adult-Journeys-to-Faith-Theos-Research-Report.pdf](#)

3.00 Evening Prayer

3.30 Depart

Next year we are planning a Richborough Congress for licensed clergy in Walsingham, 13th-15th October 2027. More details will follow but please hold the dates for now.

I am also hoping to arrange a gathering for our PTO clergy in 2027 which will be an opportunity to thank them for their faithful ministry among us.

Following on from the regional festivals celebrated across the year so far in Lincoln, Wellingborough, Leicester and Aylesford, our next festival will be an October Devotion to Our Lady on **Saturday 17th October 2026** in the Undercroft of Canterbury Cathedral.

If you would like to concelebrate the Mass then please follow the link to the Form confirming your attendance and that you are licensed/PTO

<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/1Lrx6KZCjA?origin=lprLink>

Thank you to all who have supported, encouraged, and attended the regional festivals throughout this year. They have proved to be times of grace and mutual upbuilding as we have delighted in the deep bonds of sacramental communion and life in Christ. I look forward to seeing many of you and your faithful in Canterbury and at the festivals in 2027.

Amidst the festivals, confirmations, ordinations, pilgrimages, and patronal festivals the vital work of attending to the appointment processes and pastoral needs of our clergy, ordinands, faithful, and parishes continues.

It has been very good to share the good news of appointments made throughout the year to: St Michael, Walthamstow (Fr Fred Ashford-Okai), the Annunciation, Chislehurst (Fr Stephen Jullien), Walsingham Benefice with Hempton (Fr Andrew Bishop), St Mary, South Benfleet and St David, Eastwood (Fr David Wylie), St Peter, Folkestone (Bishop Martin Warner), St Aidan, New Parks (Fr Herbert Fadrique), St Martin, Beford (Fr Glen Brooks), Holy Cross, Marsh Farm (Fr Emmanuel Nazir).

During the course of the last year it has also been good to welcome into the Richborough Family new parishes that have passed the Resolution under the House of Bishops' Declaration: The Eye Benefice (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich); the Bythams, Careby & Creeton (Lincoln); and the Anglican Chaplaincy of Ss Peter and Paul, Torrevieja, Spain (Diocese of Gibraltar in Europe).

This is also an opportunity to thank Fr Peter Harnden SSC for his diligent work as the Richborough representative in the diocese of Canterbury. He has stepped away from that after nine years of faithful service. Fr Peter continues as Rector of Harbledown.

Fr Clive Jones SSC has been appointed to St Andrew, Willesden Green. It was very good to be able to thank him for his years of faithful service in the diocese of Rochester and as the Richborough representative when we celebrated the recent festival and pilgrimage to Aylesford Friary. We pray for him and for the parish of Higham as they prepare for their vacancy from November.

Thanks, too, to Fr Adrian Ling CMP has moved to St Annes on the Sea (Heyhouses) in the Diocese of Blackburn after fourteen years in South and West Lynn. During this time he also served as the Richborough representative, as a training incumbent, and was an honorary canon of Norwich.

Many congratulations to Fr Robert Farmer who, this month, celebrates 30 years of incumbency at St Mary, Wellingborough, and to Fr James Mather who celebrates 25 years in Downham Market. Ad multos annos!

There is regular movement across the See, as you will know, and so the priority of filling vacancies and supporting parishes through their interregnum will be ongoing. Thank you to all who support our vacant parishes during vacancies, offering continuity of pastoral care and faithful celebration of the sacraments.

For your prayer and discernment, both personally and among our brethren, there will be whole time stipendiary appointments forthcoming in:

All Saints', South Lynn (Norwich Diocese)

St Mary's, Kettering (Peterborough Diocese)

Deal and Ramsgate (Canterbury Diocese)

Woodford Green and Ilford (Chelmsford Diocese)

House for Duty appointments will be forthcoming in:

St Augustine, Grimsby (Lincoln Diocese)

All Saints', Perry Street (Rochester)

There is also an associate priest (incumbent level) sought for South Benfleet and Eastwood in the diocese of Chelmsford working with Fr David Wylie as PiC from St Margaret, Leigh on Sea.

In addition to these and other vacancies in the coming months, we will be advertising for a Catholic Mission enabler priest to work alongside the clergy and Richborough parishes in the Barking Episcopal Area.

Some of these are in the very early stages of vacancy and so are a few months out from appointment process (South Lynn, Kettering) but others are more immediate (Deal and Ramsgate, Woodford Green and Ilford).

When a parish vacancy is advertised, the advert features on the See of Richborough Facebook page and on the See of Richborough website. Please keep an eye on these and share the adverts with clergy you know who may be discerning a possible move. It may also be that you are thinking of a move to a different parish.

When we are discerning the next steps in priestly ministry the first thing to do, of course, is to pray. It is also important to talk with me as your Bishop so that I can support and guide you, knowing both you and the needs of the parishes that are looking for a new priest and pastor. Don't hesitate to be in touch. Please be assured of my prayers, too, each day as we seek to be faithful to the Lord's call in our life and ministry.

It is in prayer that we are close to one another in the Lord. You are all remembered each day, with thanksgiving, at the altar as I offer Mass praying for the needs of the See and the clergy and people I serve. The updated Richborough Prayer Cycle is available on the See of Richborough [website](#) in the resources section, along with information about booking confirmations.

Please do remember that there is also a monthly opportunity to join together, clergy and people, in praying Compline via Zoom. This is usually at 8:30pm on the first Thursday of each month (except August).

The link is <https://us05web.zoom.us/j/82530656559?pwd=Y8l6lbidn34pJl0UINSrZvpFKSb50a.1> and I hope that you can share this with your faithful through your usual parish newsletters/mass sheets etc

Looking ahead, I am planning the 2027 diary. The pattern of visiting dioceses/regions for several days at a time is helpful in ensuring a regular pattern of pastoral visits across the See in a way that is consistent and sustainable. It's also important to get particular dates or events into the diary to help shape the pattern and rhythm of the year. If you would like me to join you for a patronal festival, confirmation, parish mass or celebration, please don't hesitate to be in touch as soon as possible.

To help with your parish diary planning for the year ahead, please find below an outline of the proposed Richborough 2027 diary below. Again, these are not the only times I can be available but it does give some structure to ensure that I try to ensure time and presence with as many of you as possible during the year.

Finally, please don't forget that, with me, Fr Glen and Claire are here to serve you in the mission and ministry that has been entrusted to us. I am available directly to you, but it is also a great blessing to have some depth and capacity in the office to ensure that I can prioritise pastoral and sacramental ministry across the See. As a reminder, Fr Glen is available for matters pastoral or liturgical and Claire for diary and other administrative enquiries.

With my constant prayer and every blessing,



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Richborough Diary 2027

NB, please coordinate plans for my pastoral visits to dioceses/areas between Fr Glen and the local diocesan or area Richborough representative. If it is possible to arrange confirmations or other pastoral opportunities during these proposed dates that would be very helpful but, of course, I remain available for parish visits, celebrations and confirmations at other times as the diary permits. You will appreciate that Sundays fill up quite quickly so using midweek pastoral visits to dioceses can help with arranging confirmations alongside other gatherings or meetings. Please don't hesitate to be in touch with Claire in the office here with diary requests. Thank you.

10-13 January – Portsmouth, Winchester and Guildford pastoral visits

4 – 7 February – Rochester and Canterbury pastoral visits

24 – 28 February – Ely and Norwich pastoral visits (to include Children's Pilgrimage Walsingham)

16 March - Canterbury Chrism Mass (please note that this is the Tuesday of Passion Week)

20 March – Portsmouth Chrism Mass

22 March – Chelmsford Chrism Mass

24 March – Walsingham Chrism Mass

17 April – Chelmsford Regional Festival (Walthamstow)

18-22 April – Chelmsford and Eps & Ips pastoral visits

5-7 May – Lincoln pastoral visits

14-16 May – Europe pastoral visits

31 May - National Pilgrimage Walsingham

13-15 June – Leicester pastoral visits

4-7 July - Peterborough pastoral visits

2-9 August – Walsingham Youth Pilgrimages

14 August – Assumption Festival, St Alban's Cathedral

28 August – Rochester and Canterbury regional festival, Aylesford Friary

13-15 October – Richborough Clergy Congress, Walsingham

1-3 November – St Alban pastoral visits