

Parish of St Wilfrid, Widnes

*Incorporating the churches of St Bede, St Michael,
St John Fisher and St Basil*



1st March 2026

Second Sunday of Lent (Year A)

*There will be a Second Collection
this week for SVP.*

Parish Clergy:

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Psalm Response

'May your merciful love be upon us, as we hope in you, O Lord'

Gospel Acclamation Verse

**'From a bright cloud, the Father's voice was heard; This is my beloved Son,
listen to Him'**

In 1981 Widnes had 17 Priests.

In 2026 Widnes has 2 Priests.

Being a priest in Widnes is the greatest privilege of my life. St. Wilfrid's is vibrant, alive, and centred on the Lord. In my 31 years of life, I have never been so content. Being a priest in Widnes is also my greatest challenge to date. The St. Wilfrid harvest is rich, but the priestly labourers are few.

In the 1980s, this town was served by around 17 priests across 9 parishes. Now the town is served by 2 priests across 1 parish (**see inside for comparison pictures**).

Counting our blessings and recognising our capacity leads us out of nostalgia and into mission. It does not take much to realise that 2 priests simply cannot do the work of 17 or indeed of 5 (as we had during the team ministry). We know that the days of Mass and Sacraments 'when I want it and where I want it' as in the past, are long over. We've been on that journey. I remember once chatting with Fr. Joe Bibby, former Parish Priest here, who told me that in his parish of 35 churches in Bolivia, it was 4.5 hours in the car to the furthest church. Each of the 35 churches only got a Sunday Mass every few months. Our situation in Widnes is a stark contrast to this. We live in the lap of sacramental luxury, even with just 2 priests. In comparison to many parishes around the world, Widnes has excellent 'sacramental infrastructure'. Wherever we are in the town, we are not far from all the churches.

God is doing great things here. Let us count our blessings and be part of God's work, looking forward with the hope of Easter in our hearts.

Fr. Peter.

Chrism Mass – Wednesday 1 April 2026 at 7.30pm

This year's Chrism Mass, when the whole Church gathers at the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King during Holy Week, promises to be a wonderful and prayerful occasion.

If you would like to attend, please submit your name along with £10 per person to the Parish Office. A coach will depart from St Bede's Church at 6:30pm, take us to the Cathedral for the Mass, and bring everyone safely home afterwards. All are warmly invited to join us for this special celebration.

Altar Servers – Chrism Mass

All visiting servers are asked to bring their own vestments and to gather in the Gibberd Room by 6:45pm. To ensure that sufficient benches are allocated to servers from across the Archdiocese, and in accordance with our safeguarding policy and good practice, all servers must reserve their place in advance. Please submit your name to the Parish Office as soon as possible, clearly marked 'Altar Server – Chrism Mass'. We look forward to welcoming altar servers to this memorable occasion in the liturgical life of the Cathedral and the Archdiocese.

Please note: Altar Servers must pre-book their attendance in order to robe, in accordance with safeguarding policy.

Parish Choir

Our next practices, preparing for the Easter Liturgies, will be on, **Tuesday 3rd March, Tuesday 10th March, Tuesday 17th March and Monday 23rd March**, all at **7pm** in **St. Bede's Church**.

If you have not sung before, or not sung for years, or haven't been part of this group previously, or are only able to come along occasionally, it doesn't matter, you would be most welcome. Sadly though, at this time, all members of the choir must be over 18 due to safeguarding guidance.

Donation for Sister Mary from Gift of Life for Zambia

We are delighted to say £5,000 has been sent to Sister Mary to support the outstanding vision of St. Francis Community Integrated Care Programme in Zambia by assisting the most the most vulnerable in the community. The donation is only possible through the continual generosity of the good folk of St. Wilfrid's Parish. Sister Mary has sent this message below.

*"God is ever good to us through your faithful and committed people. May God bless you all.
You are all wonderful. Blessings Mary."*

Gift of Life for Zambia

The charity was conceived for the millennium to further ecumenism and offer aid to the poor and vulnerable. St. Francis was chosen because Sister Mary was known and admired for her wonderful work with the community and her vision of Home Care support for the sick. At that time HIV/AIDS was ravaging the country and the funds we sent then covered medicines, food, coffins, and especially education for the ever-increasing orphans. Twenty-six years later you are still supporting St. Francis, and its slightly different needs, since the introduction of antiretroviral drugs. St. Francis still works with community volunteers offering quality care to those living with Aids, cancer, the mentally challenged, the physically disabled, providing ongoing counselling, independence building, and especially assistance for the orphans. Thank you so much for your twenty-six years of support. Lord bless you a hundredfold.

Safeguarding Team

'Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults are the responsibility of every single person in our community.'

Safeguarding Lead for the Parish of St. Wilfrid's – Fr. Mark Moran

Safeguarding Reps – Pauline Ruth, Carol Murray and Pauline Rolt

Easter Lillies

Would you like to buy a lily for Easter? Lillies are often bought in memory of a loved one and their names will be displayed in each of our Churches for the Sacred Triduum and Easter Sunday. Envelopes containing forms will be at the back of all churches, please complete and return them to the Parish Office before Friday 27th March. There is a cost of £5 for each lily.

Stations of the Cross – 2nd March

This will be a reflective Stations of the Cross at 7pm in St Bede's Church, led by the readers of the parish. A beautiful opportunity to walk with Jesus to Calvary

'The Very First Easter' – a book by Mary Mc Loughlin

We are awash with talent here in Widnes! Mary Mc Loughlin, a parishioner of St. Wilfrid's has written a children's book retelling the story of Easter. It is available to buy on Amazon and some of the proceeds of this book will be given to CAFOD. So, please have a look when you are next on Amazon and consider supporting the work of CAFOD and buying a book for a child who may hear the message of Easter for the first time.

Trinity Safe Space charity

Has anyone got a spare smart mobile phone that they are not using or not wanting to sell please? We, at Trinity Safe Space charity, are being asked regularly for them as people do not have one or theirs is broken and they need them. You would need to wipe all your information off them and take off pin codes. Please contact Pauline Ruth on 07395084772. Thank you.

Jubilee Club

We meet every Thursday afternoon at the Parish Hall at St John Fisher in Moorfield Road between 1.30 and 3.30. We would like to invite all parishioners and friends to come along and sample what is on offer.

Future events taking place include the spring flower arranging event on 5th March, we have three musical events and a summer outing. So please do come and join us. For more information please contact Lyn on 07790621767.

Day for Music Ministry with Jo Boyce and Team – Saturday 7th March

A day for all those who make music in our parish community, Jo Boyce and her team will come and share with us new music and ways of encouraging everyone on our parish to engage more fully in



17 Priests in Widnes in 1981.



2 Priests in Widnes
in 2026.

Parish Liturgy

Sunday	1st March	Second Sunday of Lent	
09.00	Holy Mass	St Bede	Parishioners
10.15	Holy Mass	St Michael	John Harrison
11.30	Holy Mass	St Bede	Ronni Murray
16.00	Holy Mass	St Bede	Mary & Patrick Hammond
Monday	2nd March	Week 2 of Lent	
09.00	Exposition & Morning Prayer		
09.30	Holy Mass	St. Basil	Arthur Tudor
10.00	Funeral Service	St John Fisher	Margaret Jean Fillingham
19.00	Stations of The Cross	St Bede	
Tuesday	3rd March	Week 2 of Lent	
11.30	Exposition & Rosary		
12.00	Holy Mass	St Bede	Rogerson Family
Wednesday	4th March	Week 2 of Lent	
10.00	Requiem Mass	St Michael	John Kinsella
Thursday	5th March	Week 2 of Lent	
11.00	Requiem Mass	St Bede	Marie Lynch
Friday	6th March	Week 2 of Lent	
11.30	Requiem Mass	St Bede	Paul Finnigan
12.00	Stations of the Cross	St Michael	
13.00	Stations of the Cross	St Basil	
Saturday	7th March	Vigil of Third Sunday of Lent	
16.30	Holy Mass	St Basil	Mass Association Members
18.00	Holy Mass	St John Fisher	Margaret & John McDermott
Sunday	8th March	Third Sunday of Lent	
09.00	Holy Mass	St Bede	Mary Bebbington
10.15	Holy Mass	St Michael	Parishioners
11.30	Holy Mass	St Bede	John Glover
16.00	Holy Mass	St Bede	John Stevens

Sanctuary Lamp

The Sanctuary lamp burns for 7 days for your intention.

St Bede:	Birthday Celebration
St Basil:	Madge Houghton
St John Fisher:	Tommy Cuerden
St Michael:	Julia King

Rest in Peace

Anthony Woods, Elizabeth Stonehouse,
Douglas Smith, Jacqueline Jordan
Kitty Rowlands, Jack Usher
Linda Dunn & John Moran

May the Angels lead them into Paradise!