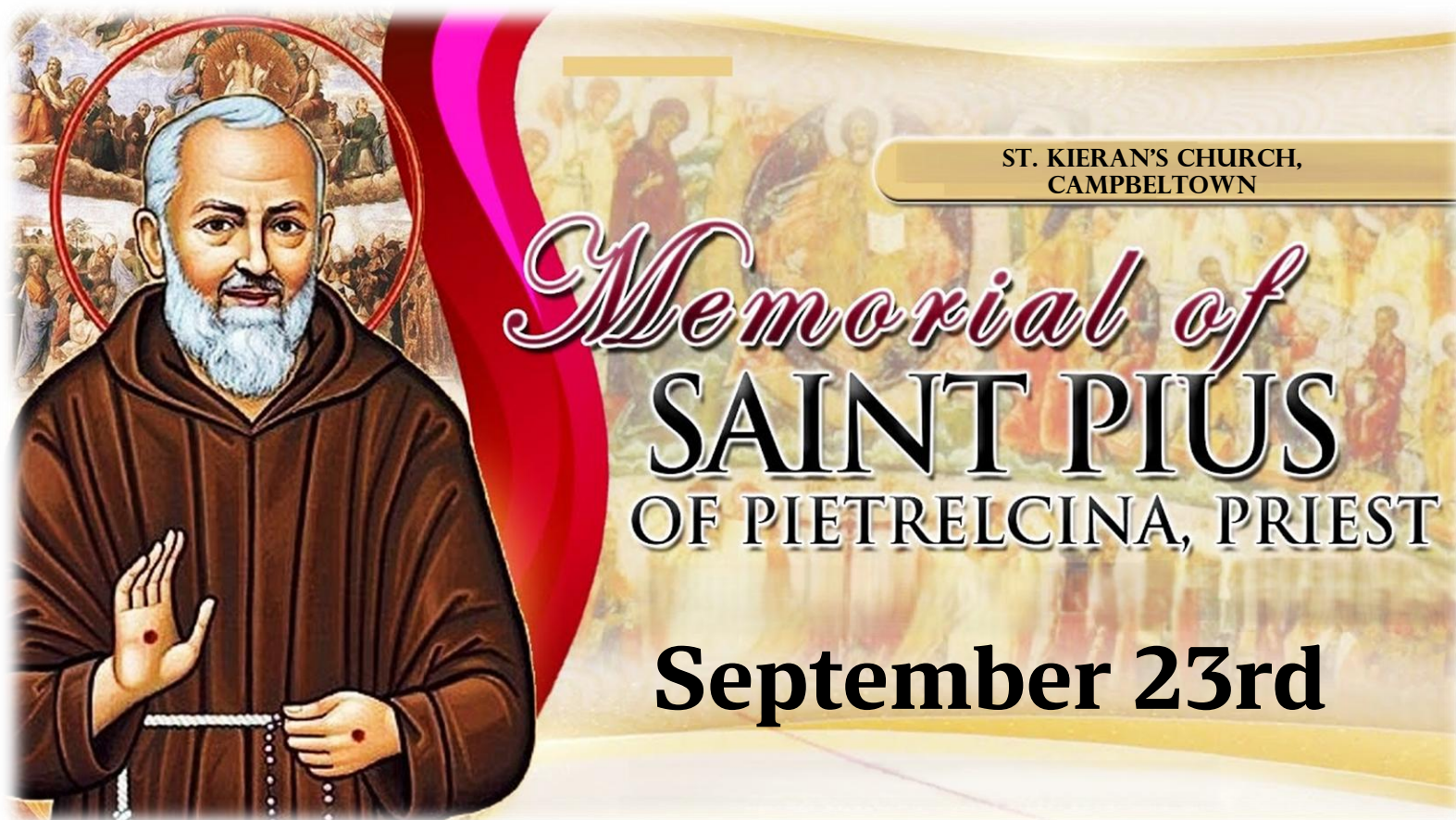


PARISH BULLETIN



St. Kieran's, the Catholic

Church in

Campbeltown and Islay

Ceann Loch Chille Chiarain

20th September 2026

The 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

St. Kieran's, Campbeltown, Kintyre

Week 25 of Ordinary Time

Tuesday: Holy Mass, 6pm

Wednesday: Adoration and Mid-morning Prayer, 9.30am; Holy Mass, 10am

Friday: Mid-morning Prayer, 9.50am; Holy Mass, 10am

Hymns/Music for Sunday

Processional

579 Vaster far

Offertory

67 Blest are you, Lord

Communion music

Благослови Господа, душе моя – Bless the Lord, my Soul

Post Communion

677 Bless the Lord, my soul (*Taizé*)

Recessional

36 Amazing Grace

Next weekend:

Saturday, 26th September, Vigil Mass, 6.00pm

Sunday, 27th September 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Holy Mass, 10.00am

Sacrament of Reconciliation: Saturday 17.30-17.50 or anytime on request.

St. Columba Episcopal Church, Bridgend, Isle of Islay

20th September: **Holy Mass, 4pm**

4th October: **Holy Mass, 4pm**

Psalm response

The Lord is close to all who call him.

Gospel acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia.

*Open our hearts, O Lord,
that we may pay attention to the words of your Son.
Alleluia.*

Communion Antiphon

*You have laid down your precepts to be carefully kept;
may my ways be firm in keeping your statutes.*

Take Five

Invest just five minutes a day, and your faith will deepen and grow – a day at a time.

MONDAY: FEAST OF SAINT MATTHEW, APOSTLE, EVANGELIST **21 SEPTEMBER 2026**

Riches you can collect on

Tax-collector-turned-apostle Matthew may not have had the most popular job when Jesus called him, but the key is not what we do before we hear the call, but what we do after. Matthew dropped his lucrative post and followed Jesus without looking back. Would you do the same? If you sense that you often lack the courage of your convictions, look to Matthew for inspiration. He gave up the big money for even greater treasure. Let the richness of faith guide you on the right road.

Today's readings: *Ephesians 4:1-7, 11-13; Matthew 9:9-13* "He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the customs post. He said to him, 'Follow me.'"

TUESDAY OF WEEK 25 **22 SEPTEMBER 2026**

Does your faith carry weight?

Imagine the contents of your heart on the scales of heaven right now. Would you be found heavy with cares or light with hope? Are your intentions solid gold or an amalgam of mixed motives? Yesterday the Jewish community observed its holiest feast, Yom Kippur, when the faithful seek atonement for the sake of being close to God. The Catholic Church teaches that "the Jews remain very dear to God . . . since God does not take back the gifts he bestowed or the choices, he made," as the Second Vatican Council document *Nostra Aetate* says (no. 4). Lighten your heart from any burden of discrimination.

Today's readings: *Proverbs 21:1-6, 10-13; Luke 8:19-21.* "All the ways of a man may be right in his own eyes, but it is the Lord who proves hearts."

WEDNESDAY: MEMORIAL OF SAINT PIUS OF PIETRELCINA (PADRE PIO), PRIEST

23 SEPTEMBER 2026

Redemptive suffering

Pope John Paul II canonized Padre Pio of Pietrelcina on 16 June, 2002. More than

300,000 people braved excessive heat to fill St. Peter's Square and nearby streets for the ceremony. They heard the Holy Father praise the new saint for his prayer and charity and for Padre Pio's witness to the power of suffering. If accepted with love, the pope stressed, such suffering can lead to "a privileged path of sanctity." There is meaning in the suffering in your own life. Search for it with patience and faith.

Today's readings: *Proverbs 30:5-9; Luke 9:1-6.* "Provide me only with the food I need; Lest, being full, I deny you, saying, 'Who is the Lord?'"

THURSDAY OF WEEK 25 **24 SEPTEMBER 2026**

Why bother?

Everyone feels down sometimes: Work seems a grind, the family is a pain, every day is just like the last. It's easy to think: What's the point of it all? But if you've lived long enough for life to sometimes feel numbingly routine, then you've lived long enough to know life is a roller coaster of ups and downs, which is anything but boring. It's hard to reassure others of that when they're stuck in a rut, but you can show them the example of your own hope and trust in God.

Today's readings: *Ecclesiastes 1:2-11; Luke 9:7-9.* "What has been, that will be; what has been done, that will be done. Nothing is new under the sun."

FRIDAY OF WEEK 25 **25 SEPTEMBER 2026**

Scripture makes Billboard's Top 10

We don't often see Bible songs hit the pop music charts. But a song by singer-songwriter and social activist Pete Seeger did just that. Written in the late 1950s, the song "Turn! Turn! Turn!" would explode to international popularity in 1965 when recorded by the Byrds. Not bad for lyrics written well over 2,000 years ago! The song is based on the book of Ecclesiastes 3:1-8. Not every popular use of the Bible turns out well, but Seeger's did, perhaps because he left the verses largely intact. Consider other scripture passages that are music to your ears.

Today's readings: *Ecclesiastes 3:1-11; Luke 9:18-22.* "There is an appointed time for

everything, and a time for every thing under the heavens.”

SATURDAY: OPTIONAL MEMORIAL OF SAINTS COSMAS AND DAMIAN, MARTYRS

26 SEPTEMBER 2026

Doctors without bills

The Churches of Eastern Christianity honour a group of saints known as the “no-money ones”: physicians who took no payment for their services. Now there’s healthcare reform! We don’t know much historically about two of them,

the twins Cosmas and Damian, but veneration of them goes back a long time and their popularity crossed over into the West. The legends about them indicate these “no-money” doctors looked to Jesus the divine physician, who healed souls and bodies for free. Why the appeal of two men about whom we have such little information? Maybe because their lives show how people can be instruments of God’s restoring grace, a gift freely dispensed.

Today’s readings: Ecclesiastes 11:9-12:8; Luke 9:43b-45. *“Follow the ways of your heart, the vision of your eyes.”*

Readings for the 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Isaiah 55:6-9

Don’t try measuring God’s ways against ours. There’s no comparison – thank God!

Psalms 145:2-3, 8-9, 17-18

God is near, with mercy, kindness, and justice in hand for those who call upon him.

Philippians 1:20c-24, 27a

It’s a great problem to have: choosing between life and death in Christ.

Matthew 20:1-16a

God is more generous with mercy than we are. Is that a problem?

Words on the Word

*

*Human life seems a pleasant fate:
The day so sweet, and the night so great!
And, in an enchanted Paradise, set down,
We’ve scarce begun to enjoy the heavenly sun,
When all at once our own confused endeavour
Conflicts with our own self, and then the other:
Nothing is complementary, as we’d wish,
It darkens outside when inside it’s bliss,
A bright exterior’s hidden from our gaze,
Joy is near – yet no one knows its face.
(J.W. Goethe, Trilogy of Passion)*

* *

We’ve got used to measuring people – in everyday life and sadly in the Church too – by what they produce, by how “useful” they are. If someone is busy, efficient, constantly doing things, we praise them. If not, we quietly write them off.

But today’s Gospel confronts that mentality head-on. We meet a landowner who seems almost careless about profit and productivity. He goes out again and again to hire workers, not because his vineyard desperately needs more hands, but because *they* need work, *they* need dignity, *they* need to belong. He seems to care more for people than for his property. It’s all

backwards from a worldly point of view.

Meanwhile, many of us – often with good intentions – reduce our faith to a list of visible “good works”: going to Mass, helping the poor, working for justice. These are all essential, of course. But then we hear that familiar, cynical refrain:

“Those who go to church are no better than anyone else.”

And part of us wonders if it’s true. We start to see our religious life with purely human eyes: people judge us as “nice” or “hypocritical”, “active” or “lazy”, but few see – and we sometimes forget – the heart of it all: **God Himself in our lives**, the real foundation of everything.

In the parable, the daily wage – that denarius – is not spectacular. It doesn’t completely transform the labourers’ earthly circumstances. Jesus isn’t giving us a lesson in economics or trade union rights. He is speaking about something infinitely greater: **the Kingdom of God**, where both the first and the last, the strong and the weak, the early and latecomer alike, are all invited in.

It’s worth stopping to ask ourselves: *what, in the end, can money actually buy?*

Can it purchase a clear blue sky, or the crash of waves on the shore, or the freshness of spring, or the quiet beauty of a sunset?

Can it buy a single genuine moment of joy, or the gift of real love, freely given and freely received?

The Gospel doesn’t pretend that effort is unimportant. Work matters. Struggle matters. Everything of real value in life usually demands perseverance, sacrifice, and the steady use of our gifts. And so it is with the Lord’s vineyard.

The Kingdom of God is already among us, is still unfolding, and will only reach its fullness in the glory to come. The question is not whether there’s work to be done – there is, in abundance. The question is: **am I ready, at any moment, to step into that vineyard and give myself to the task, however and whenever God calls?**

And here many believers stumble. We all know the saying: “*What costs nothing is worth nothing.*” It’s deeply human to want to earn our way, to be able to say: “I did it. I deserve this.”

So, part of us wants to earn the Kingdom, to feel that Heaven is a kind of wage, owed to us after a lifetime of toil. We find it hard to accept help, harder still to accept a gift – even a gift as immense as eternal life.

But this is dangerous territory. Once we start to think, even subtly, that Heaven is our due – that if we work hard enough God will be *obliged* to pay us out at the end – then we’ve lost sight of who He is and who we are. Heaven is not a salary. Salvation is not a contract. **It is pure gift, pure grace.**

So perhaps we need to come back to a simple question:

Why am I in church today?

Because someone told me I had to come?

Because I’d feel guilty if I didn’t?

Because “it’s what good Catholics do”?

There’s a deeper answer. I am here **to receive.**

Here, in the Church, with Christ our Lord and Saviour truly present, something is being *given* to

me:

- the gift of life renewed, both natural and supernatural;
- the grace to keep going, to hope, to love when I feel empty;
- the quiet, steady strength to carry my cross and follow Him.

Here, at the altar, in Word and Sacrament, God is placing in my hands that “denarius” – not a coin of silver, but the daily portion of grace that allows me to live, really live, as a child of God.

So no, I’m not here to impress God or to earn His favour. I’m here because I am poor and He is rich; I am needy and He is generous; I am weak and He is strong. I am here because He has called me, at whatever hour of my life, into His vineyard – and because, astonishingly, He delights to give me everything, even Himself.

If we can begin to live from that truth – that we are loved before we are useful, chosen before we are productive, and saved by grace rather than earned merit – then our work in the vineyard will no longer be a desperate attempt to win a wage. It will become what it was always meant to be: **a grateful response to a love that has already given us more than we could ever deserve.**

* * *

The parable of those invited to work in the vineyard reveals the generosity of God. The owner of the vineyard (God) goes out to the marketplace at every hour of the day to hire the unemployed who are waiting for work. He does not look at his watch. He does not examine references and recommendations. One might even say that He likes to hire those who have no good references: tax collectors, public sinners and thieves may turn out to be the "ideal" labourers in His vineyard (A. Pronzato).

In Christ’s love,
Fr Anthony

God’s Guide

Relations with Angels: To Be Closer to Our Guardians

Chapter 10

THE CHOIRS OF CONTEMPLATION

The seraphim are the angels who burn with love for God more intensely than any others. Their very name means “fiery” or “burning ones”. In the traditional hierarchy of angels, they stand at the highest place in heaven, closest to the throne of God.

More than seven centuries before the birth of Christ, the prophet Isaiah was granted a striking vision of these heavenly spirits. He describes it in unforgettable words:

“In the year of King Uzziah’s death I saw the Lord sitting upon a high and lofty throne, with the train of His garment filling the temple. Seraphim stood above Him; each of them had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called to another: Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of hosts. The whole earth is full of His glory” (Isa 6:1–3).

These are, then, the angels who stand nearest to God. From them we can learn how to adore Him: not just privately, but together, as the Church. At Holy Mass, especially when we pray for healing, and in silent adoration before the Blessed Sacrament, it is no bad thing to ask the seraphim to help us worship. After all, it is what they do for all eternity.

Becoming Like the Angels

The time will come when, purified and sanctified by the Father’s grace, we will be made more

like the angels ourselves and stand before the Source of Love, worshipping Him as they do. Jesus Himself hints at this when He tells the Sadducees:

“For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven” (Mt 22:30).

Christ goes further still in His great priestly prayer at the Last Supper. There He reveals His burning desire that we should share His own glory and His own communion with the Father:

*“I pray not only for them, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word, that they may all be one, as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be one in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me. **And the glory which You gave Me I have given to them, that they may be one as We are one: I in them and You in Me!** May they be brought to perfect unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me and that You loved them even as You loved Me. **Father, I desire that those whom You have given Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You gave Me, because You loved Me before the foundation of the world**”* (Jn 17:20–24).

This is not pious exaggeration. It is Christ’s own stated will: that we should one day see His glory with our own eyes and share in the love that unites Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Worship in Spirit and in Truth

Jesus also speaks very plainly about the kind of worship the Father desires. To the Samaritan woman at the well – an unlikely candidate for a deep theological conversation – He reveals something essential:

“But the hour is coming, and is now here, when true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such people to worship Him. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in Spirit and truth” (Jn 4:23–24).

This is where the seraphim can quietly teach us. Their worship is utterly focused, utterly sincere, utterly aflame with love. When we step into church for Mass, slip into a side chapel for a brief visit to the Blessed Sacrament, or whisper a prayer at home after a long day, we are invited to do the same: to worship in Spirit and in truth, not half-heartedly, not distractedly, but with as much love as grace will allow.

A Glimpse of Our Future

The Book of Revelation offers a final, breathtaking picture of what awaits the faithful – those who have become, as it were, true friends and servants of Jesus:

“The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His servants will worship Him. They will behold His face, and His name will be on their foreheads. Night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will shine upon them, and they will reign forever and ever” (Rev 22:3–5).

To see God’s face. To bear His name. To live in a light that never fades. This is the destiny held out to us. The seraphim already live this reality. We are on the way.

How Do Angels Praise God?

Scripture is full of scenes of angelic praise – far too many to quote here – but the Book of Revelation is especially rich. It is always worth reading, but it really does repay a humble prayer beforehand: “Lord, give me Your wisdom to understand.” Without that, we can easily get lost among beasts, trumpets and visions.

One particularly striking and compact hymn of praise runs as follows:

“And all the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and

they fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God, saying: ‘Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honour and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen’” (Rev 7:11–12).

In a few short lines, heaven pours out sevenfold praise: blessing, glory, wisdom, thanksgiving, honour, power and might – offered not for a passing moment, but “forever and ever”.

Joining the Angels’ Unceasing Worship

So, whenever you praise God – whether in a crowded church or at your kitchen table, on a packed train or in a hospital bed – remember this: you are never doing it alone. You are joining the unending liturgy of heaven, the ceaseless worship of the angels.

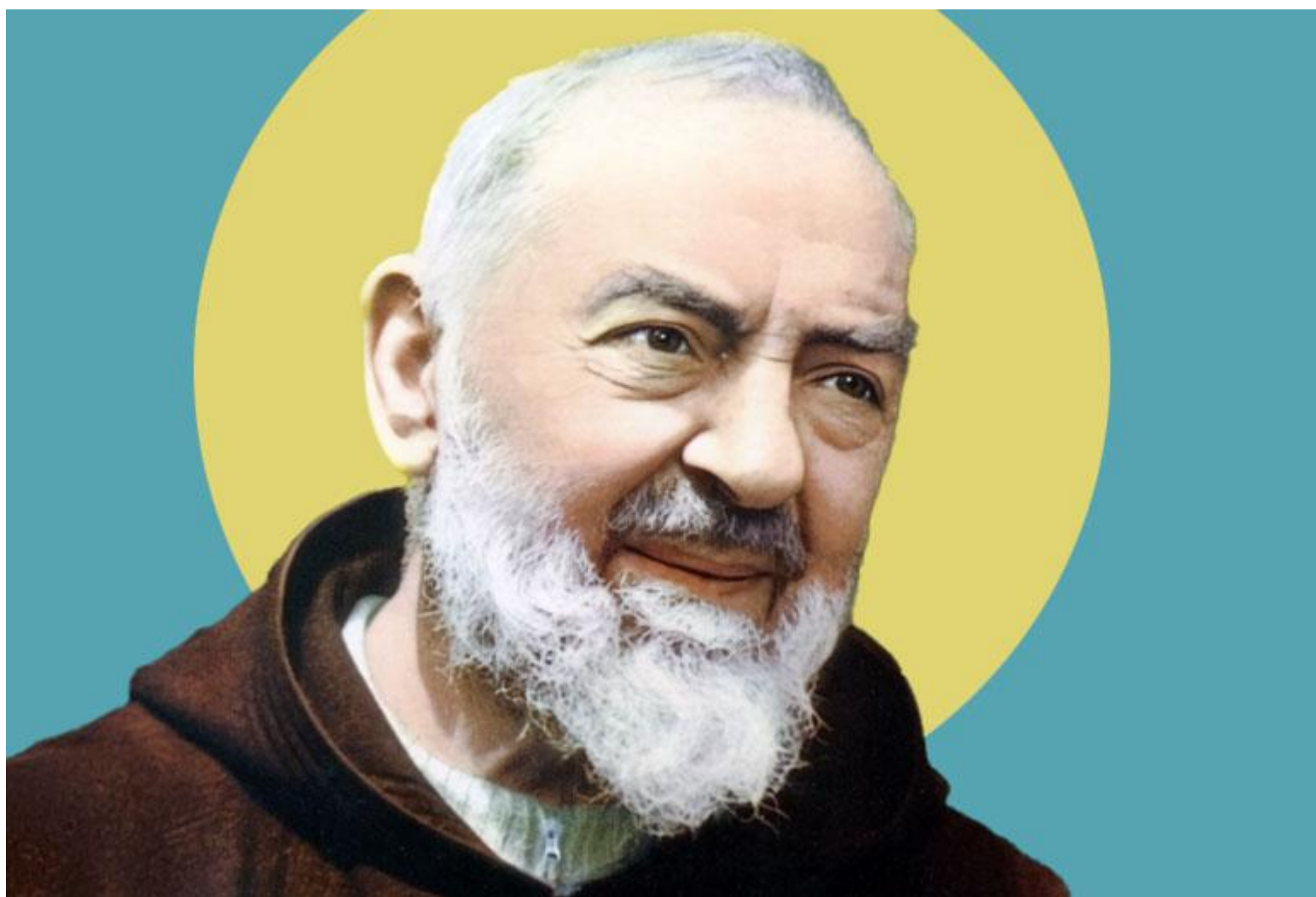
It is worth keeping that in mind. Ask the angels, especially the seraphim, to help you praise God more deeply and more simply. Let them teach you how to love Love Himself.

And perhaps you might begin like this:

Our Father – my Father, Father of the angels, Father of my neighbours, Father of all creation – who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name!

Amen.

Padre Pio and the Mysteries Associated with the Saints



Accounts of bilocation – the reported ability to appear in two places at once – are found in the lives of several saints. Such stories belong to the realm of private revelation and must therefore be approached with prudence. Catholics are not obliged to believe them, even when they concern a canonised saint. Nevertheless, they remain among the most intriguing

traditions associated with the mystical life.

Saint Pio of Pietrelcina, popularly known as Padre Pio, is perhaps the saint most frequently linked with bilocation. Numerous witnesses claimed that he appeared to people in need of spiritual guidance, comfort or practical assistance. According to traditional accounts, his body remained at the friary in San Giovanni Rotondo while God permitted his presence to be experienced elsewhere.

Similar reports concern Saint Alphonsus Liguori, who was allegedly seen in Rome during the death and funeral of Pope Clement XIV, despite remaining at home. Such accounts cannot be

explained by ordinary human reasoning, and the Church teaches that extraordinary claims must always be carefully examined.

The Bombing of San Giovanni Rotondo

One of the best-known stories associated with Padre Pio dates from the Second World War.

From September 1943, Allied pilots reportedly saw a mysterious friar in the sky whenever they approached San Giovanni Rotondo. According to their testimonies, the figure caused their aircraft to change course and prevented them from dropping their bombs. While nearby towns were heavily damaged, San Giovanni Rotondo escaped bombardment.

General Rossini later recalled that pilots from different backgrounds had described the same phenomenon. They included Americans, British and Polish airmen, as well as Catholics, Protestants, Jews and non-believers.

An American general eventually decided to investigate for himself. He led a squadron ordered to destroy a German ammunition depot near the town. When the aircraft approached their target, the pilots reportedly saw a friar flying at the same height, with his hands raised. The bombs fell into the surrounding woods, while the planes turned back towards their base.

After the German withdrawal, the general travelled to San Giovanni Rotondo with several pilots. On entering the friary sacristy, he is said to have recognised Padre Pio as the figure he had seen in the sky.

According to the account, Padre Pio greeted him with the words: “So it was you who wanted to blow us all sky-high!” The general, previously a Protestant, later became a Catholic.

A Handprint on a Hospital Window

In 1957, Father Placid Bux was admitted to hospital in San Severo with advanced cirrhosis of the liver. Doctors considered his condition hopeless.

During the night, he reportedly saw Padre Pio beside his bed. The friar comforted him and promised that he would recover. He then walked to the window, pressed his hand against the glass and disappeared.

The following morning, Father Placid felt considerably better. He also noticed what appeared to be Padre Pio’s handprint on the window. News of the mark spread through the hospital and attracted many visitors. Hospital officials reportedly tried to remove it, but ordinary cleaning products failed.

Father Placid eventually recovered and later travelled to San Giovanni Rotondo. When Padre Pio met him, he allegedly asked how he was feeling. Asked whether he had visited the hospital, Padre Pio replied: “And you doubt it? I was there, but do not tell anyone about it.”

“Thank You for Saving My Life”

Another testimony concerns an infantry captain who approached Padre Pio after Mass and thanked him for saving his life.

During a battle, the officer said, he had seen a friar standing nearby. The friar instructed him to leave his position and stand beside him. The captain obeyed. Moments later, a shell struck the place where he had been standing. When he turned to thank the friar, the figure had disappeared.

After the war, the captain visited San Giovanni Rotondo and recognised Padre Pio as the mysterious friar.

Reports from Behind the Iron Curtain

Letters from Eastern Europe also described alleged bilocations. Some writers claimed that Padre

Pio had appeared to persecuted Catholics, bringing consolation and, on occasion, the means to celebrate Mass.

One account placed him in Yugoslavia during the trial of Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac. Another claimed that he visited Cardinal József Mindszenty while the Hungarian churchman was imprisoned. The cardinal's secretary later recalled that, during his captivity, Mindszenty longed to celebrate Mass. Padre Pio was allegedly seen in his cell with everything required for the liturgy, even serving the Mass before taking the items away.

A similar testimony came from Czechoslovakia, where communist authorities had dissolved religious orders and imprisoned priests. A group of sisters lived secretly, working in the fields by day and praying together at night. They later wrote to Padre Pio, thanking him for visiting them and celebrating Mass.

Their letter suggests that they believed he had physically travelled from Italy. The traditional interpretation, however, is that the visit occurred through bilocation.

The Fragrance Associated with Padre Pio

Another phenomenon frequently associated with Padre Pio was a distinctive fragrance. Witnesses variously described it as resembling violets, roses, lilies or incense. Sometimes the scent was noticed on objects connected with him; on other occasions, it appeared without any apparent cause and then disappeared.

Padre Pio was reportedly believed to have said that such a fragrance could signify a grace obtained through prayer. It might also bring consolation or serve as a warning against danger, temptation or sin.

Similar reports have been made about other saints and their relics. Saint Martin de Porres, for example, was said to have been associated with a delicate fragrance, which witnesses reportedly noticed when his tomb was opened years after his death.

Several stories concern Padre Pio. Dr Giorgio Festa, who examined his stigmata, allegedly kept a bloodstained bandage in his Rome consulting room. Patients repeatedly asked about the powerful scent coming from the cabinet where it was stored.

Giuseppe Onufrio of Palermo recalled that, after Padre Pio held his hand during confession, the distinctive fragrance remained on it for several days despite repeated washing. He said that the scent continued during the period of penance imposed by the friar and disappeared when the penance ended.

In another account, Rosa Baldi suffered from a high fever that doctors could not explain. Her son travelled to San Giovanni Rotondo and asked Padre Pio to pray for her. When he returned home, the family noticed an extraordinary fragrance. That same day, Mrs Baldi's fever reportedly disappeared.

A Message of Hope

For those who accept these testimonies, Padre Pio's alleged bilocations and the fragrance associated with him point beyond the saint himself to God's providence and mercy.

The Church remains clear that private revelations are not binding on the faithful. Extraordinary claims must be tested carefully and judged in the light of the Gospel. Yet such accounts can still encourage Christians who face suffering, fear or loneliness.

Padre Pio once wrote to his spiritual children:

“Even if you see that your soul is standing on the edge of the abyss, Jesus is nevertheless with you... Cry out loudly, together with the patient Job... ‘Even if the Almighty should slay me – I

trust.’”

Those words offer a lasting Christian confidence. Whatever trials may come, Christ remains near, and no darkness lies beyond the reach of His grace.



Around the World

The sometimes-missed news

USA

BEWARE OF CHINA

The United States should take seriously a warning from the National Security Agency (NSA), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA): Chinese artificial-intelligence companies are allegedly copying the capabilities of leading American models on an industrial scale.

The agencies say these firms are using “distillation” – a process in which one AI system learns from another – to reproduce advanced functions at a fraction of the original cost. They claim that restricted capabilities are also being extracted to train competing systems, potentially weakening America’s technological lead.

According to the agencies, more capable Chinese AI could strengthen military operations and cyber-attacks against the United States and its allies. They are urging technology companies to work together to counter the practice.

The warning deserves careful attention, but public debate should remain factual and measured. AI distillation is not automatically unethical or unlawful; its moral character depends on how it is conducted. Misappropriating intellectual property, evading safeguards or enabling attacks would raise serious concerns. At the same time, accusations should be supported by evidence, and criticism should target specific actions – not an entire people or nation.

National security matters, but so do truth, justice, privacy and the peaceful use of technology. Any response should defend the common good without fuelling fear or unnecessary hostility.

CANADA

US TRADE WAR

Canada has imposed retaliatory tariffs on more than 700 American products, worth nearly C\$28 billion, after the United States introduced tariffs of up to 50 per cent on Canadian exports.

Speaking after the measures took effect, Prime Minister Mark Carney said Canada would not allow American goods to enter tariff-free while Canadian companies faced restrictions in the US. He said the response was intended to protect workers, businesses and local communities.

“Our future will not be decided in Washington,” Mr Carney told Canadians. “Canada has always

handled adversity well and used it to build the country.”

He warned that the dispute could end 40 years of close economic integration between the two countries and repeated his claim that Washington wanted to make Canada dependent on – and ultimately take over – the country. Such language may strengthen national resolve, but it risks inflaming tensions unless supported by clear evidence.

The government has also promoted a “Buy Canadian” campaign, urging families to favour domestic products. That may express legitimate civic solidarity, but ethical policymaking must also consider higher prices and the effect on poorer households.

A just response should protect workers while seeking honest negotiations, peaceful co-operation and the common good of both nations.

THREAT

HYBRID WARFARE

According to Latvia’s LETA news agency, the pro-Russian group *Global Citizens Against War 1984* has allegedly threatened companies in Latvia, Poland and Portugal involved in supporting Ukraine. The group reportedly sent letters demanding that the companies stop supplying weapons to Kyiv. The claims should be independently verified, and the group’s precise status should be established before it is described as “terrorist”.

Russia is also conducting an information campaign accusing the Baltic states of persecuting their Russian-speaking minorities. Analysts warn that such claims could be used to justify hostile action, although there is no certainty that an armed attack is being planned.

US media reports say that American intelligence chief John Ratcliffe warned the Kremlin, during a visit to Moscow in late August, against attacking NATO members, particularly the Baltic states. The Institute for the Study of War has likewise reported signs of possible Russian preparations for aggression against a NATO country.

Experts believe any action is more likely to involve cyber-attacks, intimidation, sabotage or disinformation – forms of hybrid warfare below the threshold of open conflict. Reporting should avoid panic and distinguish clearly between evidence, allegation and speculation.

Morally, threats against civilians and the deliberate spreading of fear are serious wrongs; a just response must protect the innocent while seeking peace and truth.

We Read Pope Leo

We must safeguard the gift of communication as the deepest truth of the human person, toward which every technological innovation must be directed.

From the moment of creation, God desired the human person as his interlocutor and (...) impressed upon the human face the reflection of divine love, so that humanity might be lived to the full through love. Safeguarding human faces and voices therefore means safeguarding this seal, this indelible reflection of God’s love. We are not a species composed of predetermined biochemical algorithms. Each of us has an irreplaceable and unique vocation that springs from life and is revealed precisely in communication with others. If we fail to respect this principle, digital technology may radically alter some of the fundamental pillars of human civilization that we sometimes take for granted. By simulating human voices and faces, wisdom and knowledge, consciousness and responsibility, empathy and friendship, systems known as artificial intelligence not only interfere with information ecosystems but also enter

the deepest level of communication: that of interpersonal relationships.

This challenge is therefore not technological but anthropological. Protecting faces and voices ultimately means protecting ourselves. Embracing with courage, determination and discernment the opportunities offered by digital technology and artificial intelligence does not mean concealing from ourselves the critical issues, ambiguities and dangers. (...) We must safeguard the gift of communication as the deepest truth of the human person, toward which every technological innovation must be directed.

Message for the 60th World Communications Day

To be a person always means relationship, communion and participation, both in relation to God and to other people (...). It excludes being closed in on oneself. To be a person means to see oneself as a gift to be shared, growing and maturing through welcoming others, reciprocity and service. This dignity has been entrusted to the responsibility of every human being. At the same time, it requires solidarity and mutual care, as well as overcoming the many distortions and manipulations that continue to warp its understanding and hinder its realization. (...) The Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* states that human dignity encompasses the whole person; therefore, dualistic approaches must be overcome: the human person is a “unity of body and soul.” Reducing the body to an “object” that may be disposed of at will is always a denial of personal dignity. “A human being may not despise bodily life,” but, on the contrary, “is obliged to regard the body as good and worthy of honour since God has created it and will raise it up on the last day.” Since we are all wounded by sin, care must also be taken lest the body “be enslaved to the evil inclinations of the heart” (GS, 14).

General Audience, 9 September, 2026

Forgiveness alone sets us free and brings light anew, even where a person’s material and moral poverty has for a time obscured the horizon and made the path uncertain. Forgiveness, like a favourable wind, scatters even the thickest clouds until the sun can be seen once more. (...) Let us therefore ask the Virgin Mary, Mother of Mercy, to help us always to forgive, even when it is difficult to take the first step, and courageously and perseveringly to bear the serene and healing light of love, which conquers hatred and disarms all resentment.

Angelus, 13 September, 2026

Prayer



Please remember to pray for those who are unwell, in need, or have requested our prayers: Anne Smith, Richard Fox, Cecil Finn, Andrew McLaughlin, Claire Wiggins, Russell Carroll, Lucy Cunningham, Lilian Cox, Sarah Carmichael, and Doleen Durnin.

Please keep in your prayers Fr Donald Campbell, Rev Angus Morrison (Islay), Jamesina (Shirley) Finn (2017) **and all whose anniversaries fall around this time.**

News and Events

Join us for tea and coffee in the hall after Sunday Mass. We warmly welcome visitors and would be delighted to share our hospitality with you. We hope to see you there!



campbeltown@rcdai.org.uk



www.stkieranscampbeltown.org



<https://www.facebook.com/campbeltownrcchurch/>

A Parish of the R.C. Diocese of Argyll and the Isles; Charitable Trust, a registered Scottish Charity, SC002876

Parish Priest: Fr. A. Wood, St. Kieran's, Campbeltown; Tel. 01586 552160