SCARBOROUGH CATHOLIC PARISHES

CHURCHES OF ST PETER, ST JOSEPH, ST EDWARD THE CONFESSOR

Part of the Middlesbrough Diocesan Trust: Reg. Charity No. 233748

Parish Priest: Canon Edmond Gubbins

St Joseph's Presbytery
1 Greyland's Park Grove, YO12 6HY

St Peter's Rectory
Castle Road, YO11 1TH

St Edward the Confessor
Avenue Victoria, YO11 2QS

Tel: 01723 360358 • Email: ***scarboroughcatholicparishes@rcdmidd.org.uk*** **• Website:** ***www.scarboroughcatholicparishes.org.uk***

25 OCTOBER 2026: 30TH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME: YEAR A DIVINE OFFICE: Week 2

LIVING THE WORD: A REFLECTION ON TODAY'S READINGS

Living the Twofold Commandment: This Sunday, our Liturgy of the Word presents us with the absolute foundation of our identity as Christian disciples. The readings do not offer us a long list of strict rules and regulations; instead, they distil the entirety of our faith into a single, cohesive, and dynamic calling: an undivided love for God that must prove itself true through a radical, active love for our neighbour.

When we look at the readings for this Sunday, we can see how they connect and speak with one voice. In the Gospel reading (**Matthew 22:34–40**), Jesus is cornered by a scholar of the law who asks a trick question: ***"Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?"*** It was common for Jewish religious leaders to debate the vast body of Mosaic law (there were over 600 of them), and how to weigh which were heavy (*mitzvah chamurah*) and which were light (*mitzvah kalah*) i.e. of greater or lesser import or requiring greater or lesser effort to keep. The Pharisees had just seen Jesus humiliate their rivals, the Saducees, and sent an "expert in the law" to test him. Their goal was to trap Jesus politically and theologically. If he chose one specific commandment, they could accuse him of neglecting or disrespecting the rest of God's law, thereby undermining his authority with the crowds. Rather than taking the bait, Jesus unites two distinct texts from the Old Testament. He pairs the Shema from Deuteronomy—***to love God with all our heart, soul, and mind***—with a line from Leviticus: to ***love our neighbour as ourselves***, stating that all the law and the prophets hang on these two 'pegs'. By doing this, he completely upended the trap. Instead of simply choosing a law, he exposed the core flaw in their entire approach to God's commandments. He was telling them that the hundreds of specific laws are not a random checklist but are all individual expressions of these two central ideas. If you are loving God and loving your neighbour, you are automatically fulfilling the rest of the law.

The Liturgy intentionally pairs this Gospel with the First Reading from **Exodus 22:20–26**, making it beautifully clear that "**neighbour**" is not an abstract concept. Exodus demands real, practical justice for the most vulnerable people in the ancient world: the **resident alien, the widow, the orphan, and the poor debtor**. The Psalm echoes this, reminding us that because God is our protector and fortress, we are called to be a refuge for others. Finally, in the Second Reading (**1 Thessalonians 1:5c–10**), St Paul praises the Thessalonians, that their faith became a living, breathing model for everyone around them. Their lives proved that the Gospel is not just an idea, but a complete transformation.

Wisdom from the Greats of the Church: The great minds and saints of early Church history consistently saw these readings as a warning against separating our prayer lives from our everyday actions. They understood that loving our neighbour is the laboratory where our love for God is tested and proven. For example, St Augustine (354–430 AD), commenting on the dual command of love observed that, while love of God is first in order of importance, love of neighbour is where we actually have to begin our work. He noted that we cannot see God directly yet, but we can see our neighbour. By loving the person right in front of us, we clear our spiritual vision to see God. In his Tractates on the First Epistle of John (Track 17, 8), he writes: "*If you do not love the brother whom you see, how will you be able to love God whom you do not see? Begin, then, by loving your neighbour... walk, that you may arrive.*"

St John Chrysostom (c. 347–407 AD), in his Homilies on the Gospel of Matthew (Homily 71), pointed out that Jesus tightly bound the second commandment to the first so that we wouldn't try to cheat the system. He remarked that a person who claims to love God but ignores a suffering neighbour is holding an empty shell. True love of neighbour is the ultimate indicator and proof of our devotion to God.

Deus Caritas Est and Unconditional Love: In his first encyclical (a papal letter on church teaching), Deus Caritas Est (God is Love), Pope Benedict XVI used this exact Gospel passage from Matthew 22:37-40 to show us how we can live this out in our modern parish life. He famously reminds us in Section 1, that being a Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea. It is the encounter with an event, a Person, which gives life a new horizon. Moving into Section 18, Benedict directly addresses the practical anxiety many of us feel: **How can I force myself to love a neighbour I might not even like, or a God I cannot see?** The answer, Benedict points out, is found in the sequence of grace. We can love our neighbour because God has first loved us. When we encounter Jesus in the Sacraments, in prayer, and in the Eucharist, His love changes our hearts. Benedict writes that if we completely ignore our neighbour, our relationship with God becomes stunted and 'formalised'. Conversely, if we try to do pure charity work without a deep prayer life, we quickly run out of energy and become bitter. For us sitting in the pews today, this is an encouraging reminder: loving our neighbour does not mean conjuring up intense emotional feelings on our own. It means letting the love we receive at Mass spill over into our families, our workplaces, and our local community.

Fratelli Tutti: The Call to Open Our Hearts: While Pope Benedict looks at the internal heart of Christian love, Pope Francis tracks how that love must move outward into a broken world. In his encyclical Fratelli Tutti (On Fraternity and Social Friendship), Pope Francis places immense, direct emphasis on our First Reading from Exodus 22:21-26. Section 61 of the encyclical explicitly quotes Exodus 22:21: "***You shall not wrong or oppress a stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.***" Pope Francis uses this scriptural anchor to challenge our human tendency to build walls, form exclusive cliques, or ignore those who are culturally, socially, or economically on the margins of our community. He points out that the ancient people of Israel were given a big reminder by God: Remember your own history of being vulnerable and let that memory make you a safe space for others. When applied to our lives, Francis's reflection on Exodus calls us to look closely at our local surroundings. Who are the "strangers" or "aliens" in our neighbourhood today? They might be the newly arrived immigrant family, the isolated elderly person living down the street, or the lonely individual sitting at the back of the church who feels out of place. Loving our neighbour means moving past our comfort zones to build real, face-to-face friendships.

A Living Blueprint: As we step out of the church doors this Sunday, let us carry the heartbeat of these readings with us. Let us hold onto the assurance of our Gospel that when we focus on loving God and loving those around us, everything else falls into its proper place. May our parish community be a living echo of St Paul's words to the Thessalonians—a place where faith is active, love is genuine, and hope is contagious.

LET US PRAY

Lord Jesus, You remind us that we are all neighbours. Show us how to love, Lord. May we open our eyes. May we emerge from our comfortable isolation. May we build a world of compassion and dignity. Help us to move past walls of division. Help us to restore dignity to those who suffer. Help us to build a parish and a society based not on leaving people out, but on community. Amen.

MASS TIMES - WEEK COMMENCING 25 OCTOBER 2026 – YEAR A 30TH SUNDAY: ORDINARY TIME
Masses at St Peter's Church are also LIVE STREAMED via YouTube: *https://youtube.com/@stpeterschurchscarborough*

Saturday	**24**	**5.30pm**	**St Edward's**	
Sunday	**25**	**9.30am**	**St Joseph's**	
		9.30am	**St Peter's (Polish)**	
		11.30am	**St Peter's**	
Monday	26	10am	St Joseph's *Ss Chad & Cedd*	
Tuesday	27	5.30pm	St Edward's	
Wednesday	28	10am	St Peter's *SS SIMON & JUDE*	
Thursday	**29**	**9am**	**St Joseph's ** *note earlier time***	
Friday	30	10am	St Peter's	
Saturday	31	10am	St Peter's	

MASS IN THE SYRO-MALABAR RITE celebrated monthly **9.30am** on **4th Sunday of month** at St Edward's Church.

CONFESSION TIMES Sat: 10.30am-11am at St Peter's & **5-5.20pm** at St Edward's; **Sun: 9-9.20am** at St Joseph's; & **by request**

ADORATION OF BLESSED SACRAMENT weekdays **9.30-10am** at St Peter's, **1 hour** before Mass at St Joseph's, 5pm St Edward's **CHILDREN'S LITURGY OF THE WORD (Children only)** St Peter's & St Joseph's Sundays weekly; **OCTOBER PRAYER INTENTIONS OF POPE LEO**: *that mental health ministry be established throughout the Church, helping to overcome the stigma and discrimination of persons with mental illnesses*. **DIVINE MERCY CHAPLET** *Fridays* before Mass. **STATIONS / SACRED HEART DEVOTION** Fridays after Mass, alternating weekly

LATELY DEAD: Vincent White, Keith Pickin; **ANNIV'S**: Clare Buck, Eleanor Duffy, Andrew Carr, Michael Groombridge, Mary Carney; **MASS ATTENDANCE**: **Vigil**: St Edward's **80** (est); **Sunday**: St Joseph's **168**; St Peter's **166**, Polish **55** (est); **Total 469**; **OFFERINGS**: Loose Plate: **£517**; Gift Aid Envelopes: **£213**; Av. Standing Orders: **£1,030** (av.); Contactless **£1,053**; Polish: **£30**; **Total £2,843**. **Thank you. 300 CLUB WINNERS: £25 No.119; £10 No.148**

ONLINE GIVING You can donate online at ***https://donate.mydona.com/scarborough-parishes*** or use the QR code (right) or by making a direct payment from your account: Parish bank account details: Barclays Bank Account No: **50003417**, Sort Code: **20-56-90**, Account name: ***Diocese of Middlesbrough***. If you wish to **Gift Aid** your offerings, please sign a **Gift Aid Form**). Also, a **CONTACTLESS MACHINE** is in place in all our **three churches** near the entrance. Choose headings carefully when using (headings run onto two pages).

CLOCKS GO BACK this Sunday 25 Oct at 2am. They go back 1 hour – so 2am becomes 1am, and you get an extra hour in bed.

ST AUGUSTINE'S SCHOOL APPLICATIONS - IMPORTANT NOTICE Deadline for Admissions is **31 October** for entry into Year 7 in September 2027. Do not delay if you wish to apply for a place in either school. Full details of the admissions criteria and application process is on schools' website. **Applicants should be baptised**. You will need to provide proof of this with your application.

TROPIC CHRISTMAS SHOPPING AFTERNOON 1 to 3pm Sat 31 Oct at St Joseph's Church, with mince pies & refreshments. Tropic is a range of skincare and beauty products, naturally derived, vegan, and cruelty-free. 10% of proceeds to St Joseph's heating and St Peter's restoration funds. Come along and enjoy the festive feeling.

ROSARY & BLESSING OF GRAVES at Woodlands Cemetery at **3pm on Sunday 1 November**. Meet at the entrance. It is Cemetery Sunday. Let's remember our deceased loved ones.

SCARBOROUGH COUNCIL OF CHURCHES AGM 7pm Tuesday 4 November at Queen Street Methodist Church. All welcome

MASS FOR DECEASED CLERGY & BISHOPS of Diocese 12 noon Wed 4 Nov at St Mary's Cathedral, Middlesbrough. All welcome.

3 DAY ICONOGRAPHY RETREAT for beginners: **Tue 10 to Thu 12 November** at St George's Church, Eastfield. No experience needed. You will be led each step of the way and will complete a satisfactory Icon. Full tuition and all materials provided. Led by Canon Ian Holdsworth, a practiced and well-known Iconographer. **Fees £125**. For more details or to book email: ***canonianh@gmail.com***

NOVEMBER HOLY SOULS' ENVELOPES and sheets are now available at back of church. Add the names of your loved ones and return together with a money donation.

WEAR YOUR POPPY WITH PRIDE. Box of poppies at the back of each church as we approach Remembrance Sunday.

10TH WORLD DAY OF THE POOR Caritas Middlesbrough invites everyone to a day of prayer, reflection and solidarity at St Mary's Cathedral, Middlesbrough, **10.30am to 3.15pm on Saturday 14 November**. Fr Chris Hughes will speak on ***No Justice, No Peace***, exploring how we can work towards a just peace in our communities, All welcome. Bring packed lunch. Refreshments provided.

ST AUGUSTINE'S SCHOOL CHRISTMAS FAYRE 14 Dec. The school is **collecting items to sell**, (knitted toys, tree decorations, hand-crafted gifts. They'll also have a teddy tombola. If you are a crafter or are having a sort out, pass on teddies or toys to the school.

ST JOSEPH'S MINISTERS OF THE WORD Please confirm you wish to continue to read at Sunday Mass by end November. Contact Deb on 07503 212224. New rota for 2027 available in December. If you wish to become a Minister, speak to Fr Gubbins.

PARISH CONCERT raised a total of **£1,354** from ticket sales and raffle. Special thanks to Michael O'Brien and Trish and Martin Gallagher who made it such a great evening, and of course, to all the wonderful participants.

SECOND COLLECTION for Missio last weekend raised **£394**. **Thank you**.

POLITE NOTICE Please return hymn books and Missalettes to the back of church – don't leave in the benches. Thank you.

***SUNDAY SMILE**: Without God, one week would be: Sinday, Mournday, Tearday, Wasteday, Thurstday, Fightday, Shatterday!*