



St. Joseph's Church Wilton

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Why are we focusing on Christian persecution for our Christmas charity?

It's a sobering thought that while we think of the first century AD of the Roman Empire as a time of Christian persecution, **more Christians have been killed for their faith in the last 100 years than in the previous 1,900 years of Christian history.**

The latest *Religious Freedom in the World Report 2025* published by **Aid to the Church in Need** ([a copy of this report is available in the church and in the Parish Centre](#)) shows that a staggering **413 million Christians** live in countries where religious freedom is severely violated - that's **18%**, or about **one in five Christians**. Of these, approximately **220 million** live in countries where they are directly exposed to persecution - that's **10%**, or **one in ten of all Christians**. At a time when there is heightened awareness of human rights abuses globally, there is a blind spot when it comes to violence against Christians and the wider threat to religious freedom for people of all faiths and none.

According to **Aid to the Church in Need**, the right to believe — or to live according to one's convictions — is in decline in **62 countries**, affecting billions of people. Religious persecution **destroys communities, fuels conflict and forces millions to flee**. Now, more than ever, religious freedom must be defended and protected worldwide.

"Religious freedom is a litmus test for all other freedoms, **without the freedom to believe all other freedoms are under threat**".

SMA Calendar 2026.

The SMA Calendar for 2026 is now on sale in the Mass Office. €3 per copy.

The Gospel.

Feast of Christ the King. – This is the King of the Jews.

This looks like a strange gospel passage for the feast of Christ the King. The sign above his head calls him "the King of the Jews" but he looks like anything but a king. The one who sees beyond these contradictions is the man on the third cross, the one whom tradition calls the good thief. He admits his guilt, gives testimony to Jesus' innocence, and asks to be remembered when he comes into his kingdom.

How does my accepting of Christ as king involve accepting the cross?

ST JOSEPH'S SMA PARISH WILTON

Advent

DAY OF QUIET PRAYER



SAT 6TH DECEMBER

11AM TO 4PM

- Periods of quiet communal prayer
- Inputs to help focus our attention
- Guided personal reflection in preparation for Advent reconciliation
- Sit down meal in silence
- Freedom to walk in the quiet of the church or grounds

Activities on the day will include:

Please register at the SMA Parish Centre in advance of the event

Fee: €15

The Beginning of Christmas.

The parish is hosting a Christmas Carol concert featuring the **Cork Light Orchestra** with guests **One Voice Choir** on **Fri Nov 28th, 7p.m. to 9 p.m.** at St. Joseph's Church, Wilton.

Tickets are €20 and must be purchased on Eventbrite. There is a QR code on posters around the Church and Parish Centre where tickets can be purchased. Proceeds of the night are in aid of a Camino for Down Syndrome Cork/Field of Dreams. Scan the QR code for more detail on this event.



SMA Journal November 2025.

The latest edition of the SMA Journal can be viewed by **scanning the QR code below**.

It includes stories about the following: the latest edition of the SMA Magazine and the SMA Calendar for 2026. We also hear about the new online availability of our Missionary Association Cards through the SMA website. We talked with Bishop Bulus of Kontagora Diocese, Nigeria, an area in which many SMA's served and contributed to the establishment of the diocese. We hear how Newry, Northern Ireland honours the memory of Archbishop Francis Carroll SMA and finally, in this November the month of the Holy Souls, a report about the Blessing of graves in St Finbarr's Cemetery, Cork.



Parish Charity for November.

For the month of November we will support **The Rise and Shine Trust** (formally the Irish Pilgrimage Trust). The group raises funds to sponsor young people to go to Lourdes from Cork city and county each year. Each organising group is tasked with raising €14,500 to pay for the young people. Let's see what we can do to help them during the month of November. To date we have raised €1,033.

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

How worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and divinity, and wisdom and strength and honour. To him belong glory and power for ever and ever.

PENITENTIAL ACT

Lord Jesus, you are mighty God and prince of peace:

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you are Son of God and Son of Mary:

Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you are Word made flesh and splendour of the Father:

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

May almighty God have mercy on us... **Amen.**

THE GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us;

you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer;

you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us;

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. **Amen.**

OPENING PRAYER

Almighty ever-living God, whose will is to restore all things in your beloved Son, the King of the universe, grant, we pray, that the whole creation, set free from slavery, may render your majesty service and ceaselessly proclaim your praise.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ,

✠ LITURGY OF THE WORD ✠

FIRST READING 2 Samuel 5:1-3

A reading from the second book of Samuel.

All the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron. 'Look' they said, 'we are your own flesh and blood. In days past when Saul was our king, it was you who led Israel in all their exploits; and the Lord said to you, "You are the man who shall be shepherd of my people, Israel, you



OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, KING OF THE UNIVERSE

The Cross is a Throne and the Man hanging there is a King! He is a king, not through wealth or reputation, but because he is a Man of compassion and of mercy, of justice brought to death.

23rd November 2025

shall be the leader of Israel." ' So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and King David made a pact with them at Hebron in the presence of the Lord and they anointed David king of Israel.

The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 121: 1-5

R. I rejoiced when I heard them say

'Let us go to God's house.'

1. I rejoiced when I heard them say:

'Let us go to God's house.'

and now our feet are standing within your gates, O Jerusalem. (R)

2. Jerusalem is built as a city strongly compact.

It is there that the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord. (R)

3. For Israel's law it is,

there to praise the Lord's name.

There were set the thrones of judgement of the house of David. (R)

SECOND READING Colossians 1:12 - 20

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Colossians.

We give thanks to the Father who has made it possible for you to join the saints and with them to inherit the light. Because that is what he has done: he has taken us out of the power of darkness and created a place for us in the kingdom of the Son that he loves, and in him, we gain our freedom, the forgiveness of our sins.

He is the image of the unseen God

and the first-born of all creation

for in him were created

all things in heaven and on earth:

everything visible and everything invisible, Thrones, Dominations, Sovereignities, Powers - all things were created through him and for him.

Before anything was created, he existed

and he holds all things in unity.

Now the Church is his body, he is its head.

As he is the Beginning,

he was first to be born from the dead,

so that he should be first in every way;

because God wanted all perfection

to be found in him and all things to be reconciled through him and for him, everything in heaven and everything on earth,

when he made peace by his death on the cross.

The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia! Blessings on him who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessings on the coming kingdom of our father David! Alleluia!

GOSPEL Luke 23. 35 - 43

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

The people stayed there before the Cross watching Jesus. As for the leaders, they jeered at him. 'He saved others,' they said, 'let him save himself if he is the Christ of God, the Chosen One.' The soldiers mocked him too, and when they approached to offer him vinegar they said, 'If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself.' Above him there was an inscription: 'This is the King of the Jews.'

One of the criminals hanging there abused him. 'Are you not the Christ?' he said. 'Save yourself and us as well.' But the other spoke up and rebuked him. 'Have you no fear of God at all?' he said. 'You got the same sentence as he did, but in our case we deserved it: we are paying for what we did. But this man has done nothing wrong. Jesus,' he said, 'remember me when you come into your kingdom.' 'Indeed, I promise you,' he replied, 'today you will be with me in paradise.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

NICENE CREED

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

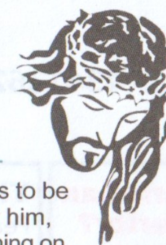
I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages.

God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,

begotten, not made, consubstantial with

the Father; through him all things were made.

For us men and for our salvation



he came down from heaven,

All bow for following three lines:

and by the Holy Spirit

was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.

He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.

I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. **Amen**

✠ LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST ✠

Pray brothers and sisters,

May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

As we offer you, O Lord, the sacrifice by which the human race is reconciled to you, we humbly pray that your Son himself may bestow on all nations the gifts of unity and peace. Through Christ our Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Lord be with you. **And with your spirit.**

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right and just.

AFTER THE CONSECRATION

Save us, Saviour of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection you have set us free.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

The Lord sits as King for ever. The Lord will bless his people with peace.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Having received the food of immortality, we ask, O Lord, that, glorying in obedience to the commands of Christ, the King of the universe, we may live with him eternally in his heavenly Kingdom. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

