



RAF ROMAN CATHOLIC SUMMER 24 UPDATE

Newsletter No. 8



Welcome to the latest update for the RAF Roman Catholic Community. Since our last newsletter there have been several opportunities for the RAF RC Community to get together to celebrate our common bonds and friendship. Foremost of these events was the International Military Pilgrimage (IMP) which took place in Lourdes in May. Read more about it below.

I hope that you find the newsletter informative. We look forward to a busy rest of the year filled with activity. I especially wish to highlight the walking pilgrimage to Walsingham taking place in Sep. Please join with one of the many events - it would be great to see you.

I hope that you and your families get the chance to enjoy some leave over the Summer period. But let's remember in prayer all members of the RAF on deployment or about to deploy, especially my Chaplain colleagues, Fr James Mealy and Padre Anthony Curran.

Rev (SqN Ldr) Deacon Dave Skillen, RAF Principal Roman Catholic Chaplain (PRCC)



ST BENEDICT WEEK 2024

6 - 14 JULY 2024

BENEDICT: OPPORTUNITY IN A
TIME OF CRISIS

Join in celebrating Benedict in a series of online blogs, podcasts, talks and more!

*SPEAKERS INCLUDE: JEROME BEARDS,
ROWAN WILLIAMS, DR SCHOLASTICA JACOB
& FR CHAD BOULTON*

For more information visit
[The Lay Community of Saint Benedict](https://www.rafrc.org.uk/)



Over the late May Bank Holiday weekend, 350 members of the Armed Forces Community, including about 40 from the RAF, travelled to Lourdes in the French Pyrenees for the 64th International Military Pilgrimage. The UK Contingent was part of a 15,000 strong gathering of military personnel from around the world. Throughout a full programme there were opportunities for prayer and reflection, as well as sporting and social events. The [Bishopric website](https://www.rafrc.org.uk/imp) has many photos from this years' IMP which give a flavour of what took place.

The next IMP takes place 15 to 19 May 2025. All welcome to attend. For further information contact details are at the end of this newsletter.

Annual Masses for the RAF

We hold 2 Masses each year for the RAF RC Community. The first, held at the Military Cathedral in Aldershot, took place on 21 Apr. The second Mass takes place at the Central Church of the RAF, St Clement Danes, on Thu 10 Oct at 1400. Bishop Paul Mason, RC Bishop of the Forces, presides at both Masses.

These are great occasions and allow us to celebrate our common bonds of friendship. Open to all, it would be wonderful to see you there this year.

RAF Annual Masses 2024

The Eucharist is essential for us: it is Christ who enables us to enter our lives and fill us with his presence - Pope Francis

Join the Bishop of the Forces, the RAF Principal Roman Catholic Chaplain and the RAF Whole Force RC Community to gather together in celebration.

Sunday 21 April 1100 at St Michael & St George, The Cathedral Church of the Bishop of the Forces, Queen's Avenue, Aldershot, GU11 2NY	Thursday 10 October 1400 at The Central Church of the RAF, St Clement Danes, The Strand, London, WC2R 1EH
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Both Masses followed by refreshments

For further information, or to indicate your attendance, please contact
Wg Cdr (Rtd) Jean Vignone
jean.vignone@rafrc.org.uk

Upcoming Events

Bishopric of
the Armed Forces

**Walking Pilgrimage
to
Walsingham**

**16 - 20
September
2024**

Join with the Rt Rev Paul Mason, Roman Catholic Bishop of the Forces, and personnel from the Whole Force to walk the 37 miles of waymarked path. Starting at the Shrine of St Julian in Norwich to the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham.



To express your interest and for further information, contact:
jeremy.wynne109@mod.gov.uk

Bishopric of the Forces Walking Pilgrimage to Walsingham

16 - 20 Sep 24

In 2022 the Bishopric of the Forces offered 30 military personnel the opportunity to take part in a walking pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela in northern Spain. Following on from the success of that, a similar opportunity is offered for personnel from the Whole Force to take part in a walking pilgrimage to Walsingham between 16 to 20 Sep.

The walk follows the ancient pilgrim's route of Walsingham Way from the medieval city of Norwich to the Marian Shrine at Walsingham, a total of 37 miles. We are delighted that The Rt Rev Paul Mason, Bishop of the Armed Forces, will accompany us on our pilgrimage, as well as other military chaplains. Each day there will be the opportunity for Mass and other devotions to Our Lady.

Please contact jeremy.wynne109@mod.gov.uk to express an interest.

The retreat has been invaluable to me as an individual and has helped me to appreciate the importance of spiritual wellbeing for my subordinates ahead of assuming command overseas later this year'.

Comment by a recent attendee at the Douai Abbey retreat.

Bishopric of the Forces Retreats 2024

The ever-popular retreat series offered by the Bishopric of the Forces continues in 2024. This year 2 of the 4 opportunities are still to take place:

- **Worth Abbey, West Sussex 14 to 17 Oct**
- **Ampleforth Abbey, Nth Yorks 11 to 14 Nov**

DIN 2023DIN01-128 HM Forces Bishopric Roman Catholic Retreats 2024 provides more information and includes the application form. These retreats are open to all.

Family Pilgrimage - Walsingham - Mon 28 - Thu 31 Oct 24

This Family Pilgrimage is offered by the Anglican Shrine at Walsingham as an action-packed week of liturgies and activities to share and enjoy plus lively music and a relaxed atmosphere. Visit [here](#) for more information.

And finally...

If you would like to know more about or take part in any of the events mentioned in this newsletter, or about Catholic life in the RAF, or should you wish to be added to our database and receive future updates, get in touch with Wg Cdr (rtd) Jem Wynne, Pastoral Administrative Assistant to the RAF PRCC. Contact the RAF Principal Roman Catholic Chaplain, Padre Dave Skillen, to say hello, request prayers, or to know more about Catholic life in the RAF

Wg Cdr (Rtd) Jem Wynne Jeremy.wynne109@mod.gov.uk

Rev(Sqn Ldr) Dave Skillen David.skillen100@mod.gov.uk

Check out the Bishopric of the Forces [Website](#) for the latest news and information.

