



people were as much in evidence as those who were poor: Richard the Lionheart and Henry V both came to pray here before going into battle and indeed it seems to have been the survival of the latter, then a prince, at the Battle of Shrewsbury in 1403, that brought the story of the shrine to greater fame. But it was the mother of Henry VII, Margaret Beaufort, who ensured the place would have a legacy by building a chapel here in the fifteenth century; ironically it would be her grandson, Henry VIII, who would suppress it and other places of Catholic congregation and worship a few decades later. Over the years that followed, St Winefride's became a symbol of Catholic defiance at a time of repression and was supported by the Jesuits.

THE SHRINE TODAY

Today the shrine is a place of quiet contemplation – and pilgrims still come seeking a cure. The spring waters still bubble up on the ground floor into a star-shaped basin beneath an elaborately vaulted ceiling. Its centrepiece is a six-sided pendant illustrating the main events in Winefride's life: it begins with her decapitation, followed by her return to life, and then she is pictured taking her vows as a nun and entering her community. The final scenes show her at her death and then in heaven.

The water then flows into an outdoor pool where people can bathe, as at Lourdes – in the summer there's a line of small tents that serve as changing rooms. One wall is heavily marked with the initials of many of those who've visited – and people still add their marks there to this day.

Mass text

ENTRANCE ANTI-PHON

If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities,
Lord, who could stand?
But with you is found forgiveness,
O God of Israel.

FIRST READING Wisdom 7:7-11

PSALM Psalm 89

RESPONSE Fill us with your love that we may
rejoice.

1. Make us know the shortness of our life
that we may gain wisdom of heart.
Lord, relent! Is your anger for ever?
Show pity to your servants. R.
2. In the morning, fill us with your love;
we shall exult and rejoice all our days.
Give us joy to balance our affliction
for the years when we knew misfortune. R.

3. Show forth your work to your servants;
let your glory shine on their children.
Let the favour of the Lord be upon us:
give success to the work of our hands. R.

SECOND READING Hebrews 4:12-13

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!
How happy are the poor in spirit;
theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL Mark 10:17-30

COMMUNION ANTI-PHON

When the Lord appears, we shall be like him,
for we shall see him as he is.

Next Sunday's Readings:

Isaiah 53:10-11
Hebrews 4:14-16
Mark 10:35-45



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SUNDAY BULLETIN

BRITAIN'S OWN LOURDES: ST WINEFRIDE'S WELL AND SHRINE, HOLYWELL, WALES

It's been called the Lourdes of Britain and it stands beside a road in north Wales. Across more than a thousand years it's been visited by millions of pilgrims – and continues to this day to attract visitors from across the world. As with the French shrine where Our Lady appeared to St Bernadette, there are many who believe their ailments have been cured by a dip in its waters – and indeed there's a large collection of discarded crutches to make the point.

This is St Winefride's Well and shrine in Holywell, which has been a centre of spirituality since at least 1115 and possibly earlier. The story on which the shrine is founded is a curious legend involving murder and resurrection, and it's based on a young woman called Winefride, or Winifred, whose suitor was so upset when she rejected his marriage proposal that he decided to kill her. Winefride was decapitated and her head rolled down the hill; but where it came to stop, according to the legend, a spring erupted.

Winefride was the niece of St Beuno, one of Wales' best-known saints. He had a reputation for being able to bring people back to life; so when he heard about Winefride's demise, he rushed to the scene and reattached her head. She went on to live a long life as a nun – and the site of the shrine, which had possibly previously been the site of pre-Christian pilgrimage, now became a centre of Christianity renowned throughout Britain.

Over the centuries that followed, many people travelled to Holywell to pray at the shrine and the holy waters – it was much easier for British Christians to get to north Wales than to Santiago de Compostela, the shrine of St James, or to Rome. There was a specific format to a visit, with pilgrims processing three times around the shrine before offering prayers at the statue to St Winefride – and then, as at Santiago, they were awarded a badge as proof of their journey. Powerful and wealthy

Houses of God



In a new series for *Sunday Bulletin*, Catholic journalist and author Joanna Moorhead looks at a selection of Britain's Catholic churches and places of pilgrimage.



10 OCTOBER 2021

28TH SUNDAY
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DIVINE OFFICE WEEK IV