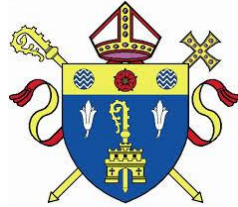


*Press Release*

**English Martyrs' Church, Preston prepares for new  
'lease of life' under Institute of Christ the King  
Sovereign Priest**



**Iconic church in Preston will come under the administration of the  
Institute at Mass on Sunday 24 September 2017 at 11.30am.**

*Per Crucem ad Coronam*  
SHRINE CHURCH OF SAINT THOMAS OF CANTERBURY &  
ENGLISH MARTYRS  
INSTITUTE OF CHRIST THE KING SOVEREIGN PRIEST

**Sunday 24th September 2017  
11.30 am**

**PONTIFICAL HIGH MASS**  
**celebrated by**  
**The Rt. Rev. Michael Campbell, O.S.A.**  
**Bishop of Lancaster**

**to open the new Shrine Church of  
Saint Thomas of Canterbury & English Martyrs  
(Garstang Road, Preston, PR1 1NA)**

**in the presence of the Very Rev. Mgr Gilles Wach  
Prior General of  
the Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest**

Extract from the Bishop's Blog (9<sup>th</sup> July)  
"[This] magnificent church [will] be open each day for prayer and worship as a fully operational shrine church dedicated to the devotion of St Thomas of Canterbury and the English Martyrs on the old Gallows Hill."

Saint Walburge's Presbytery  
Weston Street - Preston - PR2 2QE  
[www.stwalburge.org](http://www.stwalburge.org) / Facebook: ICKSP St Walburge

**STATEMENT BEGINS:**

On Sunday 24 September 2017 at 11.30am, the Bishop of Lancaster, Rt Rev Michael G Campbell OSA, will celebrate a Pontifical High Mass at English Martyrs church on Garstang Road, Preston to mark 150 years of the church being opened and the transfer of the care of the church from the clergy of the Diocese of Lancaster to the Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest.

Monsignor Gilles Wach, Prior General of the Institute will be present for the Mass.  
**All are most welcome to attend and be part of these celebrations.**

The church of St Thomas of Canterbury and the English Martyrs, Preston (more commonly known simply as 'the English Martyrs') has been in an increasingly precarious situation for several years. The building had severely deteriorated, and the dwindling and older Mass congregation made its future more and more uncertain. Faced with the possibility of the closure of such an iconic Preston church Bishop Campbell took decisive action and invited the Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest to assume its care. The Institute, who have a proven track record in caring for historic churches and bringing them back to life, have successfully administered [St Walburge's Church, Preston](#), for the last three years.

Like St Walburge's, it will be a unique spiritual home offering Extraordinary Form Masses - with sacred music, daily confessions, days of recollection, classes in spirituality and doctrine, and youth formation activities - among others.

This magnificent church, up until now, only open on Sundays, will soon be open each and every day for prayer. Each day there will be devotions and Mass celebrated in the church.

Bishop Campbell commented: "For English Catholics, the martyrs of this land hold a special importance. These men and women, priests and laity, gave their lives for love of the Catholic Faith. It is because of them that we can practice our religion in this country freely today. Mindful of this, I have asked the Institute to develop the church as a special shrine to the English Martyrs promoting knowledge of their lives and devotion to them.

*STATEMENT ENDS*

#### **Notes to Editors:**

- The **English Martyrs Church (PR1 1NA)** is located near to Preston city centre and stands on the corner of the A6 (Garstang Road), between Aqueduct Street and St George's Road. It is built on the site of an area that used to be called Gallows Hill. It received that name after the Battle of Preston of the Jacobite rising of 1715. After the government overcame the rebel army, it was on Gallows Hill that the rebel prisoners were executed. On the 5 January 1715, it was recorded that sixteen rebels 'were hanged upon Gallows Hill, for high treason and conspiracy.'
- [The Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest](#) is based internationally in Florence, Italy. In many cases, the institute's ministry has revitalized and allowed for the restoration of historic churches. The Institute was established canonically in 1990 by Monsignor Gilles Wach and Father Phillippe Mora. Its stated mission is "the honour of God and the sanctification of priests in the service of the Church and souls."

19 September 2017