

**The Feast of Saints Thomas More & John Cardinal Fisher – Mon. 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2026:**

This feast joins the clergy and laity together in the cause of the truth, especially the holiness and virtue of marriage. This is a matter of conscience and while we may debate many aspects of politics and economics, we must always be truthful in our convictions, otherwise, we simply repeat the errors of the world. Both More and Fisher show us that doing what is right often goes against the majority and can be very costly in this life but is of eternal value to our immortal soul. Too often we do things out a false notion of fellowship with our neighbour, a decision to maintain a status quo that makes us popular or not seem weird. It may be expedient to *'go with the flow'* but deep down we know that truth is not determined by a majority opinion. Their contemporaries did something unconscionable – they likely believed the truth in private and yet worked against it in public. Such contradictions lead to injustice because people are convicted not for the truth but because they simply refused to get with the programme.

**Memorial in A&B of St Thomas Garnet, Martyr – Tues. 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2026:**

Thomas Garnet, destined for the Priesthood tried to travel to the English Theological College at Valladolid, Spain, but bad weather forced their ship to run for shelter of the English coast, and he was discovered hiding in the hold. He and his companions were treated roughly. He managed his escape after falling ill; his jailer was not fastidious in his duties, allowing him to escape and head to Valladolid as planned. After ordination, he returned to England, helping souls return to the Catholic Church. During the excitement of the Gunpowder Plot (1605), he was implicated as a conspirator and his captors tried to extract evidence against his uncle Henry Garnet, the superior of the English Jesuits. Despite no evidence of his involvement, he was expelled and told that if he returned to England, he would be executed. After a time at St-Omer he was sent back to England and quickly arrested and was executed at Tyburn.

**The Sol. of the Nativity of St John the Baptist – Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2026:**

Like John the Baptist, we are called to be heralds of the gospel. This includes a call to repentance, which was a key feature of John's mission who challenged Herod over his illicit marriage. We invite people, even our own families, to bring their *'partnership'* before the altar or before the Diocesan Marriage Tribunal and we accompany them as they begin to live in the Truth of Christ and his gospel. John's name means *'God is gracious'*, so we know God always gives us the grace needed to live out our vocation.

### **Thursday in 12<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time – 25<sup>th</sup> June 2026:**

Our teenagers are besieged on all sides by invading ideologies leading them away from the Promised Land, into an exile where they lose touch with God. In Primary School they were excited about faith, grasping the divine with the innocence of a child. Then at Secondary School, our teenagers quickly surrender to world, a superficial celebrity that sucks them in and spits them out even more quickly. Many converts have said, I believed in everything the world promised and it failed to deliver. Then slowly comes the realisation that fulfilment is found in doing God's Will. At first, it is scary because it is a share in the life of the cross, and yet, with God's grace, they begin to understand the cross leads to the glory of the resurrection. Helping them develop a deeper sense of prayer is the first step, the ability to listen to what the Lord is saying in terms of service and sacrifice, two words not spoken of in the secular sphere.

### **Friday in 12<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time – 25<sup>th</sup> June 2026:**

Psalm 137 became popular in secular music in the Rastafarian song '*by the rivers of Babylon*' as a symbol of resistance to a political system they believed was oppressive. And so, '*By the rivers of Babylon*' meant living in a repressive society and the longing for freedom. In truth, the psalm speaks of the tragedy of Jerusalem's destruction and the people's exile in Babylon. It is a national hymn of sorrow, marked by a nostalgia for what has been lost; a heartfelt plea to God to free them from slavery in Babylon and to express the sentiments of hope for a saviour – the Messiah. Perhaps, the exile does not seem too bad at first, a land with its rivers and streams, the place where the people would come together and meet, for there was no Temple to pray in. And yet, the most beautiful prison is still a prison, the loss of freedom a burden for a person to bear. Although distant from Jerusalem and the Temple, the people keep it alive in their hearts - they temper their grief with hope and longing for their eventual return.

### **Opt. Mem of St Cyril of Alexandria – Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> June 2026:**

At the Council of Ephesus, Bishop Nestorius suggested that the eternal logos had chosen to dwell in the person of Jesus Christ, implying two distinct persons. Bishop Cyril affirms that the Word becomes flesh, that the Second Person of the Trinity is Jesus of Nazareth, one person with two natures, fully divine and fully human – that which we call the hypostatic union. Each nature is perfect and united to each other. God is not condescended and neither is humanity overwhelmed by the union.