

PRESS RELEASE

A NEW SHRINE FOR LONDON

Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster, has announced the erection of a new Diocesan Shrine, this one to be dedicated to the Blessed Sacrament at Corpus Christi, Maiden Lane in Covent Garden. He will officially inaugurate the shrine at a Mass on Sunday 3rd June.

When the church was opened in 1874, Cardinal Henry Manning, the then Archbishop of Westminster, said Corpus Christi would be “specifically devoted to the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.” This church was the first Catholic church in England to be named Corpus Christi – the feast of Christ’s Body and Blood – since the Reformation. The church’s construction was intended as reparation for the offences against the Blessed Sacrament committed in England since the 16th century.

The church has undergone extensive renovation and restoration work over the course of five years at the request of Cardinal Nichols. The building work has been complemented by the establishment of a Sodality of the Blessed Sacrament, a Confraternity with hundreds of members worldwide.

Fr. Alan Robinson, Parish Priest, said, “This is an important day in the life of the Diocese of Westminster and the Parish. I hope that Corpus Christi will become a place of pilgrimage, drawing people ever closer to our Eucharistic Lord. The *Adoremus* Eucharistic Congress in Liverpool this year will help to rejuvenate Eucharistic adoration in our country and we will keep that flame burning in the heart of the nation’s capital.”

The church is planning a week-long series of celebrations to mark its official ‘re-opening’, culminating in a Pontifical High Mass of Corpus Christi celebrated by Cardinal Nichols on Sunday 3rd June at 11am, at which he will officially proclaim the church a Shrine. The Mass will be followed by a Procession of the Blessed Sacrament in Covent Garden.

The traditional 40 Hours Devotion will begin on the preceding Tuesday 29th May at 6:30pm and will close with a Pontifical High Mass in the Extraordinary Form celebrated by Abbot Hugh Allan, o.praem., on Thursday 31st May at 7:00pm.

In addition, the new Stations of the Cross will be solemnly erected on Friday 1st June at 6:30pm according to the traditional rites of the Church. The stations were sculpted by the artist Arthur Fleischmann and kindly donated in his memory by his widow, Joy, who will be present at this celebration.

On Saturday 2nd June, there will be a Pontifical celebration of First Vespers of Corpus Christi, celebrated by Bishop Robert Byrne, Cong.Orat., Auxiliary in Birmingham at 3:30pm, followed by a Pontifical Vigil Mass at 6:00pm.

To find out more about Corpus Christi visit www.maidenlane.org.uk

To find out more and join the Sodality of the Blessed Sacrament visit www.sodality.co.uk