

ST SAVIOUR'S CHURCH

ST ALBANS



PARISH PILGRIMAGE & RETREAT

THE SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF WALSINGHAM

April 23-26, 2026

PARISH RETREAT PILGRIMAGE TO WALSINGHAM: Thurs 23 – Sun 26 April 2026

DRAFT PROGRAMME

Thursday 23 April

Check in from 3.00pm, and please aim to arrive in time for

5.30pm	Evening Prayer
6.00pm	Pilgrim Mass
6.30pm	Supper
7.45pm	Free time
9.00pm	Night Prayer
9.15pm	Bed or Pub

Friday 24 April

8-9am	Breakfast
10.30am	First Visit to the Holy House
11.15am	Lectio Divina 1:
12.30pm	Lunch
2.30pm	Sprinkling at the Well
4.30pm	Mass in the Holy House (tbc)
5.30pm	Evening Prayer
6.30pm	Supper
7.45pm	Lectio Divina 2:
9.00pm	Night Prayer
9.15pm	Bed or Pub

Saturday 25 April

8-9am	Breakfast
10.15am	Stations of the Cross
11am	Lectio Divina 3:
12noon	Solemn Pilgrimage Mass
12.30pm	Lunch
1.45pm	Wells-next-the-Sea <i>or free time</i>
6.30pm	Supper
8.00pm	Procession, Benediction & Healing Ministries
9.30pm	Night Prayer
9.45pm	Bed or Pub

Sunday 26 April

8-9am	Breakfast
11.00am	Parish Mass <i>at St Mary's Church</i>
12.30pm	Lunch
1.45pm	Depart

WHY PILGRIMAGE?

Pilgrimage is an essential part of life and living. Christians see life itself in terms of a journey, coming from God and returning to God. This is true of other world religions where pilgrimage is also important. A pilgrimage is a symbol in action. It represents the journey of the Christian life from earth to heaven. The Church is sometimes described as a pilgrim people. Back in the Middle Ages pilgrimages were very popular. It was not like going on holiday. Pilgrimages often took years. Journeys were long and dangerous and many died *en route*. They usually travelled in groups and would stay in monasteries or hostels on the way. Pilgrims undertook these journeys to holy places because it was important for their faith. If they had committed sins they believed that by going on a pilgrimage they could show God how sorry they were. Sometimes they were sent on such journeys by a priest as a penance. Sometimes they went for healing of a physical condition.

WHY WALSINGHAM?

Even in the 11th century, when this story begins, the village of Little Walsingham was a thriving place, located mid-way between Norwich (then England's 2nd city) and the wealthy town of King's Lynn. Richeldis de Faverches was a Saxon noblewoman, married to the Lord of the Manor of Walsingham Parva. We know that Richeldis had a deep faith in God and devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary – and legend has it that her life of prayer and good works was rewarded by a vision in the year 1061. In this vision she was taken by Mary to be shown the house in Nazareth where Gabriel had announced the news of the birth of Jesus. Mary asked Richeldis to build an exact replica of that house in Walsingham. This is how Walsingham became known as England's Nazareth, and the Shrine was born.

Walsingham grew to be a major place of pilgrimage, not only in England but across Europe until it was destroyed by Henry VIII in 1538, along with many other monasteries, shrines and religious houses. After nearly four hundred years, the 20th century saw the restoration of pilgrimage to Walsingham as a regular feature of Christian life in these islands, and indeed beyond. Fr Hope Patten, appointed as Vicar of Walsingham in 1921, ignited Anglican interest in the pre-Reformation pilgrimage. In 1922, a statue was set up in the Parish Church of St. Mary, and regular pilgrimage devotion followed. From the first night that the statue was placed there, people gathered to pray, asking Mary to join her powerful prayer with theirs. This work of intercession continues to this day.

WHY ST SAVIOUR'S?

Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary is an important part of the Anglican Catholic tradition of which St Saviour's is a part. Each summer there is a day pilgrimage to Walsingham, and every other year the Parish Retreat is held at the Shrine (alternating with the House of Retreat at Pleshey). The 2026 Parish Pilgrimage and Retreat has been booked for **Thursday 23 – Sunday 26 April**, with the option of a later arrival on Friday for those with work or other commitments. The cost of each pilgrim's accommodation Thurs to Sun (full board) is **£283.20**. Transport will be in private cars and will be arranged when numbers are finalised nearer the time. (There will be an opportunity to contribute to petrol costs.) Please use the booking form on the reverse of this leaflet to reserve your place as soon as possible. Payment can be by cheque or preferably bank transfer:

St Saviours Parochial Church Council Account: **80779075** Sort Code: **20-74-09**

BOOKING FORM

Please complete and detach this page and return to The Vicarage, 25 Sandpit Lane AL1 4DF

NAME:

ADDRESS:

POSTCODE: PHONE:

EMAIL:

EMERGENCY CONTACT DETAILS NAME:

PHONE: EMAIL:

DIETRY REQUIREMENTS:

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RELEVANT MEDICAL INFORMATION:

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ARRIVAL DATE (please tick one box only): Thurs 23 April Fri 24 April

PAYMENT

I have paid the full cost of accommodation (Thurs – Sun) **£283.20** by bank transfer

I enclose a cheque for the full cost of accommodation **£283.20**

I plan to arrive on Friday 24 April and would like to know the reduced cost

Signed: Date: