

The Parish of St Josephine Bakhita

The Churches of English Martyrs & St Robert Bellarmine

4th Sunday of Lent

Sunday 30th March 2025



Parish Priest:

Very Rev Canon Mark B Madden KCHS FRSA

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

How can I be merciful like the father in this parable? What resentments do I need to overcome? Can I be truly forgiving to someone who has hurt me or those I love?

JUBILEE PILGRIMAGE - 8-15 September 2025

Places are still available for the Holy Year pilgrimage to Rome, San Giovanni & Assisi, Monday 8 September - Monday 15 September 2025. Fr Mark and the Pilgrimage Company have now finalised the last remaining details of the flights:

Monday 8 September

10:15 am depart Manchester on Ryanair

13:55 pm arrive Rome

Monday 15 September

21:30 pm depart Rome on Ryanair

23:30 pm arrive Manchester

The timing of the flights is excellent, as it gives us more time in Rome on our arrival day and a full day before we depart for home.

The final total cost of the trip is £1588.

If anyone one is interested in booking, you need to take a booking form from the parish office as soon as possible, complete it and bring it back



SUNDAY THOUGHTS

Food is one of the most basic human needs. We would not last long without it. In the desert, lack of it drove some to rage and others to despair. Only after God provided manna were the Chosen People able to complete their journey to the promised land. There, as we hear in the first reading, they can eat of the produce of the land of Canaan. Whether directly or indirectly, God's providence supplies a famished people with food. In sacrificing his body and blood, Jesus provides a spiritually famished people with sustenance.

The prodigal son is starving just the same as the Chosen People in the desert. He is willing to eat as poorly as one of his father's hired workers. Instead, his father spends his own wealth (for he'd already given his son half his legacy) to provide a feast for him, a banquet of reconciliation. The prodigal son sinned in every way possible, spurning his father and living a dissolute life. Yet the father welcomes him back with open arms. We recall this feast as we approach the Eucharistic table as sinners today, which itself foreshadows the banquet of reconciliation we are promised when we at last are united with God.

We can likely relate to each of the characters in this parable in some way. At times we have sheepishly returned to someone we've wronged and asked forgiveness. Other times we've resented that someone unworthy was rewarded and we've refused to be placated. We may also recall celebrating a loved one's apologetic return. Knowing that we have a heavenly Father who does this continually, let us adopt the attitude of the penitent son, who is rewarded with true reconciliation.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

No Stations of the Cross today, Sunday. Next Friday at St. Robert Bellarmine after the 10.00 a.m. Mass.

Guild of St Stephen Pilgrimage to Lourdes

The Liverpool Archdiocesan Guild of St Stephen's Pilgrimage to Lourdes is currently accepting bookings. The pilgrimage will take place Sunday 26th October – Saturday 1st November 2025 and further information, including booking costs, is included on the attached flyer. For more information please contact Rose Curry on 07932 729896.

Masses & Services for the coming week

DATE	English Martyrs	St Robert Bellarmine
Sunday 30th March <i>Fourth Sunday of Lent</i> <i>Laetare Sunday</i>	9.30am Margaret Willcox	11.00am - People of the Parish
Monday 31st March	10.00am Hughes family	
Tuesday 1st April		10.00am Maureen Ryan
Wednesday 2nd April	NO MASS	NO MASS
Thursday 3rd April	10.00am Roy Maloney	
Friday 4th April		10.00am Irene Mills
Saturday 5th April	NO MASS	NO MASS
Sunday 6th April <i>Fifth Sunday of Lent</i>	9.30am People of the Parish	11.00am - William Chegwin



SANCTUARY LAMPS

The Sanctuary Lamps for the coming week are for:
Margaret & Septimus Murphy - English Martyrs
May, Joe & Kathleen O'Brien - St Robert's



SANTA MARTA GROUP

The Santa Marta Group is a International Group hoping to be a catalyst to bring systemic change to end human trafficking and modern-day slavery by bringing together leaders from civil society, law enforcement, business, faiths and communities.

Fr Mark would like to form a new parish Group that will work specifically with the Santa Marta Group, Caritas, Civic authorities etc. to highlight the work of human trafficking and modern-day slavery. We will officially launch the group and its work on Sunday 8th February 2026. If you are willing to join, please give your name to the parish offices.

A PRAYER FOR POPE FRANCIS

O merciful Father, You have called Your servant Pope Francis to shepherd Your Church with faith and love. In his time of need, we turn to You, the Divine Physician, and humbly ask that You extend Your healing hand upon him. Grant him strength in body, mind, and spirit, so that he may continue to lead Your people with steadfast devotion. Through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church, we place him under Your loving care, trusting in Your divine will.



We ask this in the name of Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever. Amen.

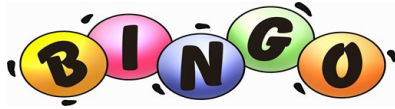
THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Fr Mark is often available in the 20 minutes before each Mass to hear reconciliations. Please pop into the sacristy to ask.



EASTER BINGO AND RAFFLE LAST CHANCE FOR TICKETS!

Easter Bingo will take place **THIS** Tuesday 1 April. **Doors open at 6.30pm** for 'eyes down' at 7pm.



This is your last chance to get tickets for bingo and raffle - on sale after mass. Last year was a sell out so get your tickets asap! Cost for both is just £1

IRENÆUS: COME AND SEE, 'The Wonder of Being Human', Saturday 5 April 2025, 10.30–16.00

Keynote speaker: Timothy Radcliffe. Suggested donation of £10.

A packed lunch is advised. For more information email:

jenny@irenaeus.co.uk or call: 0151 949 1199.

LENTEN ALMS

Lent is the ideal time to do a little bit more in remembering the needy. The call of Christians to charity is a frequent theme of the Gospels. During Lent, we are asked to focus more intently on "**almsgiving**," which means donating money or goods to the poor and performing other acts of charity. As one of the three pillars of Lenten practice, almsgiving, the Catechism of the Catholic Church says is, *a witness to fraternal charity!* and *"a work of justice pleasing to God."*

A box for financial donations will be available at all Masses during Lent for you to make a contribution. This money is sent to the Diocese and the Archbishop decides on a cause for this to be sent as a Diocesan donation. You can also help in donating items for our local Food Bank which we regularly support and will be greatly appreciated. Items for food can be left at the back of church.



FR MARK'S THEATRE GROUP

It's beginning to feel a bit like Spring so let's come out of 'hibernation' We have another theatre trip arranged:



Saturday 14 June Liverpool Philharmonic - 'A Night at the Musicals'

'Orchestra and leading West End vocalists bring the musical hits right here to Hope Street. Packed with your favourite songs from Hamilton, Six, The Book of Mormon, Frozen, Aladdin, Mamma Mia!, Grease, The Lion King, The Phantom of the Opera and Les Misérables, expect showbiz glamour and knockout tunes.' Cost for this one is **£53**. Name and deposit to office before end of April please

Can those who are joining us for 'War Horse' please now pay the balance - cost is £63. Thank you!

'SONGS WE REMEMBER' SING-A-LONG

2pm, 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month (Dementia friendly). Email: irenaeus.co.uk Tel: 0151 949 1199. 32 Great Georges Road, Waterloo,

CATHEDRAL WALK

Saturday 12 April, 10:15am

PLACE: Shakespeare North Playhouse, Prescot

DETAILS: The next cathedral walk is scheduled

for Saturday 12th April meeting at Shakespeare North Playhouse, Prescot and walking to Blessed Dominic Shrine, Sutton.



The Shrine is one of the designated churches for our Archdiocese in our jubilee year. The shrine will be open in the afternoon and facilities will be open at the church club. The walk will take around 3 to 4 hours and whilst largely urban will take in Shirley park in St Helens. It will give walkers the chance to see the new theatre and jubilee shrine, meeting at 10.15am at Shakespeare North, not far from Prescot station. CONTACT: Mike, 0796 954 3983 for further details.

FEAST OF THE WEEK

St Vincent Ferrer (1350-1419)

He was born in Valencia and joined the Dominicans at the age of 17. In 1399, with the approval of the Pope, he set out on his mission as a preacher. For twenty years he travelled through western Europe, with thousands flocking to hear him wherever he was. From 1408 he worked mostly south of the Pyrenees. Among others, he preached to the Jews, of whom some 25,000 were converted to Christianity; and in the Kingdom of Granada he converted thousands of Moors. In 1417 he moved on to Brittany and continued his work there: he died in Vannes in Brittany on 5 April 1419.



REST IN PEACE

We were sad to hear of the recent death of Fr Vincent Fedigan. Born in Pemberton on 7th February 1947, the son of Joseph He spent his early childhood in St Cuthbert's parish, Pemberton, and attended the parish primary school before going on to Upholland College to complete his seminary formation. He was ordained to the sacred priesthood at the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King, Liverpool, on 27th May 1972 by Archbishop George Andrew Beck. Following ordination, he served in three parishes as assistant priest including St Robert Bellarmine, (1977-80) In October 1986, he became parish priest at Thornton and served a further 10 years in that parish. After a brief period of sick leave, he returned to parish ministry in January 1997, when he was appointed as parish priest at St David's, Newton-le-Willows. Eventually his pastoral oversight extended to all the parishes in Newton-le-Willows: St Mary and St John from 2002, and St Patrick from 2012. He retired from active ministry in the summer of 2021, living firstly in Orrell, and then in a nursing home at Upholland, until his death on Thursday 13th March 2025, aged 78 years, and in his 53rd year of the priesthood. May he rest in peace.

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY

We wish all our mum's a very happy and blessed Mother's Day. May the Lord, with the help of his own Mother, bless and protect you.



POPE FRANCIS PRAYER INTENTION FOR APRIL

For the use of the new technologies

Let us pray that the use of the new technologies will not replace human relationships, will respect the dignity of the person, and will help us face the crises of our times.

Lord in your mercy...



ARCHDIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE WALK 1

St Anne & Blessed Dominic, Sutton, St Helens (WA9 3ZD) – Saturday 17 May 2025.

The first of our three Jubilee Pilgrimage Walks will take place on Saturday 17 May. This will be a circular walk of 5 miles based around the Jubilee Church of St Anne and Blessed Dominic in St Helens. The walk will begin 10.00am from the church car park and will end with a short procession through the grounds at 11.50am. Those who do not feel able to complete the 5-mile walk may join us for the procession. Mass will be celebrated at 12 noon and there will be an opportunity for the Sacrament of Reconciliation and visit to the Shrine of Blessed Dominic Barberi. Refreshments will also be available after Mass in the Parish Centre. For more information contact Chris: c.higgins@rcaol.org.uk

RACIAL JUSTICE CONFERENCE

The Response of the Faithful to the Archbishop's Pastoral Letter and Video on Racial Justice -

Saturday 12 April, 9:30am - 12:30pm at St Margaret Clitheroe Centre, Croxteth Drive, L17 1AA

A half-day conference to explore and deepen our response to the Archbishop's recent Racial Justice pastoral letter and video. This event will provide an opportunity to reflect on the implications of the message and discuss ways to promote racial justice within our Archdiocese.

All are welcome. For bookings and enquiries, contact the Catholic Association for Racial Justice at bschmack@aol.com or call 07742 578 079.

CARE NOT KILLING

Please consider signing the Care Not Killing petition which calls on MPs to vote against legalising assisted suicide in England and Wales.

The Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill would make vulnerable people - including the elderly and disabled - feel a burden on family or carers resulting in pressure to end their lives. Please visit: www.carenotkilling.org.uk for the online petition. Our own MP voted for the Bill when it was last debated in Parliament!

In April or May, MPs will again vote on the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill. Despite a disappointing initial vote of 330-275 in favour, there is now a realistic chance the Bill can be defeated. The Independent newspaper reports that 142 MPs who initially backed the Bill could withdraw their support. **NOW** is the time for Catholics to make their voices heard.

If assisted suicide becomes law in England & Wales:

1. Hospice [and palliative care] provision will be undermined
2. Suicide prevention efforts will be weakened
3. Elderly and disabled people will feel pressure to take their own lives*

In the US state of Oregon, almost half of those who have died by assisted suicide cited fear of being a burden on their families or carers as a reason for choosing to die. Only 1-in-3 people cite fear of pain.

Jesus Youth "Way of the Cross" Procession through Liverpool City Centre - Saturday 12 April 2025

Jesus Youth Liverpool will be hosting a "Way of the Cross" procession through Liverpool City Centre on Saturday at 1pm. The journey will begin at the Blessed Sacrament Shine and will reach the Metropolitan Cathedral, concluding with a blessing from Archbishop Malcolm McMahon. All are welcome to join.

Jesus Youth is an international Catholic movement dedicated to deepening the faith of young people and families, encouraging them to live out the Gospel in their daily lives. Through prayer, sacraments, and acts of service, they strive to strengthen the spiritual fabric of our communities.

**THROUGH THE EYES OF THOSE FIRST FOLLOWERS OF JESUS:
EASTER RETREAT, Wednesday 16 – Sunday 20 April**

Led by Fr Chris Thomas and the Irenaeus team, following the Easter Triduum services, beginning with a Passover meal on the Wednesday. Limited residential places available. To book and for more information contact jenny@irenaeus.co.uk

**CATHOLIC SPIRITUALITY NETWORK CONFERENCE 2025,
Saturday 26 April**

Led by Rev Lister Tonge at the Irenaeus Centre, L22 1RD. 10:30-16:00 **Conference Fees:** £30 / CSN members £25 - £5 early bird discount until **14th March 2025**. Bookings: catholicspiritualitynetwork@gmail.com , www.csnretreats.org.uk/conference.php

NUGENT CARE

Nugent are a not-for-profit organisation based in the Archdiocese of Liverpool, established since 1881. We have a proven history of adapting what we do to meet the needs of the communities we serve. As a leading voice in the care sector, we look to improve health, opportunity, quality of life, and levels of achievement, whilst reducing poverty and increasing safety for all.

We operate across the North West, predominantly in the Liverpool City region, offering a diverse range of support for adults and children. Our children's provisions include residential homes, a secure facility, a step-down home and SEMH School. Our adult's provisions include dispersed homelessness accommodation, floating support provided in the community and supported living provided at home. We also provide adult residential homes including a specialist acquired brain injury, a home for those living with dementia, and a home supporting Mental Health needs. We also offer adoption support services working in partnership with local authorities across the UK.

To reach communities beyond these provisions we have established an initiative called Our Future Now, which actively engages in a range of fundraising and community-based activities. These efforts support wider unmet needs across the Liverpool City Region and beyond.

The annual retiring collection for Nugent Care will take place this weekend. Please give generously.

HOLY WEEK 2025

13 April

Palm Sunday

9:30 am

English Martyrs

11:15 am

St Robert Bellarmine

Please note the slightly later time at St Robert Bellarmine

14 April

Holy Monday

10:00 am

English Martyrs



15 April

Holy Tuesday

10:00 am

St Robert Bellarmine

17 April

Holy Thursday

7.00 pm

English Martyrs

Mass of the Lord's Supper

10.00 pm

English Martyrs

Night Prayer

18 April

Good Friday

3.00 pm

St Robert Bellarmine The Celebration of the Lord's
Passion

19 April

Holy Saturday

8.30 pm

English Martyrs

Easter Vigil & First Mass of Easter

20 April

Easter Sunday

9.30 am

English Martyrs

Mass of Easter Day

11:00 am

St Robert Bellarmine

Mass of Easter Day

English Martyrs Office:

0151 928 3471 englishmartyrs@rcaol.org.uk

School Lane, Litherland. L21 7LX

Office hours: Mon, Tue, Thur, Fri 9.30am–2.30pm

St Robert Bellarmine Office:

0151 922 1352 strobert@rcaol.org.uk

Orrell Road, Bootle. L20 6DZ

Office hours: Tues, Wed, Fri 9.30am–1.30pm

liverpoolcatholic.org.uk/privacynotice

Archdiocese of Liverpool: CIO no:1199714