



Our Lady & The English Martyrs

Litherland

3rd Sunday of Ordinary Time
Sunday 24th January 2021



Parish Priest: Rev Canon Mark B Madden KCHS FRSA

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A MESSAGE FROM FR MARK

Since the Prime Minister announced the current lockdown I have continued to celebrate Mass in English Martyrs.

However the Archbishop, in his New Year letter to priests, has written this: *Although I have circulated the recent government advice on the opening of churches, I want to emphasise that the final decision in this regard is yours. Only you know your people, their age profile and the risks that they are likely to be exposed to and present to others. You have to consider your volunteers and stewards. You also have yourself to consider and I would not want you to expose yourself unnecessarily to infection from the virus.*

So, after consultation with other priests and health professionals I have decided that we will suspend the celebration of public Mass until further notice.

There are several reasons for this:

- The number of cases in Liverpool is very high (nearly 1000 cases per 100,000 at the time of writing).
 - The new strain is more virulent than previously.
 - The majority of people who come to our Mass are over 70. Even though there is no obligation, attending Mass is a further risk.
 - It is important to ensure the safety of our stewards.
- Our thanks goes to them for all the work they have done over the months.

Even though our churches are Covid secure, it is still a gathering of people for 30 minutes with the attendant risk of spreading the virus. The situation will be reviewed at the end of January.

Baptisms are also suspended until further notice. Funeral Masses and Funeral Services will take place in church but they must keep to restriction guidelines and no more than 30 people can attend.

Some Masses in the Archdiocese are streamed live and list of all those Masses are available via the Archdiocesan website: www.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

The kingdom of God is at hand, within reach. How can I answer God's call and commit myself to help realise the kingdom of God here and now?

CORONAVIRUS VACCINATION

It is excellent news that the vaccination programme is well underway and we pray for its success so that we can get back to normal life. In relation to any moral concerns that anyone may have regarding the vaccines, Archbishop Malcolm recently wrote to the priests assuring everyone that there is no moral reason not to have the vaccines.....
"I must state most strongly that it is morally permissible to receive any of these vaccines.....I insist that the guidance you give your parishioners and that you follow yourself is in accordance with the Note of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith 21 December 2020. Pope Francis has endorsed this note, and therefore comes from the highest authority." (7th Jan 2021)

REST IN PEACE

We pray for the repose of the souls of Carmel Hughes, Funeral Mass on Monday, and for Maureen Thompson, Funeral Service on Friday. May they both rest in peace.



PLEASE PRAY FOR...

Alice Power, Mary Jennings , Bet White , Joan Johnson,
Mary Cleary, Dorothy Frodsham Rene Jackson, Eileen Hannon,
Nora Wright, Pauline McGrath, James Halpin,
Kath Murray, Gaetano Scappaticci, Peter Maloney, Olive & Eric Forest,



FR GERARD BRITT

We regret to inform you of the death last Wednesday of Fr Britt, a much loved former parish priest of Our Lady Queen of Peace. His Funeral Mass will take place next Saturday in Ince Blundell. Due to COVID restrictions, the Funeral will be private for just family and invited guests only.

James Gerard Britt was born in Liverpool on 1st April 1922, the son of James and Helen Britt and he was baptised shortly afterwards at St Philip Neri, Catharine Street. He received his early education at the Notre Dame Demonstration School and at St Francis Xavier's College, Liverpool. Aged 12, he entered the seminary at Upholland in September 1934 and was ordained priest by Bishop Joseph Halsall in the college chapel on 22nd May 1948.

Following ordination he was appointed as assistant priest at St George's, Maghull until February 1955. He then moved to the Pro-Cathedral to assist Canon Gregory Doyle, the long-serving Administrator, who was to be major influence on his priestly ministry. In October 1961 he was asked to move to St Mary's, Blackbrook, St Helens, and he remained there until June 1967. He then returned to Liverpool and became assistant to Mgr. Thomas Adamson, the former Vicar General. At St Clare's he dedicated himself particularly to the chaplaincy work both at Sefton General Hospital and at the Lourdes Hospital. He is remembered by one of his fellow curates of the time as being particularly helpful to a recently-ordained priest, having a great sense of humour and often quoting Latin tags learned from Canon Paddy Hanrahan at Upholland.

In February 1975 he received his first appointment as parish priest, when he was asked to succeed Fr John Moynihan at Our Lady, Queen of Peace, Litherland. He dedicated himself for fifteen years to the service of the people there. By now in his late sixties, he moved to the quieter parish of Holy Family, Ince Blundell, for his final parochial appointment in August 1990. He retired from active ministry in September 2001, moving initially to Formby. In 2003 he took up residence at the St Marie's House, Southport.

He died on Wednesday 20th January 2021 aged 98 years and in the 73rd year of his priesthood. With his death the Archdiocese of Liverpool lost its last surviving priest ordained in the 1940s.

May he rest in peace.



MASS ON THE PHONE

For those who have no access to the internet, you can still listen to the Mass in full on your phone. The Mass is provided free of charge, except for the local phone charge. It comes from Middlesborough Cathedral every Sunday. Phone: 01642 130 120 and you are connected to the Mass for that week. You can listen at any time of day or night.

POPE FRANCIS

PRAYER INTENTION FOR JANUARY

Human fraternity

May the Lord give us the grace to live in full fellowship with our brothers and sisters of other religions, praying for one another, open to all.
Lord in your mercy...



ECHOES OF GOD

A 7 week look at Old and New Testament Scripture on Mondays at 7-8pm on Zoom starting on 18 January. Using David McLoughlin's scripture sessions that start with Exodus and end with St Paul's Letters, an opportunity to read, reflect and share. Registration and materials (free) at www.thegodwhospeaks2020.org.uk

Have a look on CAFOD website to support the 'Walk for Water' campaign and sign up!



OUR LADY OF LOURDES

The annual Archdiocesan Mass for the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes will be held online on Thursday 11th February, 7.00 p.m. You will be able to watch using the Facebook link (no Facebook account is needed). www.facebook.com/Archdiocese-of-Liverpool-Feast-of-Our-Lady-of-Lourdes-Mass

FEAST OF THE WEEK

St Thomas Aquinas - 28th January

Thomas Aquinas lived in the 13th century and is arguably one of the finest minds that the Church and the world have ever known. He tried to show that faith and intelligent reason should not be in conflict. One way in which he did this was to try and give five 'proofs' for the existence of God. Here's a modern way of saying what he taught:

1. Things everywhere move. Think of a train where each carriage is pulled along by the one in front of it. But there must have been one unit that started the pulling without being pulled by others: the engine. God is the engine, the prime mover.
2. I have a picture of myself with my father and grandfather. My father 'created' me, my grandfather did the same for him, and so we go back to the first human being. Who caused the first life (however primitive or subhuman) to come about? It had to be someone who was not created themselves. God is that first cause.
3. Things come and go. There are things that last for a while (contingent beings) and then die off or are destroyed while other things (necessary beings) make more passing things. Not everything can be passing; there has to be some original thing that gives rise to the things that come and go. God is that necessary being.
4. When I look at paintings or sculptures I say that one is more beautiful than another. This supposes that there is some sort of grade of beauty (or truth or goodness, etc) involved. There has to be a top and a bottom of this scale. We say that the thing that possesses the fullness of beauty etc is God.
5. When a surgeon opens the body of a patient on the operating table, he or she is faced with an incredibly complex network of nerves, muscle, vessels and tissue that are interdependent in the most marvellous way. It is not possible that this has happened by complete luck or chance. There is a pattern or intelligence to it. The intelligent designer is God.

SUNDAY THOUGHTS

The very first words of Jesus recorded by St Mark are *'The time has come and the kingdom of God is close at hand. Repent and believe the Good News.'*



Jesus' whole life would turn out to be an invitation to enter God's kingdom through repentance. And the Good News was precisely that: we have a God who does not want to lose us but wants us to be happy with him now and forever.

Our first problem is usually in believing that God really means what he says. We live in a society that encourages litigation. We are urged on to get our rightful due, to press for what we are entitled to and to live in a compensation world. Yet God laughs in the face of this. Who could claim the all-time record payout when it comes to compensation? God, of course! Yet God's time is not spent getting his own back but looking of ways to forgive. But God's forgiveness is not automatic; it demands repentance. Repentance originally meant regret. But it's not enough to regret our sins; we need also to take action to ensure that they don't happen again.

In the Old Testament, repentance included a physical action. The Hebrew word 'shuv' means to turn. Repentance for the Jewish people was like doing a U-turn and deciding to go in a different direction. In the New Testament, the Greek word used is 'metanoia' which means having a change of mind and deciding that we have to start looking with a fresh outlook on the way we behave. Later the Romans would use the Latin word 'conversio' from which we get our word conversion. But conversion wasn't just a religious word. It meant to turn around, to transform and to return.

Whatever way we choose to think about repentance, it is at the heart of the Christian gospel and it forms the basis of Christ's preaching. Repentance means changing our mind about the way we behave and turning our lives around. If, like the people of Nineveh in the days of Jonah, we want to experience God's forgiveness then we need to repent. For repentance is the hallmark of being a Christian. It's something that never ends. We need to show it now. And tomorrow. And the next day.



HANDS



FACE



SPACE

Stay Safe