



# Our Lady & The English Martyrs

## Litherland

2nd Sunday of Ordinary Time  
Sunday 17th January 2021



Parish Priest: Rev Canon Mark B Madden KCHS FRSA

0151 928 3471 [englishmartyrs@rcaolp.co.uk](mailto:englishmartyrs@rcaolp.co.uk)

[www.ourladyandenglishmartyrs.co.uk](http://www.ourladyandenglishmartyrs.co.uk)

## 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](http://www.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk)

## QUESTION OF THE WEEK

How is Jesus calling me to work for him in the world today?

### PEACE SUNDAY

This annual day of prayer takes place Sunday 17 January and this year Pope Francis asks us to think about **'A Culture of Care as a Path to Peace'**.



*"How many resources," he says, "are spent on weaponry, especially nuclear weapons, that could be used for more significant priorities such as ensuring the safety of individuals, the promotion of peace and integral human development, the fight against poverty, and the provision of health care." Pope Francis calls on us to "strive daily, in concrete and practical ways, to form a community composed of brothers and sisters who accept and care for one another."*

In this country we have an active Catholic peace movement in Pax Christi. Their website suggests many ways we can all promote peace in our daily lives. There are activities for families to do at home, including a 15-minute peace liturgy for young children.

[www.paxchristi.org.uk/peace-sunday-2021/](http://www.paxchristi.org.uk/peace-sunday-2021/)

Archbishop Malcolm is the National President of Pax Christi UK.

### 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](http://www.thegodwhospeaks2020.org.uk)

### 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,



## THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY 2021

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is traditionally observed from the 18th to the 25th January – the octave of St. Paul



The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in 2021 has been prepared by the Monastic Community of Grandchamp in Switzerland. The theme that was chosen, *“Abide in my love and you shall bear much fruit”*, is based on John 15:1-17 and expresses Grandchamp Community’s vocation to prayer, reconciliation and unity in the Church and the human family.

Today the community has fifty sisters, all women from different generations, Church traditions, countries and continents. In their diversity the sisters are a living parable of communion. They remain faithful to a life of prayer, life in community and the welcoming of guests. The sisters share the grace of their monastic life with visitors and volunteers who go to Grandchamp for a time of retreat, silence, healing or in search of meaning.

For 2021, the sisters are inviting churches across the world to enter into their tradition of prayer and silence that is rooted in the ancient traditions of the Church catholic.

[www.grandchamp.org](http://www.grandchamp.org)

## 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](https://www.facebook.com/Archdiocese-of-Liverpool-Feast-of-Our-Lady-of-Lourdes-Mass)

## 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...*



## FR JAMES CLARKSON RIP

It was with sadness that we heard last week of the death of Fr Jim Clarkson who served in English Martyrs in the 1970's - 80's.

James Clarkson was born in Wavertree in 1931. Archbishop Heenan accepted him as a student for the priesthood and he was sent to the Beda College, Rome. He was ordained priest at the Basilica of St Paul, Rome, on 3rd April 1965. Following ordination he served in several parishes as assistant priest: St Edward, Wigan; St Paul, West Derby. English Martyrs, Litherland (August 1976) and St Austin, Thatto Heath (December 1982). In January 1985 he was asked to take up appointment as parish priest at St Winefride's, Bootle. After 15 years of fruitful labour in Bootle he moved in the summer of 2001 to Holy Family, Ince Blundell, as parish priest. In October of the following in 2006. He spent his last years at Ince Blundell Hall, where he was cared for by the sisters and staff for the remainder of his life.



Fr Clarkson has a memorial in our church as his name is proudly displayed in our church as he was involved with the installation of the names of the English Martyrs around the walls. May he rest in peace.

## FEAST OF THE WEEK

St Wulstan, whose feast is on January 19th, seems to have been something of a character! He is really the last of the Anglo-Saxon saints, bridging the gap between the old 'English' Church and the new regime under the Normans.



He was a monk who eventually became Bishop of Worcester, against his own will. As a young man he appears to have been handsome and athletic and had to fight to retain his virginity. This continued when he was older, and there's even a case of him fighting off a married woman's attentions. He publicly slapped her on the face!

He confessed that once while celebrating the liturgy he was so looking forward to eating a delicious goose for lunch that he kept getting distracted. So he gave up meat altogether. He was a man who spoke out without fear and this extended to giving a piece of his mind to King Harold (who was to die at the Battle of Hastings). He was also an abolitionist, being opposed to the slave trade between England and Ireland that used to take place at the port of Bristol in his day.

He finally took to his bed at Whitsun 1094 but stubbornly lingered on until January 19th 1095 when he finally died aged 87. The last of a breed!

## 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)

## SUNDAY THOUGHTS

When John the Baptist called Jesus the 'Lamb of God' what did his hearers think he was talking about? To us it seems such a strange thing to say. Was it any less strange for the people on the banks of the River Jordan? Those who knew about the scriptures would think of two things. They would remember some mysterious passages in the prophecies of Isaiah, and their minds would also go back to the Exodus and its annual celebration at Passover.

At one stage in their history the Jews were deported to Iraq, to Babylon, close to Baghdad. Their hopes seemed dashed as for about fifty years they were separated from Jerusalem and the proper practice of their religion. At that time Isaiah (or one of his disciples) begins to talk about a mysterious 'suffering servant' who would take on the troubles of the people and ultimately save them by giving his own life.

The Jews in today's Gospel might have been back home in Jerusalem but once more they were under army occupation, this time by the Romans. When John points Jesus out as the 'Lamb of God' his hearers would have made the connection with the 'suffering servant' of Isaiah. Some would have hoped for a revolutionary leader to overthrow the Romans, but others would remember the perfect disciple of God who proclaims the true faith in the midst of errors, who suffers to atone for the sins of the people and who is ultimately glorified by God.

Of course, not everyone would have immediately taken all this in. But every Jew would have made the connection with the Exodus and the Passover. For the lamb was the animal by which the people were saved from Egyptian slavery and brought into the Promised Land. It was with the blood of the lamb that sacrifices were made daily in the Temple and at the annual celebration of Passover it was a lamb that was eaten. The lamb was a central spiritual symbol.

So when John the Baptist called Jesus the 'Lamb of God' it started to ring bells for his hearers. Who was this man? What did he want? What would he do?

Little did they suspect. And little did they know.



**HANDS**



**FACE**



**SPACE**

# Stay Safe