



# Our Lady & The English Martyrs

## Litherland

6th Sunday of Ordinary Time  
Sunday 14th February 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 continued to celebrate Mass in English Martyrs. However the Archbishop, in his New Year letter to priests, wrote 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
  - 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. 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)

**Please see details below regarding re-opening of Church.**

## REST IN PEACE

We pray for the repose of the soul of Beryl McMullen - her Funeral Mass is on Friday. We also pray for Bridget Hall whose Funeral Service will be celebrated at Thornton Crematorium on Tuesday. May they rest in peace and rise in glory.



## QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Even with restrictions, what can I do at home to make Lent this year a special time to come closer to the Lord?

## CHURCH RE-OPENING

The priests have received a message from the Archbishop with details about the re-opening of churches. He says: *"On the 22 February the Prime Minister is due to give a statement updating the country about the pandemic situation and possible "unlocking". It seems wise to wait until after he has spoken. It may then be appropriate to re-open around the same time as the schools re-open. (At present that looks like being 8 March). All the previous guidelines will need to be in place. Of course some parts of the archdiocese may not be as far along the road to reduction of levels of infection as others so local decisions may need to be made"*.

With this in mind, we hope to re-open our church on **Sunday 14th March**, Mass at 10.30 a.m. As the Archbishop says, this depends on Government statements and local rates of infection.

Fr Mark has also taken the decision that for the time being there will be no 4.30 p.m. Saturday Mass. Recent numbers for this Mass have not been high and we can easily accommodate everyone in the one Sunday Mass. The Saturday Vigil Mass will resume once we get back to normality.

Baptisms etc are still suspended until we get further information from the Archdiocese.

**CATHOLIC PIC:** The current edition is now available. Copies are available from the parish office.

## 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,



## ASH WEDNESDAY 2021

Sadly, church will not be open for Ash Wednesday, 17th February. You are still welcome to come to church at **12noon or 6.00 p.m.** to receive ashes which will be distributed at the church door; Social distancing means that ashes will be given slightly different this year and it will simply be to arrive at church, receive ashes and leave. Please let others know the arrangements.



## POPE FRANCIS

### PRAYER INTENTION FOR FEBRUARY

#### **Violence Against Women**

We pray for women who are victims of violence, that they may be protected by society and have their sufferings considered and heeded  
*Lord in your mercy...*



## NOVENA TO ST. JOSEPH

The National Novena to St Joseph will take place from 10<sup>th</sup>- 18<sup>th</sup> March 2021 at St Joseph's Church in Maidenhead. In this Year dedicated to St. Joseph, the Mill Hill Missionaries are preparing for the Feast of St Joseph, their patron, with a special Novena of Masses and prayers to ask for God's blessing on their Society's missionary outreach, and for the intentions of all those who support their work.

If you are able, and if it is possible to attend, Masses are on Wednesday to Friday (10-12 March), at 7.30pm, Saturday, 13 March at 10am, Sunday, 14 March at 11.00am, Monday –Thursday (15-18 March) at 7.30pm.

If you are unable to attend but would like to join in from home, for the first time this year, Masses from St. Joseph's Church will be available to follow on Zoom and YouTube via the parish website: [stjosephsparish.co.uk](http://stjosephsparish.co.uk) and the Mill Hill website: [www.millhillmissionaries.com/novena](http://www.millhillmissionaries.com/novena), where you will also find the Novena prayer leaflet

You can also join in by praying the daily Novena prayer, which will be in your Novena prayer leaflet. You are welcome to send in your petitions and/or to request a printed Novena prayer leaflet. Please write to the Novena Director, 41 Victoria Road, Liverpool, L37 1LW, or email [novenamhm@gmail.com](mailto:novenamhm@gmail.com).

## UNEMPLOYMENT SUNDAY

### Prayer of those seeking employment:

*Maker of the world and of all creation, you made us in your image and intended us for creative work. Look with love on those of us who are unemployed. Help us to enjoy life together with those who have work and to understand what kind of help we need to give one another, whether in paid employment or not. Guide the leaders of our country, that they may take wise decisions which will benefit us all. Finally we ask you, Lord, to guide us in the knowledge that we all have worth in ourselves and that we are all of equal value in your eyes, through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.*

### MOTHER ELIZABETH PROUT

Recently, the Holy See declared Mother Elizabeth Prout, foundress of the Sisters of the Cross and Passion, to be Venerable. The Holy Father in an audience with the Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints authorised the same Congregation to promulgate a decree recognising the heroic virtues of this Servant of God. Mother Elizabeth Prout is buried in the archdiocese and it was in the archdiocese that her sainthood cause was opened in 1994.



*Archbishop Malcolm writes: "I am delighted that the Holy See has further recognised the holiness of Mother Elizabeth Prout. She made a significant contribution to the Church and the people of England and further afield in education and healthcare, and the Sisters of the Congregation that she founded continue to show the care of the Catholic Church for those in need.*

*This will be joyful news for the Cross and Passion family, and I am sure that our prayers as an archdiocese are with them as Mother Elizabeth Prout is recognised in this way. Let's pray also that the Shrine at Sutton, near St. Helens, will be a place of prayer for her eventual canonisation.*

Venerable Elizabeth Prout is buried alongside Blessed Dominic Barberi and we continue to pray for his canonisation.

## MARY'S MEALS

Mary's Meals has launched an emergency appeal for aid for Tigray in Ethiopia, where millions have been forced to flee their homes as a result of conflict there which has been ongoing since November. The UN has described it as a very severe situation with around 4.5 million people without food and basic supplies and many children separated from their families, living in refugee camps on the borders. Fortunately, Mary's Meals are already established in Ethiopia and were previously feeding 24,230 children in schools every day. This means that Mary's meals have an established and trusted partner agency in the area and are therefore able to get help to those who need it most. In other words, we are already giving aid and saving lives!



To make a donation please go to: [https://giving.marysmeals.org/en\\_gb/donate-to-ethiopia](https://giving.marysmeals.org/en_gb/donate-to-ethiopia).

## WEAR THEM WITH PRIDE!

On Ash Wednesday we begin Lent by putting ashes on our forehead (an ancient symbol of being a penitent). The ashes, of course, are only a symbol. They remind us that one day we will return to ashes at the end of our life and that in the meantime we need to ensure that we deepen our commitment to the gospel and turn away from sin. Once we have washed ourselves the ashes will no longer be visible to others. But we can carry them spiritually with us for the six weeks of Lent as an inner sign to ourselves that each day we are trying to die to our bad habits and so rise to glory with Christ at Easter. Even though others can't see your inner ashes, wear them with pride!

Lent will be different this year with the usual practises not being celebrated, but we can still do something in our homes. Maybe pray the Stations of the Cross each Friday at home, read the Bible throughout Lent or choose a spiritual book to read.

## CATHOLIC NEWSPAPERS

At the moment you are unable to collect your paper at Mass but you can get it delivered direct to your home every week, POST FREE. Please go to [www.thecatholicuniverse.com](http://www.thecatholicuniverse.com) or call them on 0161 820 5722 and they will arrange for you.

Special offer 3 months :  
£25.00

Special offer 12 months :  
£99.00

or

Digital copy 12 Months :  
£55.00



## SUNDAY THOUGHTS

It became fashionable back in the 80's to compare the modern-day disease of AIDS and HIV with leprosy. They're not connected medically but they sometimes have the same effect on those who suffer with the illness: they become isolated, shunned and in some cases looked down upon.

Certainly lepers were despised at the time of Jesus. They were not allowed to live in the towns or to mix with other people. They carried a bell or made some noise when approaching people so that everyone had a chance to move away from them. They wore torn clothes and shielded their faces. And there was no way in which they were allowed to practise their religion like the rest of society. They were outcasts.

When St Mark reports the curing of the leper in the first chapter of his gospel there is much more at stake than a simple healing of an individual. Mark is anxious to point out from the start that there is no such thing as a no-go area for Jesus, since he has come to offer salvation to all, irrespective of who they are. There are no people who are beyond the pale, no sinners who have committed such sins that they cannot hope for forgiveness, no people who don't qualify for the promises of God.

So as well as looking at what happened to the leper we also have to keep in mind the effect on the crowd that witnessed the miracle. They would have been shocked that Jesus had anything to do with a man whom their law said was untouchable. And they would have been confused that a religious man, a rabbi, seemed to be acting against what their religion had taught them.

Maybe today's gospel can teach us two things. The first is to ask ourselves whether we think that there are some people who are beyond forgiveness. Are there some crimes that merit permanent exclusion from society? Or maybe we are tempted to think that we ourselves have behaved in such a way that we do not deserve to have God bother about us any more?

And the second thing is to be honest about the way we view other people. Our society loves to have its lepers because it makes us feel superior. We're not like them. We're clean. Are there people that we feel superior to? And if so, why?



**HANDS**



**FACE**



**SPACE**

# Stay Safe