



Our Lady & The English Martyrs Litherland

Fourth Sunday of Advent
Sunday 18th December 2022



Parish Priest: Rev Canon Mark B Madden KCHS FRSA

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QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Through all the excitement and stress of this coming week, can I be attentive to how Jesus remains with me and to reflect how God is calling me?

SANCTUARY LAMP

Did you know that this candle is one of the most important candles lit in Roman Catholic Churches? The General Instruction of the Roman Missal states: *“In accordance with tradition, near the tabernacle a special lamp should be kept alight to indicate and honour the presence of Christ in the tabernacle”*. It is a sign that the Lord is present in the tabernacle and a reminder of Christ’s abiding love for us. This candle is continuously lit except from Holy Thursday evening - Holy Saturday night. Each candle lasts approximately 7 days before it is renewed. Would you like to dedicate the Sanctuary Lamp to a loved one, living or dead. or for a specific intention? The cost is just £5. If you would like a dedication for a week, place your £5 and the intention inside an envelope with SANCTUARY LAMP on the envelope and we will publish the intention each week in the parish newsletter.

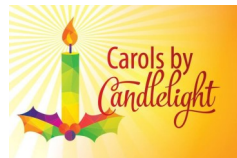


JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

A joyful cantata at Our Lady of Compassion Formby on Sunday 18 December at 6.30pm. All are welcome.

CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

Can all those who are joining us for the trip to the Philharmonic please meet in the Parish Hall at 6.00pm on Tuesday.



NEWSLETTER The Newsletter takes a short Christmas break and the next one will be the weekend of 7th January. Mass intentions will be placed on the notice boards.

CHRISTMAS 2022

Saturday 24 December Christmas Eve

6.00pm The Vigil Mass of Christmas

9.00pm The First Mass of Christmas



Sunday 25 December Christmas Day

10.30am Mass of Christmas Morning

Monday 26 December St Stephen, Martyr

12noon Mass

Tuesday 27 December St John, Apostle

12noon Mass

Thursday 29 December St Thomas Becket, Martyr

12noon Mass

Friday 30 December Feast of the Holy Family

12noon Mass

Saturday 31 December

4.30pm Mass

Sunday 1 January Mary, the Holy Mother of God

10.30am Mass

Monday 2 January

12noon Mass

Tuesday 3 January The Most Holy Name of Jesus

10:00am Mass

Thursday 5 January

10:00am Mass

6.00pm Vigil Mass for the Epiphany

Friday 6 January The Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord

12noon Mass

Masses & Services for the coming week

DATE	MASS INTENTIONS & SERVICES
Saturday 17th December	4.30pm Ian McLean Snr & Jnr
Sunday 18th December <i>4th Sunday of Advent</i>	10.30am People of the Parish
Monday 19th December	10.00am Tim McCarthy
Tuesday 20th December	10.00am Frances McDonagh
Wednesday 21st December	NO MASS
Thursday 22nd December	10.00am Ann Buck
Friday 23rd December	10.00am Tom Willis
Saturday 24th December	6.00pm Vigil Mass of Christmas Perpetual Mass List 9.00pm First Mass of Christmas People of The Parish
Sunday 25th December <i>The Nativity of The Lord</i>	10.30am Private intention



Masses & Services for week commencing 24th December

DATE	MASS INTENTIONS & SERVICES
Saturday 24th December	<p>6.00pm Vigil Mass of Christmas Perpetual Mass List</p> <p>9.00pm First Mass of Christmas People of The Parish</p>
Sunday 25th December <i>The Nativity of The Lord</i>	<p>10.30am</p> <p>Private intention</p>
Monday 26th December <i>St Stephen, Martyr</i>	<p>12.00 noon</p> <p>Stephen McQuade</p>
Tuesday 27th December <i>St John, Apostle</i>	<p>12.00 noon</p> <p>Joseph & Kathleen Willis</p>
Wednesday 28th December	NO MASS
Thursday 29th December <i>St Thomas Becket, Martyr</i>	<p>12.00 noon</p> <p>Jacqueline Summers</p>
Friday 30th December <i>Feast of The Holy Family</i>	<p>12.00 noon</p> <p>Marie Stone</p>
Saturday 31st December	<p>4.30pm</p> <p>John Dunn</p>
Sunday 1st January <i>Mary, the Holy Mother of God</i>	<p>10.30am</p> <p>People of The Parish</p>



SUNDAY THOUGHTS

By now you're probably fed up with all the adverts to get you to spend your money in order to have 'the Christmas you and your family deserve'. But is there such a thing as a perfect Christmas?



It might not have seemed so for Mary. She had every reason to dread that first Christmas. A young teenage girl, she now finds herself having a baby and is unmarried. What will her family say? How's she going to explain things to Joseph? And what about the neighbours? There'll be tongues wagging all over the place and she'll probably be living under a cloud for years to come. Only she and God would ever really understand. And she didn't understand much.

Joseph's probably wasn't looking forward to that first Christmas either. For him it didn't look too promising. People would point him out as the husband who'd been the last to know. They'd wonder why he didn't simply ditch Mary. And he probably had a nagging feeling that all these strange dreams were storing up trouble for the future.

Joseph and Mary are good examples of the untidiness of human existence, of how things rarely go according to plan. It's strange, isn't it, that God couldn't find some perfect parents for his only Son? He ends up with these two.

Maybe that's what Christmas is about. Perhaps one of its jobs is to remind us that into our 'screwed up' planet, into the bleak complexity of our private lives, into a world where achievements never seem to match up to yearnings, into the higgledy-piggledy days of our existence...the infant God is born.

God could have chosen some ideal scenario into which to be born. But he chose one that was profoundly human instead. It was all so fragile: Mary had to trust the angel; Joseph had to trust Mary; God had to trust them both.

Christmas is almost upon us and we're surely not on top of things; in fact, we're probably dreading some. But if this week we were able to realise that the child Jesus offers to keep being born into the jumble of our human lives, no matter how untidy they are, then we would have experienced a great truth. And despite all the stress and strain we would have had a perfect Christmas into the bargain.



WARM & COSY CENTRES

Just a reminder that the centres are welcoming people to enjoy free tea, coffee and biscuits and have free use of TVs and wi-fi in a safe space.

Our nearest Centres are: Our Lady of Walsingham & St Robert Bellarmine (Thursdays) & St Elizabeth's (Mondays) and they are open to everyone from 1.00-3.30pm.

The Irenaeus Project in Waterloo will also be open every Monday-Thursday 10.00am - 4.00pm for people to pop in. Holy Rosary Parish Hall in the Old Roan will be open from on Friday 12.00pm - 2.00pm with a warm lunch served at 12.30pm.

POPE FRANCIS PRAYER INTENTION FOR DECEMBER

Volunteer Not-for-Profit Organizations

We pray that volunteer non-profit organizations committed to human development find people dedicated to the common good and ceaselessly seek out new paths to international cooperation..

Lord in your mercy...



WHAT'S ON AT IRENAEUS

Nia Movement to Heal - 21st December. 1.20pm

Knit & Natter - 10.30 - 12noon every Tuesday.

Art & Meditation 2-4pm every Thursday

'Songs We Remember' – 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month.

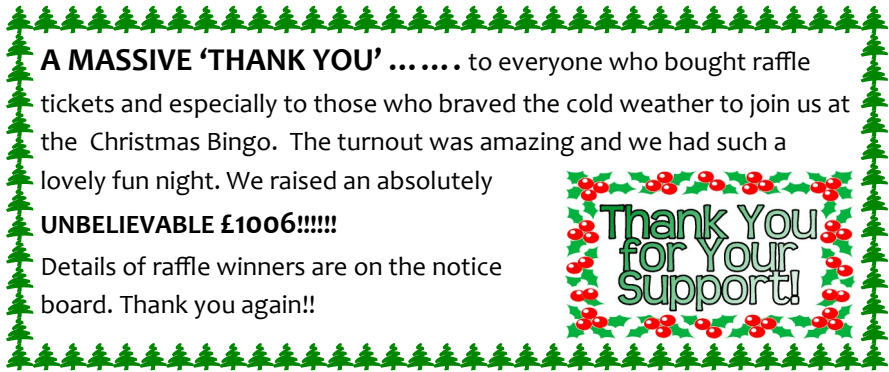
Agape Mass - First Thursday of every month 7pm

For more information on these or future events please call Jenny on:
0151 949 1199



CHRISTMAS CLOSURE

The Parish Office will close at 2.30pm on Thursday 22 December and will reopen on Tuesday 3 January. A huge thank you to Bernie & Nigel the Housekeeper for their support of Fr Mark in 2022.



A MASSIVE 'THANK YOU' to everyone who bought raffle tickets and especially to those who braved the cold weather to join us at the Christmas Bingo. The turnout was amazing and we had such a lovely fun night. We raised an absolutely

UNBELIEVABLE £1006!!!!!!

Details of raffle winners are on the notice board. Thank you again!!



SANCTUARY LAMP

The Sanctuary Lamp for the coming week is for:



'Bamber family'



EXPECTANT MOTHERS

Traditionally on the 4th Sunday of Advent we pray for expectant mothers. You may wish to use the following prayer:



Father of new life, we thank you for expectant mothers who carry growing hope in their lives and into our world. Bless them along with the living promise of their children and help them to manage the mix of joys, fears and anxieties which they may have about the time that lies ahead.

As they watch their bodies change, may they grow in your own loving kindness and compassion. Let them be inspired by Mary and Joseph, models of a loving family life, and give them the courage to guide their children in a faith-filled future.

Be with them in their gladness during these days and deepen their faith, so that labour might be a time of strength and prayer. Guard the health of their babies and give them that peace of mind that may so often seem elusive at this period.

With your grace, may they be ready for the end of this expectant time and ready to take on the joys and challenges of parenthood. Amen.

CHRISTMAS CRIB 2022



Our Christmas stable and crib is now taking shape and the figures will be arriving very soon. This year the Crib offerings will go to the Bethlehem Care & Hospice Trust.

Bethlehem, is a special place to a great many people in the world. It is special to Christians, to Judaism and to Islam. Many of Bethlehem's inhabitants can trace their ancestry back to the time of Christ. The world has an idealised view of Bethlehem. It is associated with Christmas and the events of 2000 years ago. Many forget that Bethlehem is also a living community facing the everyday challenges of everyday living in an emerging state – Palestine.

Bethlehem's healthcare system is underdeveloped and healthcare delivery is patchy. Cancer related illness is the second highest cause of death. One in eight of all deaths are cancer related. Those with other life limiting illnesses add to the numbers needing care.

Sixty-eight per cent of those first diagnosed with cancer are at a late stage. The average age of those who receive a cancer diagnosis is 55 years.

Family is strong in Bethlehem but without palliative support families are unable to help or comfort, their loved ones who suffer and too often die in pain. At the end of life when the load of symptoms is high families are not able to care for their loved ones as there is no system for home care available for the Palestinian patients. Patients are given little pain control.

Bethlehem Care and Hospice Trust was established within the Catholic Diocese of Hallam, Sheffield, after Bishop John Rawsthorne, the former bishop, led a diocesan pilgrimage to the Holy Land and pilgrims came back touched by what they saw and wanted to help in a specific way.

The charity funds the training of professionals with the help of a hospice in Leeds and the faculty of medicine at Bethlehem University and the first group have now started work by visiting patients in their homes to offer palliative care. Fr Mark has been involved with the charity since its foundation and returns home from a brief visit to Bethlehem this weekend when he has met the team and seen the amazing work they are doing.

Once the crib is in place please give generously to our collection and play your part in this important act of witness to our Christian brothers and sisters in the city of the Lord's birth.



FEAST OF THE WEEK

St Peter Canisius (1521-1597)

Peter was born in Nijmegen (now in the Netherlands) in 1521. He studied at Cologne and joined the Society of Jesus: he was ordained priest in 1546. He was sent to Germany, where for many years he worked hard to defend and strengthen the Catholic faith both by writing and by preaching. He wrote many books, of which *The Catechism* is particularly noteworthy. He died at Fribourg in Switzerland on 21 November 1597. His feast is commemorated on Wednesday.



CAFOD FUN RUN 2022

This year's Cafod fun run will take place on Tuesday 27 December. It will be the 39th year that the fun run has taken place.

All are welcome to the event at The Mystery, Wavertree Athletics Centre. There is a 3k and 5k route and people of all ages are welcome to join and can run or walk the routes. If you can't make it on the day, there is an option to join virtually wherever you are.



CHRISTMAS FUN RUN

TUESDAY 27TH DECEMBER
PLEASE REGISTER FROM 10AM FOR AN 11AM RUN!

RUN OR WALK 3K OR 5K

With family and friends at **The Mystery, Wavertree Athletics Centre, Wellington Road, Liverpool, L15 4LE**

CONTACTLESS AVAILABLE
CASH ACCEPTED

£5 CHILD £10 ADULT £20 FAMILY

We rely heavily on your support to make this event a success. Please sign up and gather sponsorship to raise much needed funds, visit <https://register.enthuse.com/ps/event/CAFODChristmasFunRun> to set up your own online sponsor page or contact liverpoolcafod.org.uk for a sponsor form. Can't make it on the day? Don't miss out, join in virtually wherever you are!



CAF+D
Catholic Agency for
Overseas Development



Registration takes place at 10am and the run starts at 11am. The cost to take part is £5 per child, £10 per adult and £20 per family.

HOT OFF THE PRESS - LITERALLY!!!

Please have a look in the piety shop for our new stock of glass ornaments. Made especially for us last weekend in Bethlehem and brought back by Fr Mark. They are beautiful and when we buy them we are supporting our friends in the Holy Land.



Come in and have a look!! There are also still some lovely Olive Wood items available. Again, these support our Friends in The Holy Land so please have a browse - they make lovely Christmas gifts.

JUBILEE YEAR 2025

As we are quickly approaching the end of this liturgical year, it may be good to cast our glance towards what is coming. Some of you may be aware that the year 2025 will be a year of jubilee, and the motto will be **“Pilgrims of Hope”**. A Jubilee Year takes place in the Catholic Church every 25 years, the last being the Great Jubilee of the year 2000.



In preparation for this jubilee year, Pope Francis wrote a letter in which he calls the Church to renew its awareness of the universal call to responsible participation. Hence, in 2023, we are invited to focus on the four major constitutions of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, and all the supporting documents. This new year liturgically started last week with the first Sunday of Advent, and non-liturgically in less than two months. Afterwards, we are to celebrate 2024 as a year of prayer in preparation for the jubilee year. The Pope’s vision for 2024 is worth quoting in full, and worth praying with.

“In this time of preparation, I would greatly desire that we devote 2024, the year preceding the Jubilee event, to a great “symphony” of prayer. Prayer, above all else, to renew our desire to be in the presence of the Lord, to listen to him and to adore him. Prayer, moreover, to thank God for the many gifts of his love for us and to praise his work in creation, which summons everyone to respect it and to take concrete and responsible steps to protect it. Prayer as the expression of a single “heart and soul” (cf. Acts 4:32), which then translates into solidarity and the sharing of our daily bread. Prayer that makes it possible for every man and woman in this world to turn to the one God and to reveal to him what lies hidden in the depths of their heart. Prayer as the royal road to holiness, which enables us to be contemplative even in the midst of activity. In a word, may it be an intense year of prayer in which hearts are opened to receive the outpouring of God’s grace and to make the “Our Father,” the prayer Jesus taught us, the life programme of each of his disciples.”

Fr Mark is thinking of another pilgrimage to Rome for the Jubilee Year which will include a visit to the major Basilicas and walking through the

CATHOLIC PIC

The December edition is now available from the church shop.





Happy Christmas!

May the peace and light which
only the Child of Bethlehem can
bring, fill your hearts this
Christmas and in the New
Year.

Fr. Mark