



Our Lady & The English Martyrs Litherland

First Sunday of Advent

Sunday 3rd December 2023



ADVENT

Parish Priest: Very Rev Canon Mark B Madden KCHS FRSA

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www.ourladyandenglishmartyrs.co.uk

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

What will I do this week to prepare for Christ's coming, knowing that it may happen at any time?

WEEKDAY MASS

Please note that there is NO MASS on Tuesday

We welcome some of the children from school who will join us for Mass on Monday.

CATHOLIC PIC The December edition is now available from the shop, free of charge. The main feature is a report on the new Cathedral in the Isle of Man and also an excellent interview with our very own John Smartt on his important work in the field of ecumenism.



CHRISTMAS BINGO AND GRAND CHRISTMAS RAFFLE

The Christmas Bingo will be held on Wednesday 13 December in Parish Hall. 'Eyes down' at 7pm. Entrance £1



Bingo tickets and raffle tickets are on sale at back of Church

FAITH DISCUSSION GROUP

Our next meeting is on Monday 4th December at 7pm, where we will be discussing Advent and the O Antiphons. There is no preparation required before the meeting, although there will be some group participation! All are welcome - come and join us.

Could people attending please come with some ideas for topics so we can discuss a plan for future meetings?

HELP NEEDED

In order for parishes to function we need people who are willing to help and to ensure the smooth running of the church, the parish and the liturgy. We are desperately in need of people who are willing to help clean the church for 1 hour every couple of weeks. We also need a few more volunteers to help wash the church linen. Can you help? Please give your name to the Parish Office.

SUNDAY THOUGHTS

Isaiah pleads with God to “rend the heavens and come down,” and rescue those who have wandered and move the hearts of the stubborn. For Christians, Jesus is God’s response to Isaiah’s prayer. He is the Good Shepherd, pursuing the lost sheep. He is the teacher, teaching us mercy and forgiveness. May we realise the gift we have in Jesus, our greatest Christmas gift, whom God sent to redeem us all.

A few weeks ago we heard the parable of the ten virgins waiting for the bride-groom, five who foolishly brought no oil with them for their lamps. The lesson from that Gospel can be applied to today’s as well. Be prepared. Be patient. Plan ahead because delays happen. The wise servants in today’s Gospel do exactly that, accomplishing their work so they are ready whenever the master returns, but waiting patiently because it may be a while. May we be reminded that our period of preparation does not end on December 25, for the Lord comes in different ways to different folks, not just as an infant child on Christmas Day. Let us make ourselves ready, whether it’s today or years from now.

Contrasting these two stories, in today’s Gospel each servant has different work to do. Some may have difficult or time-consuming tasks while others have lighter ones. So it is with us. We cannot truly know the amount of work or amount of time our neighbour must put in to prepare or keep watch. Instead of comparing ourselves to our neighbour, we should offer to help.

All are welcome to attend the Clatterbridge Christmas Concert at the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King - **December 14th 7.30pm.**

Legendary entertainer Pete Price will host as the Wirral Orchestra and Choir take you on a sleigh ride of Christmas favourites. There will also be a chance to win a Christmas shop full of treats, courtesy of Tesco.

Tickets from eventbrite.co.uk are priced at £8/£12

Masses & Services for the coming week

DATE	MASS INTENTIONS & SERVICES
Saturday 2nd December	5.00pm Advent evening prayer and blessing of Advent Wreath
Sunday 3rd December <i>First Sunday of Advent</i>	10.30am People of the Parish 11.45am Baptism Alyssa Eve and Lillie Rose Tait
Monday 4th December	10.00am Mary Hoban
Tuesday 5th December	NO MASS
Wednesday 6th December	NO MASS
Thursday 7th December	10.00am Michelle McMullen
Friday 8th December	10.00am Joe Lovelady & Septimus Murphy
Saturday 9th December	NO MASS
Sunday 10th December <i>Second Sunday of Advent</i>	10.30am People of the Parish 11.45am Baptism - Reuben Kennedy

POPE FRANCIS PRAYER INTENTION FOR DECEMBER

For persons with disabilities

We pray that people living with disabilities may be at the centre of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusive programmes which value their active participation. .

Lord in your mercy...



GAZA COLLECTION

The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem will be launching an appeal for funds which will go directly to support the Catholics in Gaza. This will also help in the rebuilding of homes once the war ends. This collection will remain open for a couple of weeks if you wish to make a donation.



Metropolitan Cathedral
of Christ the King Liverpool

MIDNIGHT MASS AT THE CATHEDRAL - 11.30pm

We are delighted to announce that Midnight Mass, celebrated by Archbishop McMahon OP, will be broadcast live on BBC Radio 4 this year, from the Metropolitan Cathedral with the Cathedral Choir. The start time is 23.30 and the congregation are asked to be in their seats by 23.15. No tickets are required.

LGBT+ Catholic Gatherings

Next LGBT+ Catholic gathering is on Sunday 10th December 2023. Mass at 2.00pm. Venue: All Saints Church, High Street, Golborne, WA3 3BG (**Please note this Mass is NOT in Anfield as normal, it is in Golborne just off the East Lincs Road.**)

LIGHTS TO REMEMBER

All are welcome to attend Marie Curie's Lights to Remember Service at Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral on Sunday 10 December at 5pm - 6pm, with refreshments and mice pies served afterwards. The event is for people who have been affected by terminal illness or bereavement, and an opportunity to come together in our local community, joined by Marie Curie staff and inspirational supporters. All are warmly invited.



ADVENT SEQUENCE

Each Sunday throughout Advent, you can hear our Cathedral Choir sing a sublime selection of seasonal music designed to reflect the wonder and joy of Advent. Entrance is free and no tickets are required.

Sunday, 3 December, 5pm-6pm The Cathedral's Advent wreath will be blessed during this service and the choir will sing a selection of music for the season.

Sunday, 10 December, 3pm Benjamin Britten's A Ceremony of Carols. Benjamin Britten's famous carol sequence will be sung following a shorter Evening Prayer.

Sunday, 17 December, 5pm Festival Carol Service. A mix of seasonal music and readings as well as congregational carols.

Missionaries of Charity Carol Singing Missionaries of Charity invite everyone to join them for carol singing at the roadside crib on Church Street, Liverpool, at 2pm on Saturday 16 December.

QUIZ NIGHT

Sefton Coach 7 are hosting their next Quiz Night on Friday 8th December from 7.30pm at St Helen's Parish Centre, Crosby, L23 7TF. Please join us as we raise funds for the youth pilgrimage to Lourdes next summer. There will be a raffle with some great prizes and other games on the night. £5 per adult (£3 per young person). Bring your own refreshments.

CAFOD WORLD GIFTS

This year why not send someone a CAFOD World Gift this Christmas? The Christmas catalogue is at the back of Church. Have a look at all the fantastic gifts that you can purchase that will help people in communities all around the world. People experiencing poverty and injustice will be helped with your donation. You will receive a beautiful illustrated card to send that explains the gift





Mary's Meals – **Double the Love**

From 22 November 2023 to 22 January 2024, donations made to Mary's Meals will be doubled by a group of generous supporters, up to £1million. Today, we face some of our greatest challenges yet in a world devastated by conflict, food insecurity and the cost of living crisis, which we know is affecting people here in the UK as well as in the countries where we work, such as Syria, Haiti and South Sudan. With Double the Love, your donation will be matched and your kindness will go even further – meaning we can reach even more desperately hungry children with a life-changing school meal. There are many ways to get involved, find out more at www.marysmeals.org.uk



FEAST OF THE WEEK

St John Almond (c.1565-1612)

John Almond was born at Allerton, Liverpool, of Catholic parents about 1565 and went to school at Much Woolton. After studying at Reims he went to the English College in Rome, where in due course he was ordained priest. In 1602 he returned to England as a secular priest and ministered to Catholics there. He was arrested briefly in 1608, and then again in 1612. In November of that year, seven priests had escaped from prison, and this may have sharpened the zeal of those who interrogated him. He displayed to the last great skill in argument; the account of his death describes him as “a reprover of sin, a good example to follow, of an ingenious and acute understanding, sharp and apprehensive in his conceits and answers, yet complete with modesty, full of courage and ready to suffer for Christ, that suffered for him.” He refused to sign the Oath of Allegiance in the form in which it was offered him, but offered to swear that he bore in his heart “so much allegiance to King James as he, or any Christian king, could expect by the law of nature, or the positive law of the true Church, be it which it will, ours or yours.” He was committed to Newgate and within a few months was brought to trial as a seminary priest. Having been duly convicted he was hanged, drawn, and quartered on 5 December 1612 at Tyburn, London.

ST WINEFRIDE'S WELL

During their recent meeting the Bishops of England & Wales have elevated the Shrine of St Winefride in Holywell, north Wales, to the status of a National Shrine for England and Wales. It's one of the oldest places of pilgrimage in Britain and has an unbroken 1,400-year tradition of pilgrimage. This puts the shrine on the same level as Walsingham.

The Catholic Bishop of Wrexham, Bishop Peter Brignall. said: *"It's an important recognition by the bishops of the value of shrines and is totally in accord with Pope Francis. Recently, the Holy Father met the directors of shrines and spoke to them of the importance of shrines as places of pilgrimage, prayer, consolation, and hope for all who visit them. Indeed, the Jubilee Year of 2025 has been given the theme Pilgrims of Hope. We are all pilgrims and these shrines are little windows onto the whole pilgrimage of our lives."*

Bishop Brignall also wants St Winefride's Shrine to be a beacon of hope and healing for women who have suffered from violence and abuse in parallel with the experiences of the saint herself.

In 630, St Winefride spurned the advances of Caradog, a chieftain from Hawarden who attempted to seduce her. The aggressor then pursued and decapitated her as she ran towards the church which had been built by her uncle, St Beuno. In the place where her head fell, a spring of water came up. St Beuno came out from the church, took up her head and placed it back on her body before praying and miraculously raising her to life.

Fr Mark will arrange a day pilgrimage to this beautiful shrine sometime in the summer months.



★ **Fr Mark's Theatre Group**



★ **SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS AT THE PHIL'**

★ Still a few tickets available for the visit to the

★ Philharmonic on Friday 22 December. Cost is £49.





SANCTUARY LAMP

The Sanctuary Lamp for the coming week is for:



'Special intention (CS)'

NSPCC CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

Taking place at our Cathedral to celebrate the festive season on Tuesday, 5 December.

Performers include PopVox Choir, Cheshire Chord Company, Wirral Youth Brass and Whitefield Primary School Choir. Tickets are priced at £10 and children under 16 are free when accompanied by an adult. Check cathedral website.



CHRISTMAS SHOPPING

Did you know 57% of shoppers will do most of their Christmas shopping online this year? And did you know this shopping can easily turn into funding for our parish? 8,000 popular online shops including eBay, Argos, John Lewis, Currys, Etsy, M&S, Boots, Waterstones and Moonpig will donate money whenever our parishioners shop with them. To use this great facility log onto www.easyfundraising.org.uk

- * Search for the brand you want to shop with on the easy fundraising website
- * The website will take you to the brand's website and activate your donation
- * Get a free donation when you checkout - your shopping will cost exactly the same!

VATICAN II CONSTITUTIONS The Vatican II Constitutions Lecture & Seminar Series preparing for the Year in Prayer are at Liverpool Hope University. The dates and speakers are as follows:
Wednesday 6 December: Paul McPartlan (Lumen Gentium)
Wednesday 17 January: Peter McGrail (Sacrosanctum Concilium)
Wednesday 28 February: Pat Jones (Gaudium et Spes)
The seminars will take place 3pm - 4:30pm, and after a break for refreshments, the lectures will be from 5:30 - 7pm. . If you would like to sign up, please register your interest with Elizabeth Parsons by emailing e.parsons@rcaol.org.uk

CHRISTMAS 2023

The times of Masses over the Christmas period are as follows:



24 December

10.30 am

Mass for the 4th Sunday of Advent

6.00 pm

Christmas Vigil Mass

9.00 pm

The 1st Mass of Christmas

25 December

10.30 am

Mass of Christmas Day

Masses from 26 December will be at midday until the New Year.

Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday this year which means that we are still obliged to attend morning Mass.

Evening Masses on Christmas Eve do not fulfil the Sunday obligation

ADVENT DATES

Sunday 17 December:

Fr Mark will bless our parish Christmas trees.

A blessing will be in the Newsletter for you to bless your own tree.



Sunday 24 December:

Fr Mark will bless our parish Christmas Crib.

Pope Francis encourages all Catholics to have a crib displayed in our homes. Bring your crib or the Baby Jesus to Mass this day and Fr Mark will bless them.

Fr Mark will place the Baby Jesus in the parish Crib on Christmas

DEANERY NEWS

Families of Parishes.

Following the extensive consultation in each of the parishes across the deanery, the priests met last week to look at all the comments and suggestions offered by people and they can confirm that there was widespread agreement with the proposed families of parishes and an acknowledgement that that was the right way forward. The priests have now sent the formal proposal to the Archbishop who will ratify the decision. Our deanery will have two families:

Family 1: Our Lady & The English Martyrs, St Elizabeth of Hungary, St. Robert Bellarmine. St Benets & Our Lady of Walsingham.

Family 2: Holy Rosary, St George, St Mary & Kentigern, St Catherine of Alexandria.

We will continue to work as a deanery but the parishes in both families will work closer together and the priests, the Deanery Synodal Council and parishes will continue to look at the ways in which the families will operate.

Deanery Patron

During the consultation process for Families of Parishes we also invited people to propose a Patron for our Deanery.

Overwhelmingly the name that came up most consistently in the area was **St Teresa of Calcutta**. The priests have informed the Episcopal Vicar for Pastoral Organisation with this proposal and he has formally replied to accept it.

CAFOD's Christmas Fun Run is back on Wednesday 27 December 2023! Join hundreds of people around the country as you walk, run,

stroll or roll around this festive fun run with a difference. Run starts at 10.00am at Wavertree Sports Park, Wellington Road, Liverpool, L15 4LE
To register email: events@cafod.org.uk or telephone 07779 804242



Christmas at the Met



Principal services and concerts
during Advent & Christmas

Sunday 3 December
17.00 An Advent Sequence

Sunday 10 December
15.00 A Ceremony of Carols - Britten

Saturday 16 December
19.00 A Celebration of Christmas
www.ticketsource.co.uk/metcathedral

Sunday 17 December
17.00 Festival Carol Service

Sunday 24 December **Christmas Eve**
15.00 First Vespers of Christmas
18.00 Vigil Mass
23.30 Midnight Mass
Most Rev Malcolm McMahon OP, Archbishop of Liverpool
broadcast live on  

Monday 25 December **Christmas Day**
Masses at 9.00, 10.00 & 11.00 (Solemn)

For a full list of Christmas events and services,
please visit www.liverpoolmetro cathedral.org.uk



Metropolitan Cathedral
of Christ the King Liverpool

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