



Our Lady & The English Martyrs Litherland

Solemnity of The Epiphany of The Lord

Sunday 7th January 2024



Parish Priest: Very Rev Canon Mark B Madden KCHS FRSA

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QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Have I had an epiphany, a sudden insight, after an experience where I've recognised an encounter with Christ? If I cannot recall one, can I imagine how it could happen?

WHEN YOU PRAY:

A Clear path to a deeper relationship with God.

You know that prayer is important but still find it challenging. Perhaps it's hard to find time, or you're unsure what to do when you pray. Or maybe you feel discouraged by your weaknesses and your inability to overcome them. If you have any of these feelings, you are not alone. Many of the saints struggled in prayer. They were like us. But each time they fell, they got up again and learned to rely more on God's grace. What God did in the lives of countless saints, he wants to do in the lives of ordinary people like us.

Starting on Monday 5 February, a 7 week course will begin in the parish hall on prayer and how to begin to pray better. This video presentation will help us on the journey of prayer God wants to take us on and it will lead us through the season of Lent.

To register, please give your name to the parish office.

THE CHRISTMAS CRIB

The Season of Christmas comes to an end tomorrow, Monday, with the feast of the Baptism of the Lord. Our Christmas Crib will remain in church until Friday 2 February, the Feast of the Lord's Presentation in the Temple.

Please be generous with your crib offerings which will be sent to the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem for our Catholic brothers and sisters in the parish of Holy Family, Gaza.



SUNDAY THOUGHTS

Light is an invaluable resource. It's no accident that in Genesis we hear that it was created first. In complete darkness, we are all blind. For millennia, the stars enabled travellers to navigate at night and light from the moon enabled them to see their way. When the Israelites' long exile ended, Isaiah pointed to Jerusalem as a beacon, shining radiantly to draw families, rulers, and foreigners to its glory, even as it was still rebuilding after years of desolation. So too the star above nearby Bethlehem drew the magi, though it was to a humble stable, inhabited by a family that to Herod would have looked absolutely unremarkable. We may feel that we have nothing radiant in us or in our lives, but with the light of Christ in us we are in fact blessed with a source of light for ourselves and others.

Today, January 7, is the date on which Orthodox Christians celebrate Christmas, based on the old Julian calendar. In today's second reading we hear Saint Paul explicitly state that Gentiles are "members of the same body." This was not a foregone conclusion. Paul could have written that Gentiles were second-class members or members of a lesser body. But the early church determined that the body of Christ is one and that all followers belong to it. So too today with all Christians, no matter when they celebrate Christ's birth.

The magi were truly wise, for not only did they set out at once for Judea once they saw the star at its rising, they also changed their plan to return to Herod after finding the child. They had an epiphany, as it were, after encountering the Messiah, after finding him in a place they could not have anticipated when they'd left their homes. We would do well to be open to epiphanies of our own after an unexpected encounter with the Lord.



Masses & Services for the coming week

DATE	MASS INTENTIONS & SERVICES
Saturday 6th January	NO MASS
Sunday 7th January <i>Solemnity of The Epiphany of The Lord</i>	10.30am People of the Parish 11.45am Baptism - Lucas Liang
Monday 8th January <i>The Baptism of The Lord</i>	10.00am Joseph Ferry
Tuesday 9th January	10.00am Betty White 11.00am Funeral service - Sheila Robinson
Wednesday 10th January	NO MASS
Thursday 11th January	10.00am Brenda Davenport
Friday 12th January	10.00am Lynn Tasker 11.45am Funeral Service - Raymond Anthony Rose
Saturday 13th January	NO MASS
Sunday 14th January <i>2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time</i>	10.30am People of the Parish

WE WELCOME WITH GREAT JOY



Lucas Liang

Baptised Sunday 7th January 2024



IRENÆUS CENTRE

The next Come and See Day at Irenaeus will be led by Pat Kennedy, who formerly worked with the Diocese of Hexham & Newcastle in adult formation and training of the permanent diaconate and is now a member of the Emmanuel community in Hexham and Newcastle. The session will focus on "The Power of Healing", and will be held on Saturday 13 January at the Irenaeus Centre, 32 Great Georges Road, L22 1RD.



For 3 Tuesdays in January, Irenaeus are running a "School of Prayer" event. This exploration of prayer will reflect on different traditions of prayer and the history behind them. Each session will focus on a way of praying, and end with a chance to pray in that way. You will also be invited to use that form of prayer in your own personal prayer at home for that week. This is an ideal opportunity to deepen your prayer life and to share your experience with others.

THANK YOU

Fr Mark wishes to thank you for the Christmas cards, gifts and good wishes he has received over the past couple of weeks.

Thank you to all who have worked so hard throughout 2023 to make our parish the wonderful gift of God that it is to so many! May He bless you a hundred-fold! Thank you as always for your support throughout the year!

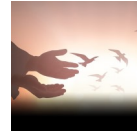


FAITH DISCUSSION GROUP

The next meeting is on Monday 8 January at 7pm when we will discuss some passages from 'Laudate Si'. John Smartt has drawn up some points for discussion which have been circulated - ask in Parish Office if you need a copy

PEACE SUNDAY MASS, LIVERPOOL METROPOLITAN CATHEDRAL -

Sunday 14th January 2024,
11am Join Archbishop
Malcolm and Pax Christi
Liverpool for
solemn mass at
11AM to mark
Peace
Sunday



MOBILE PHONES

Following discussion at the Bishops' Conference, we have been advised that, due to the sacred nature of the confessional, mobile phones must not be brought into the confessional or they should be switched off before entering. They should not just be put to silent mode. This is because, even if in silent mode, phones can still listen-in to conversations and artificial intelligence algorithms identify items of interest to potential advertisers. This technology does not affect every network but must be presumed to be operative because it cannot be proven otherwise.

This is a good reminder that mobile phones must not be used in church and should be switched to silent mode or switched off completely.

JUSTICE & PEACE COMMISSION

Andrew Jackson CEO of Pax Christi England and Wales will speak at the Archdiocesan J&P's Annual Memorial Lecture on 'The challenges of non-violence in 2024: being non-violent in a violent world.' Sunday 14 January, 1.30pm, Gibberd room at the Metropolitan Cathedral. For more details contact p.guidi@rcaol.org.uk



Mary's Meals – **Double the Love**

From 22 November 2023 to 31 January 2024, donations made to Mary's Meals will be doubled by a group of generous supporters, up to £1.1million. 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

ARCHDIOCESAN DIRECTORY

The 2024 Liverpool Archdiocesan Directory is now on sale in the Parish Shop at just £4. This excellent annual publication gives a wealth of information including times of Masses for each parish within the Archdiocese.



LENT ZOOM WEEKEND

The Augustinian Sisters at Burbank Hall in Cumbria have arranged a weekend Lenten zoom retreat. 8-10 March with evening sessions only. Theme: Fasting and Feasting. Time out for working Catholics. For more information please contact Sr. Margaret: margaret@boarbankhall.org.uk

SANCTUARY LAMP

We are running low on dedications for the Sanctuary Lamp. This is a lovely way to remember loved ones or to ask for any special intention. Just write dedication and place in envelope with £5 donation and pass to Parish Office. Dedications are allocated for a full week



CHRISTMAS TREE COLLECTION



Taking down your tree this weekend?

Jospice in Thornton will collect and recycle your tree for a small donation (recommended £10). Just go on to their website - www.stjhospice.org.uk - and complete the online form. Just leave your tree at the front of your property by 8am on 13th January and collections will be made on 13/14 January.

Time Out On Tuesdays

10:30AM - 4PM 9 January 2024

Wanting time for yourself? Time to stop and reflect? Time to step aside for a while from the daily round of life? Then why not join The Sisters of Our Lady and the Cenacle on a Tuesday to get away for a few hours to stop and ponder the important things of life? No need to book, just come along and maybe bring a friend. Suggested offering for the day is £10, bring your own lunch, tea/coffee provided. For further information contact Sr Winnie 0151 722 2271.

Sisters of Our Lady of the Cenacle, Liverpool

Tithebarn Grove Lance Lane, Wavertree L15 6TW

Newman Association Talk

January 18th 7:15pm

"Newman and Manning: two very different Cardinals - the tragedy of two good men misunderstanding each other."

Speaker: Fr. Eamonn Mulcahy CCSp. Join us at St. Helen's Parish Centre, Crosby, L23 7TQ. Tea and coffee will be available from 7.15 pm for a 7.30 pm start. The event is free to attend and everyone is welcome.

SANCTUARY LAMP



The Sanctuary Lamp for the coming week is for:

‘Children preparing for First Holy Communion’



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 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

THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Usually celebrated from 4.00pm - 4.30pm on Saturday.

Fr Mark is often available in the 20 minutes before each Mass.

Please pop into the sacristy to ask.

UNWANTED GIFTS?

We are always grateful for any items to help with our fundraising efforts through the year. If you have any unwanted gifts that may help with raffles etc please pass in to the Parish Office

REGULAR GIVING TO THE CHURCH

The best way to give regularly to the parish is with a Standing Order so that your contribution is paid by your bank to the parish account. This reduces the cash that has to be handled. Envelopes will always remain available but please consider the use of Standing Orders. Please contact the parish office if you would like one. If you are a tax payer please consider joining the Gift Aid Scheme as this is a way of increasing our income without having to ask people for more money. For every £1 you give 25p extra will be claimed back by the parish.

FEAST OF THE WEEK

St Aelred of Rievaulx (1110-1167)

Aelred was born in Hexham in around 1109. His family was well connected and at an early age he was sent into the service of King David of Scotland. There he rose to the position of Master of the Royal Household. In time he became attracted to the religious life, but he was also much attached to the life he lived at court and to King David himself. It took a considerable personal struggle for him at the age of 24 to give up his secular pursuits and to enter the newly founded Cistercian monastery of Rievaulx in Yorkshire in 1133. At 34 he moved from there and took charge of a new foundation in Lincolnshire. But within four years he had returned to Rievaulx as Abbot where he remained for the rest of his life. He died in 1167.



Aelred is remembered both for his energy and for his gentleness. His writings and his sermons were characterised by a deep love of the Scriptures and by a very personal love of Christ 'as friend and Saviour'. He was sensitive and understanding in his dealings with his fellow monks and under his direction the monastery at Rievaulx grew to an extraordinary size. He did not enjoy robust health and the last ten years of his life were marked by a long and painful illness. His position as Abbot required him to travel on visitation to monasteries not only in England and Scotland but even in France, and the physical suffering and exhaustion which this incurred seems to have been considerable. A contemporary account of the last year of his life describes him as being left helpless on his bed unable to speak or move for an hour after celebrating his morning Mass. Aelred was a singularly attractive figure, a man of great spiritual power but also of warm friendliness and humanity. He has been called the St Bernard of the North.

POPE FRANCIS PRAYER INTENTION FOR JANUARY

For The Gift Of Diversity In The Church

Let us pray that the Holy Spirit helps us recognise the gift of different charisms within the Christian community, and to discover the richness of different ritual traditions in the heart of the Catholic Church.

Lord in your mercy...



MAY THEY REST IN PEACE



Sheila Robinson

Funeral service - Tuesday 9th January 2024 11am



Raymond Anthony Rose

Funeral service - 12 January 2024 11.45am



We're excited to invite you to take part in CAFOD's Big Lent Walk, our challenge to walk 200km over 40 days to help people overcome poverty.

That's right – that's 5km a day, and you're in good time to get in plenty of training. You can walk, run, skip, or stroll your 200km, when and where you choose, alone or with friends. You'll be among thousands of people up and down Great Britain conquering your 200km targets in time for Easter.

This Lent CAFOD is linking up with SCIAF to bring the Big Lent Walk to the whole of Great Britain. From John O'Groats to Land's End, Cardiff to Coventry, people will be tying up their purple laces to give poverty it's marching orders.

The money you raise will help people as they overcome poverty. Remember: every step you take is a step closer to a fairer world. Let's tell poverty to jog on! Sign up at cafod.org.uk



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