



Parish of St Josephine Bakhita



ENGLISH MARTYRS



PARISH PRIEST

Very Rev Canon
Mark B Madden
KCHS FRSA

ST ROBERT BELLARMINE



Sunday Thoughts



On this Second Sunday of Easter, the Church invites us to reflect on the boundless mercy of Christ. This is not just "another Sunday after Easter"—it's Divine Mercy Sunday, a day rooted in the revelations to St. Faustina and officially recognized by St. John Paul II. But even more than that, it's a continuation of the Easter story.

In today's Gospel, we meet the apostle Thomas—forever remembered as "Doubting Thomas." But aren't we all a bit like him at times? He wanted to see the risen Lord, to touch His wounds. Jesus responds not with scolding, but with peace and mercy. He invites Thomas to come close and believe.

This is the heart of Divine Mercy: that even in our doubts, fears, or failures, Jesus meets us with compassion. He doesn't wait for us to be perfect. He comes through locked doors, into our closed hearts, and speaks words of peace.

The image of Divine Mercy shows rays of red and white streaming from Christ's heart—symbolising the blood and water that flowed on the cross. But it also reminds us: His heart is always open.

This Sunday is a perfect moment to bring our wounds, our regrets, and our fears to Jesus. Like Thomas, we're invited to place our hands in His wounds and say with confidence, "My Lord and my God!"

Let us open ourselves to His mercy and, in turn, become vessels of that mercy to others

JUBILEE PILGRIMAGE - 8-15 September 2025

Places are still available for the Holy Year pilgrimage to Rome, San Giovanni & Assisi, Monday 8 September - Monday 15 September 2025. Fr Mark and the Pilgrimage Company have now finalised the last remaining details of the flights:

Monday 8 September

10:15 am depart Manchester on Ryanair

13:55 pm arrive Rome

Monday 15 September

21:30 pm depart Rome on Ryanair

23:30 pm arrive Manchester



The final total cost of the trip is £1588. If anyone one is interested in booking, you need to take a booking form from the parish office, complete it and bring it back

WELCOME TO YOUR NEW LOOK PARISH NEWSLETTER!

This is your newsletter and we welcome any contributions that you may wish to have included in future weeks.

Any items for the newsletter need to be with either of the parish offices by Thursday morning.

PRAYER INTENTION FOR APRIL

For the use of the new technologies

Let us pray that the use of the new technologies will not replace human relationships, will respect the dignity of the person, and will help us face the crises of our times.

Lord in your mercy...

Guild of St Stephen Pilgrimage to Lourdes

The Liverpool Archdiocesan Guild of St Stephen's Pilgrimage to Lourdes is currently accepting bookings. The pilgrimage will take place Sunday 26th October – Saturday 1st November 2025 and further information, including booking costs, is included on the attached flyer. For more information please contact Rose Curry on 07932 729896.

WHAT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH TEACHES ABOUT MASS OFFERINGS

The faithful who make an offering so that Mass can be celebrated for their intention, contribute to the good of the Church, and by that offering they share in the Church's concern for the support of its ministers and its activities. Code of Canon Law, Canon 946

A Mass offering is a donation given to the parish so that a priest can celebrate or concelebrate Mass with a particular intention. Every Mass is offered for the whole Church, living and dead, as expressed in the Eucharistic Prayer. The priest does not keep the Mass offering; it goes into the parish account.

A priest must offer an intention each time that he celebrates a Mass.

Missa pro Populo

Every Sunday, a Parish Priest must ensure that one Mass is said for the intention of all the people in the parish. This is called the Missa pro Populo. When the Parish Priest is not celebrating Sunday Mass in the parish, this Mass is not said in the parish but is said by the Parish Priest wherever he may be.

Should the intention be announced at Mass?

The priest has no obligation under Canon Law to mention the name or the particular intention, and the Church recommends that this should not be the practice. The priest is required to 'have it in his mind'. The Mass intention is not for the people but for the priest only. Any concelebrating priests will also have particular intentions. Although the priest does not mention the intention, he has it firmly in mind and prays for it during Mass. Priests who say the Mass intention are doing so unofficially and are not keeping to the official practice of the Church. Priests should not be pressured to do something that is not the Church's official practice. The Church recommends publishing that week's Mass intentions in weekly newsletters or notice boards.

· HOLY MASS AND BRUNCH FOR ENGAGED COUPLES – Saturday 31 May

To celebrate the gift of marriage, all engaged couples across the Archdiocese are cordially invited to the Holy Mass on Saturday 31 May at St Margaret Clitherow Centre (Croxteth Drive, Liverpool, L17 1AA). The Mass with special blessing for engaged couples will be celebrated at 11am, followed by brunch. If you are interested to join please sign up with the below online enrolment form. For enquiry, please contact Moses at m.mui@rcaol.org.uk

ASSISTED SUICIDE LEGISLATION

The important vote for all MPs on the assisted suicide legislation, known as the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill, has been postponed for a few weeks but we are still urged to appeal to our MP to vote against it when it comes to the House of Commons.

Despite a disappointing initial vote of 330–275 in favour, there is now a realistic chance the Bill can be defeated. The Independent newspaper reports that 142 MPs who initially backed the Bill could withdraw their support. NOW is the time for Catholics to make their voices heard.

If assisted suicide becomes law in England & Wales:

1. Hospice [and palliative care] provision will be undermined
2. Suicide prevention efforts will be weakened
3. Elderly and disabled people will feel pressure to take their own lives*

In the US state of Oregon, almost half of those who have died by assisted suicide cited fear of being a burden on their families or carers as a reason for choosing to die. Only 1-in-3 people cite fear of pain.

Please take a postcard from the back of church, complete it and send it to Mr Peter Dowd, MP for Bootle, who voted in favour of Bill last November.

The charity Right to Life UK has a simple online mechanism to allow people to contact their Member of Parliament and it only takes a few moments to submit a message to ask an MP to stop assisted suicide being rushed into law. It can be accessed here: www.righttolife.org.uk/asvote.

Please also consider signing the Care Not Killing petition.

The Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill would make vulnerable people - including the elderly and disabled - feel a burden on family or carers resulting in pressure to end their lives. Please visit: www.carenotkilling.org.uk for the online petition.

FR MARK'S THEATRE GROUP

Saturday 14th June Liverpool Philharmonic - 'A Night at the Musicals'

'Orchestra and leading West End vocalists bring the musical hits to Hope Street. Packed with your favourite songs from Hamilton, Six, The Book of Mormon, Frozen, Aladdin, Mamma Mia!, Grease, The Lion King, The Phantom of the Opera and Les Misérables, expect showbiz glamour and knockout tunes.' Cost for this one is £53 which includes stalls ticket and transport from door to door. Name and £10 deposit to office before end of April will secure your place.

·POPE FRANCIS – REST IN PEACE

O God, faithful rewarder of souls,
grant that your departed servant Pope Francis, whom you made
successor of Peter and shepherd of your Church, may happily
enjoy for ever in your presence in heaven the mysteries of your
grace and compassion, which he faithfully ministered on earth.



Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns
with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God,
for ever and ever.

Amen.

- The Roman Missal, Prayers for the Dead – For A Pope

A book of condolence is available at the Cathedral for anyone who wishes to write a message or prayer in memory of Pope Francis. His funeral will take place at St Peter's on Saturday at 10.00am (Rome) – and 9.00am GMT.

Sunday Mass on 4th May at St Robert's is for the Repose of his Soul

Requiescat in pace

FEAST OF THE WEEK St George (-c.303)



St. George is one of the most beloved and legendary saints in Christianity, honoured around the world and especially in England, where he is the national patron saint. His feast day, April 23, invites us to reflect on courage, faith, and standing firm in truth—even when it costs us dearly. While many know the story of St. George slaying the dragon, the true heart of his legacy lies in his martyrdom. He was likely a Roman soldier who served under Emperor Diocletian in the 3rd century. When George refused to renounce his Christian faith, he was tortured and put to death. His bold witness made him a model of steadfast faith and loyalty to Christ.

The dragon legend, rich in symbolism, became popular in the Middle Ages. It portrays George as a hero who defends the innocent, a symbol of the Christian who, armed with God's grace, triumphs over evil.

St. George's popularity in England grew during the Crusades, when soldiers adopted him as a heavenly protector. In 1348, King Edward III made him the patron of the Order of the Garter, solidifying his role as England's patron saint.

Today, St. George reminds us that true heroism is rooted in faith and virtue. His example challenges us to be courageous in living out our beliefs and defending what is right. As we celebrate his feast, may we ask for his intercession to help us face life's challenges with the same strength, hope, and trust in God.

This feast is moved to Monday because of the Easter octave.

MAY THEY REST IN PEACE

Vivienne Malone

Funeral Service Tuesday 29th April 11.15am

St Robert Bellarmine

Maureen Winifred White

Funeral Service Friday 2nd May 10.15am

English Martyrs



PARISH DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

To help us in the implementation of the Pastoral Plan, each Deanery is being asked to work together to produce a strategy for the future. You will hear about this at Mass this weekend and you will receive a leaflet giving you more details. The first part of this strategy is to gather detailed information about each of the parishes in our Deanery. We will all need to be involved in this. The Parish Development Strategy is being rolled out across the whole Diocese in the next 2 years – but we are one of the 3 pilot Deaneries, along with the other two Sefton Deaneries.

Each parish has a member of a Deanery Steering Group: ours is Angela Jones. This work will also be done in collaboration with the Deanery Synodal Councils.

VISITATION OF FATIMA STATUE AND RELICS – Monday 2 June 2025

The Centenary Pilgrim Virgin Statue of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the relics of Ss Jacinta and Francisco are coming to the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King on Monday 2 June. On the day, there will be Holy Mass at 10:00, followed by Holy Rosary, act of consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. At 13:00, there will be Fatima talk & film, followed by enrolment & investiture of the Brown Scapular and Holy Hour. The event will finish with benediction at 16:00. For enquiry, please contact Moses at m.mui@rcaol.org.uk

COFFEE MORNING

Join us after mass at St Robert's on Sunday mornings for a cup of tea, coffee and a biscuit in the George Inch Hall. All are welcome.



MYANMAR EARTHQUAKE APPEAL

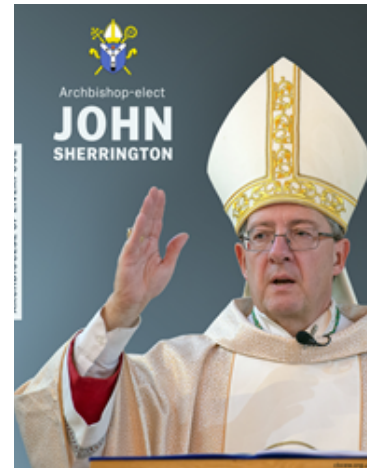
Thousands have already lost their lives, and the death toll is expected to rise. Through the Catholic Church, we can provide the emergency help that affected families will need – food, water and shelter. Please donate at cafod.org.uk.

INSTALLATION OF THE ARCHBISHOP

The Mass of Installation of The Most Reverend John Francis Sherrington as the tenth Archbishop of Liverpool will occur on Tuesday 27 May 2025, at 12 noon at the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King.

Each parish has been allocated two tickets for parishioners to attend. If you would like to go, please give your name to the Parish Office by Thursday 1 May. If we receive more than two names, Fr Mark will draw two names out of a hat.

In addition to 2 named parishioners whilst we do expect a full Cathedral for this occasion there will be some unreserved sections of the Cathedral for members of the faithful who wish to attend. In order to register your and request a space, please let the Parish Office know so that we can inform the Cathedral.



FIRST HOLY COMMUNION

First Holy Communion celebrations in our parish occur during the Easter Season. Beginning next weekend, four celebrations will be held as the children from our three Primary Schools receive Jesus in Holy Communion for the first time. Please pray for them and their families as they accept this special gift and deepen their connection to the life of the Church and our community. Thank you to our wonderful team of catechists and the schools for their help.



Newman Talk on 'The Turin Shroud' Thursday 1st May at 7.30pm St Helen's Crosby, L23 7TQ

Mike Pietrzyk is our guest speaker. He will travel to the UK from Minnesota, USA, on Easter Monday. He is an author who gives his talks globally.

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY - 27th APRIL

You are warmly invited to celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday at St John the Evangelist Church, Fountains Road, Kirkdale, L4 1QL.

Confessions available all day (with five priests).

2.15pm Talk on the Divine Mercy message.

3pm Chaplet of Divine Mercy.

Adoration and Benediction.

4pm Holy Mass.

Veneration of the Holy Image.

Relic of the True Cross.

All are welcome to attend this special afternoon of prayer and devotion.

RESURRECTION STORIES AT IRENAEUS

An exploration of the Resurrection Stories Wed 10.30am-12 Noon 30th April and 7th, 14th, 21st May.

For more info contact Irenaeus 32 Great George Rd, Liverpool. Tel: 0151 949 1199

Email: jenny@irenaeus.co.uk

COME AND BE A CATHEDRAL GUIDE & WELCOMER!

Please give us the gift of three hours a week of your precious voluntary time. Learn on the job for as long as it takes. Answer queries at the welcoming desk. Listen to the stories of our wonderful visitors. If you like, take large or very small groups on tours. Give the job your own creativity. Be part of a ministry of welcome. Add your own dimension to a large and flourishing team. Be a consistent part of your group throughout the year. Contribute toward presenting our Cathedral as a living Christian community, able to embrace everyone as valued individuals. Make new friends. Enjoy a fresh challenge. This random list could go on! Give us a call and we shall arrange for you to Come and See. Contact Dcn Paul Mannings: p.mannings@rcaol.org.uk

HOLY YEAR AND THE JUBILEE OF HOPE

As Christians we are called not to judge others but to show compassion and understanding knowing that only God knows the full heart of a person. Our aim should be to build each other up in love, not to tear down or condemn. This week we will focus on.....

Not judging others
Before we speak, before we see
The flaws in others so openly
How can we, with hearts so frail
Judge another who might also fail.

Instead lets lift with gentle hands
showing love that understands.
For we are all... just passing through,
and flaws in others can be our flaws too

So walk with mercy not with pride
Letting kindness be our guide
So that in each soul both strong and weak
We'll find the beauty we all seek.

SANTA MARTA GROUP

The Santa Marta Group is a International Group hoping to be a catalyst to bring systemic change to end human trafficking and modern-day slavery by bringing together leaders from civil society, law enforcement, business, faiths and communities.

Fr Mark would like to form a new parish Group that will work specifically with the Santa Marta Group, Caritas, Civic authorities etc. to highlight the work of human trafficking and modern-day slavery. We will officially launch the group and its work on Sunday 8th February 2026. If you are willing to join, please give your name to the parish offices.

Remembering POPE FRANCIS

1936—2025

Biography

Pope Francis—born Jorge Mario Bergoglio on December 17, 1936, in Buenos Aires, Argentina—was elected Supreme Pontiff, the 266th pope of the Catholic Church, on March 13, 2013. He is the first Jesuit pope and the first pope from the Americas. Before his election, he served as Archbishop of Buenos Aires and was made a cardinal by Pope John Paul II in 2001. As pope, he emphasized pastoral care, evangelization, and the centrality of God's mercy.



Papal Motto

Pope Francis' motto, *Miserando atque eligendo* ("by having mercy and by choosing"), comes from a homily by St. Bede on the call of St. Matthew. This phrase held deep personal significance for Pope Francis as he experienced a profound encounter with God's mercy on the Feast of St. Matthew in 1953, which led him to his vocation.

Prayer for Pope Francis

O God, who in your Divine Providence chose your servant Pope Francis to be counted among the shepherds of your Church, grant, we beseech you, that through your mercy he may receive the reward of a faithful steward and enjoy forever your presence in heaven. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

Join us in praying a
novena for Pope Francis:



Masses & Services for the Coming Week

DATE	English Martyrs	St Robert Bellarmine
Sunday 27th April Sanctuary Lamp	9.30am Alice Power Special intention (JB)	11.00am People of the Parish. Muriel & Thomas Mitchell
Monday 28th April Solemnity of St George	10.00am Alec Barr	
Tuesday 29th April St Catherine of Siena		10.00am Paul Jones 11.15am Funeral service Vivienne Malone
Wednesday 30th April	NO MASS	NO MASS
Thursday 1st May	10.00am Philip Butler	
Friday 2nd May	10.15am Funeral service Maureen White	10.00am Glad Pearson
Saturday 3rd May		
Sunday 4th May	9.30am People of the Parish	11.00am Pope Francis

English Martyrs Office
 School Lane, Litherland, L21 7LX

0151 928 3471 englishmartyrs@rcaol.org.uk
 Office hours Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri 9.30am - 2.30pm

St Robert Bellarmine Office
 Bootle, L20 6DZ

0151 922 1352 strobert@rcaol.org.uk
 Office hours Tues, Wed, Fri 9.30am - 1.30pm

What wounds in my community can I make whole? How will I do this?