



A Pastoral Letter

*to be read aloud in all churches and chapels of the Archdiocese of Liverpool
for the
Feast of the Holy Family*

27/28 December 2025

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

Peace be with you all.

These days after the feast of Christmas invite us to enter more deeply into the great mystery we have celebrated. God has shared our humanity; the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. Jesus the Christ knew what it is to be fully human and was also fully God. He is born of a Virgin into the poverty of being homeless. His crib was the feeding trough for the animals. The manger reminds us that he is the bread of life for us, our living bread.

Born at the time of year with the darkest and longest of nights, he is the light that shines into the darkness. The light of this child who is God shines out of the manger, throws light on the faces of Mary and Joseph and is our light to lead us through the joys and sorrows of life.

During this Jubilee year, we have walked with each other as pilgrims of hope. I have seen the way in which love brings hope and consolation to others. Children in our schools have cared for the needy and the collections for Nugent have given gifts to families in need. Many people have reached out to serve others. Others have shown hope by caring for the gift of creation and being good stewards of God's gifts.

I pray that your faith has been renewed, and you have new energy to follow Jesus as pilgrims of hope. Those of you who have been on pilgrimage to Rome have deepened your faith by entering the great basilicas through Holy Doors. Although the Jubilee doors in Rome will close, the doors of our hearts remain open to the love of God which is poured into them. The power of the Holy Spirit guides and leads us as a community of witnesses of Christ to others.

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When Pope Leo met Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, Head of the Orthodox Church, in late November, they celebrated the 1700th anniversary of the Council of Nicea and prayed together the Nicene Creed which we pray every Sunday. From that Council, the Church received the words, 'begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father'. In these words, we profess our belief that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and of one substance with the Father. He exists in the Godhead for all time. By the interior help of the Holy Spirit, we pray to believe this ever more deeply.

Together Pope Leo and the Patriarch pledged to walk together towards 2033 which will be the great Jubilee of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ two thousand years ago. They also pledged to work together to build peace with justice between peoples through dialogue and mutual understanding. As the Church in the Archdiocese of Liverpool, I invite you to walk together with all our Christian brothers and sisters towards 2033 as pilgrims of hope. We can accompany one another, pray together, build peace and serve others, especially the poorest members of the community. This is our witness for mission.

Peace begins with those closest to us. On this feast of the Holy Family, we thank God for the gift of our families. Parents are the first teachers of their children in the faith. This is the commitment of baptism. May they be the best of teachers. I thank God for the gift of the faith of my grandparents Agnes and John, and my parents Frank and Catherine. They gave me the greatest gift they could – life and faith.

Of course, no two families are the same. Every family has its strengths and gifts, weaknesses and challenges. There is no perfect family among us. Yet it is in our families that we first are loved, learn to love, and are formed. Sadly, this is not always the case.

We pray for families that are challenged in so many ways today. Our Church is called to be close to all families and accompany them in their joys and sorrows, hopes and griefs, and to share her life with them. Let us renew our desire to do this, supporting one another's baptism, faith and life. Let us thank God for our Catholic schools which are beacons of light in the world.

By looking at the Holy Family, we understand more about Jesus. May St Joseph and Our Blessed Lady bless our families, our schools and the family of the Church in the coming year.

May God bless you and your families,



Archbishop of Liverpool