



## Parish of St Josephine Bakhita



### ENGLISH MARTYRS



### PARISH PRIEST

Very Rev Canon  
Mark B Madden  
KCHS FRSA

### ST ROBERT BELLARMINE



Today we begin a new Church year and enter the quiet, hopeful season of Advent. St Matthew will guide us through the coming year, and he starts by reminding us of Jesus' simple message: "Stay awake." Advent invites us to slow down, pay attention, and notice where God is gently at work in our lives.

Matthew often shows Jesus as Emmanuel—God with us. Not God far away, not God who appears only in dramatic moments, but God who steps into ordinary life. As we begin this season, we are encouraged to look for Jesus in the small things: in kindness, in patience, in moments of peace, and in the people who need our care.

The single candle on the Advent wreath offers a lovely picture of this hope. Its light is small, but it pushes back the darkness. In the same way, even the smallest act of faith or love can brighten someone's day. Advent is not about rushing toward Christmas; it is about preparing our hearts to welcome the Lord, who comes quietly and faithfully.



This week, try to make a little space for God—a short prayer, a moment of silence, or a simple act of generosity. If we stay awake to God's presence, we will find that Christ is already near, walking with us as we begin this new journey together.

Fr Mark

*"What small act of kindness can I offer to bring light into someone's day this week?"*

**PLEASE OFFER YOUR PRAYERS FOR THOSE PARISHIONERS WHO ARE CURRENTLY ILL**



Joseph Mulhaney  
Michael Lundon  
Margaret Spencer  
Peter Gibbons

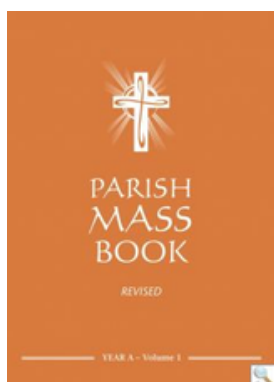
Mary Spofforth

## POPE'S PRAYER INTENTION FOR DECEMBER



### For Christians in areas of conflict

Let us pray that Christians living in areas of war or conflict, especially in the Middle East, might be seeds of peace, reconciliation, and hope.  
*Lord in your mercy...*



## FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Readings for Mass today can be found on Page 82 of the Parish Mass Book

### ARCHBISHOP MALCOLM

Archbishop Malcolm McMahon OP will celebrate his silver jubilee of Episcopal ordination in the coming weeks. He will celebrate Holy Mass at 12noon on Saturday 6 December at the Metropolitan Cathedral - all are welcome.



### ARCHBISHOP SERRINGTON FOR CBCEW - Life Issues Statement

Bishops' Conference have released a statement concerning the dignity and protection of human life. You can read the statement and watch an interview with Archbishop Sherrington here: <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/assisted-suicide-and-abortion-life-issues-statement/>

## SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Please keep the Year 4 children from St Robert's in your prayers as they receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first-time next week.



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## LIGHT OF TRUTH: ESSENTIAL TRAINING FOR CATECHISTS (ONLINE WORKSHOP), Saturday 6 December, 9.00 to 12.00

Join the Dominican Sisters on Saturdays, from 9.00 to 12.00 noon for a short course of 3 sessions, to discover the essential nature and principles of catechesis, the sources of catechesis, and the best ways to prepare and deliver our catechesis. This course is open to everyone involved or interested in any kind of catechesis for adults, young people or children. This course is free, and the Dominican Sisters gratefully accept any donation you may be able to contribute.

<https://www.lightoftruth.uk/event-details/essential-training-for-catechists-2025-12-06-09-00>

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## ST ANNE & BLESSED DOMINIC, SUTTON, ST HELENS – PILGRIMAGE VISITS VISITS

From the 8th November St Anne & Blessed Dominic will be open between 2-4pm on Saturday afternoons for pilgrimage visits. This arrangement will remain in place until the end of December.

It is still possible to arrange visits at other times by phoning the parish office - 01744811935. The office is open every Monday and Friday.

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## SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS \_ LIVERPOOL PHILHARMONIC

Can those people joining us please now pay the balance for this trip  
Thank you

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## ENGLISH MARTYRS PENSIONERS GROUP

The Pensioners have a few spare places in their group if you would like to join them. They meet on a Tuesday in English Martyrs Parish Hall from 1-4pm.

## LECTIO FOR YOUNG ADULTS

Every Friday at 6pm at St Vincent de Paul's Church, L1 5JN, there is a "lectio" prayer group for young adults. There will be a Mass at 6pm, followed by a short time of sharing the Sunday readings at 6.30pm.

It's a friendly group and sometimes they also organise trips and retreats. If you want more information please contact James: [djmoroney@cantab.net](mailto:djmoroney@cantab.net) or 07394 503 911

## LOURDES YOUTH PILGRIMAGE 2026

Applications for the Lourdes Youth Pilgrimage with Sefton Coach 7 are LIVE now at [liverpool Lourdes youth.co.uk](http://liverpool Lourdes youth.co.uk). Young people aged from Year 10-age of 22 are invited to be part of Coach 7 this year (22nd-31st July 2026). The cost of the pilgrimage is £720 but fundraising will reduce this cost. For more information email [coach7@rcaol.org.uk](mailto:coach7@rcaol.org.uk)

### BE A TRUST GOVERNOR:

Pope Francis Catholic Multi Academy Trust are looking for Governors to support leaders in providing the best Catholic education for pupils in our schools.

If you are interested in using your skills to benefit our pupils, please contact: [governance@pfcmat.org](mailto:governance@pfcmat.org) or go to <https://www.pfcmat.org/Governance/>



**Pope Francis**  
Catholic Multi Academy Trust

## CAFOD Christmas Fun Run – 27 December

Signup is open for CAFOD's annual Fun Run!

The run will take place on 27 December at Wavertree Sports Park and is open to all.

Run, walk, or wheel with family and friends to share the joy of Christmas and raise money for those in need!

Scan the QR code on the poster to sign up, or search CAFOD Fun Run.



## THE LIVERPOOL METROPOLITAN CATHEDRAL CHOIR PRESENTS A Celebration of Christmas – Saturday 13 December

A Celebration of Christmas returns this year on Saturday 13 December with a night of musical cheer, guaranteed to get you into the festive spirit.

Join the Metropolitan Cathedral Choir and some very special guests for what promises to be a magical event for all the family.

Sing along to classic carols, enjoy traditional readings and celebrate Christmas in the glorious surroundings of the Metropolitan Cathedral



Tickets: £10 each/ £18 family, available from [www.ticketsource.co.uk/metcathedral](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/metcathedral)

## Archdiocesan Young Adult Group Faith Based Talk: Is Scripture Outdated? December 16th 6:30PM - 8:00PM

Join the archdiocesan young adult group, as they are joined at Pauline Book Centre by Fr Hugh Donleavy for a faith based talk - Is Scripture outdated? Anyone between the ages of 18 and 35 are welcome to attend.

## WHAT CAN I BRING HIM? ADVENT EVENINGS

The Irenaeus Centre are hosting several Advent evenings - next one is on Wednesday 10 December from 19:00-20:30. For more information and zoom links please contact [jenny@irenaeus.co.uk](mailto:jenny@irenaeus.co.uk)



## CHATSWORTH TRIP

What a wonderful day we had last Friday for our Parish Christmas Market outing. The weather was ideal - crisp and cold. A perfect setting for a lovely day out . Thank you to those who supported us

## Autumn Formation Sessions: Have you thought about... getting involved in Catholic education?

The Archdiocese of Liverpool's Education Department is hosting two more online information sessions via Microsoft Teams. Each session runs 7pm–8pm and gives you the chance to hear from people currently in the role, learn what's involved, and ask questions.

Tuesday 3rd December – Have you thought about becoming a Religious Education Teacher? Find out what the role entails and the routes into teaching. To join, scan the QR code on the poster or email [J.Ball@rcaol.org.uk](mailto:J.Ball@rcaol.org.uk) for the Teams link.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

## Autumn Formation Sessions

These sessions take place online through Microsoft Teams from 7pm - 8pm. They will be led by people currently in the role, and will explain what is involved and routes in. There will be opportunities for you to ask questions.

*Have you thought about...*

NOV <b>06</b>	<b>Becoming a Multi-Academy Trust Director?</b>	
NOV <b>12</b>	<b>Teaching in a Catholic School?</b>	
NOV <b>19</b>	<b>Becoming a School Chaplain?</b>	
NOV <b>26</b>	<b>Becoming a School Governor?</b>	
DEC <b>03</b>	<b>Becoming a Teacher of Religious Education?</b>	



TO BOOK: Scan QR code or email Joanne Ball: [J.ball@rcaol.org.uk](mailto:J.ball@rcaol.org.uk)

## PARISH BEREAVEMENT GROUP

In every parish family there are times when someone's world changes overnight through the loss of a loved one. In those moments, the simple presence of a compassionate fellow parishioner can make all the difference. Fr Mark would like to form a new Parish Bereavement Team—a small group of volunteers who can offer gentle support to grieving families through prayer, listening, and practical help around funerals.

You just need a caring heart, a willingness to listen, and a desire to bring Christ's comfort to those who mourn. A training course within the deanery will begin at the start of February for those interested.

If you feel you could offer a little time to this quiet but essential ministry, please contact the parish office. Together we can ensure that no member of our community walks through grief alone.

## FEAST OF THE WEEK

St Ralph Sherwin (1550-1581)

This week we remember St Ralph Sherwin, one of the Forty Martyrs of England and Wales, whose courage still speaks to us today. Born in Derbyshire in 1550,

Ralph was a gifted young man who studied at Oxford before discerning a call to the priesthood. At a time when being a Catholic priest in England was a death sentence, he trained abroad, knowing full well the risk he would face by returning home.



Ralph came back not with anger or rebellion, but with a shepherd's heart. His desire was simple: to bring the sacraments, comfort, and hope to ordinary people who longed to practice their faith. Arrested after only a short time in England, he endured imprisonment, torture, and finally execution at Tyburn in 1581. He died at just thirty-one years old, forgiving those who condemned him and praying for the nation he loved.

St Ralph Sherwin reminds us that holiness is not measured by length of life, but by fidelity and love. Most of us will never face the trials he did, but we can learn from his quiet courage. He calls us to be steady in faith, gentle in witness, and hopeful even in difficulty.

May his example inspire us to live our faith with integrity, kindness, and trust in God –whatever challenges we face today.

## MARY'S MEALS – DOUBLE THE LOVE

Mary's Meals' Double the Love campaign is now running, which means that any donations made will be doubled by a group of generous supporters, up to £1.1million. You can give hope this Christmas to hungry children, with life changing school meals. Your gift will help Mary's Meals keep our promise into 2026 and beyond to the world's poorest communities in countries such as Ethiopia, Haiti and South Sudan, where conflict and the devastating impacts of climate change mean our nutritious meals are needed more than ever. There are many ways to get involved, find out more at <https://www.marysmeals.org.uk/>

## MARRIAGE PREPARATION CATECHISTS NEEDED

Would you like to help engaged couples to prepare for marriage? The archdiocese is now recruiting catechists to join the marriage preparation team. The catechist training will be provided at St Monica's Church, Bootle, Liverpool, L20 9GA and consists of 5 sessions:

- Monday 23 February 2026 (6.30pm – 8pm)
- Monday 2 March 2026 (6.30pm – 8pm)
- Monday 9 March 2026 (6.30pm – 8pm)
- Monday 16 March 2026 (6.30pm – 8pm)
- Saturday 28 March 2026 (10am – 2pm)

Upon completion of training, the catechists will be asked to offer marriage preparation course for couples twice a year. If this is something you are interested in, please sign up here <https://forms.office.com/e/JGbP8AtZwn?origin=lprLink> For more information, please contact Moses at [m.mui@rcaol.org.uk](mailto:m.mui@rcaol.org.uk).

## AFTERNOON TEA WITH FRANK SINATRA (DAVE ASHLEY) AND FRIENDS

The Irenaeus Centre is hosting a 'Songs We Remember (dementia-friendly) Christmas Celebration on Wednesday 10 December, 14:00-16:00. For more information, please contact the Irenaeus Centre.

## CHRISTMAS CARDS AND GIFTS

Christmas stock has now arrived in English Martyrs and is available in the Piety stall.

This year we have some wonderful olive wood and stained glass items which have come direct from the Holy Land.

Fr Mark's friend has an online shop and has provided a variety of items.

Proceeds from the sale of these go to support our friends in the Holy Land so please go in and have a browse.

**St Robert's now have their Christmas cards and calendars available at the back of Church**



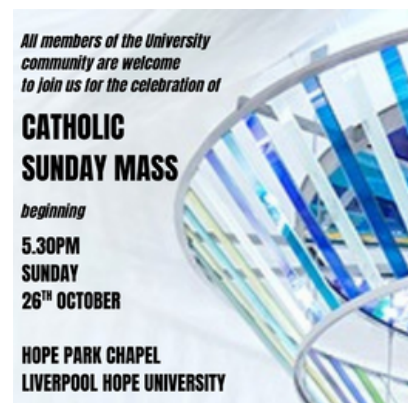
## LIVERPOOL HOPE UNIVERSITY - SUNDAY MASS

Sunday Mass will have recommenced at Liverpool Hope University. Mass will take place at 5.30pm in the Chapel on Hope Park Campus each Sunday during term time.

This Mass is in addition to the weekly 12.15pm Thursday lunchtime Mass.

All members of the university community are welcome to attend.

Contact Fr Peter Murphy ([p.murphy@rcaol.org.uk](mailto:p.murphy@rcaol.org.uk)) for more information.



## NICENE CREED

The 1700th anniversary of the Nicene Creed: Fr Mark Drew will give a talk on Mon 8th Dec at 7.00pm – 8.30pm at Holy Rosary Lounge. (L10 2LG) "The Nicene Creed: what is it; what does it mean and why does it matter." All welcome.

## ST ROBERT'S OVER 50's CLUB

The Over 50's Club meet in St Robert's parish centre on Thursday afternoons between 1.00 and 3.00pm. and is open to all.

Why not pop along and join in the fun - tea and coffee are available and, for a small charge, there is a raffle and a couple of games of Bingo for you to enjoy.

Regular members are asked to make a payment of £1.50 per week

## STRUGGLING TO FIND A GIFT?

Why not send one of CAFOD's World Gifts?

Each gift is more than a present - it is a way to stand in solidarity with our global neighbours.

There are gifts of education, farming, water and many more. Have a browse of one of the catalogues at the back of both churches and then order online at [cafod.org.uk/worldgifts](http://cafod.org.uk/worldgifts). Your loved one will receive a card confirming the gift that has been purchased in their name.



## WHAT'S ON AT JOSPICE

### Light up a Life (hospice)

**04.12.25 16:30 - 18:00 | 04.12.25**

**St. Joseph's Hospice, Ince Road, Thornton**



Join us for our annual Light up a Life service in the hospice grounds.

This year, Light up a Life will take place from 4.30pm on Thursday 4th December, with our service taking place 6pm.

Come and join us for refreshments and entertainment prior to the service.

### Church service (indoor service):

This year, we have also introduced a Light up a Life church service, which will take place at St. Peter's and Paul's Church in Crosby at 2pm on Wednesday 10th December.

This will be perfect for anyone who doesn't want to take part in our outdoor service at the hospice, or who would prefer to attend a daytime event.

### Virtual Christmas Tree:

If you cannot join us for one of our services, you can make a dedication online and light up our virtual Christmas tree.

Our Online Dedication Page allows you to make a donation and leave a personal message of dedication. These messages can be shared with friends and family across the country – and even further afield – helping to spread support and encouragement far and wide.



## 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.



PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE ARE NO TICKETS LEFT FOR ENGLISH MARTYRS  
BINGO - THERE WILL BE NO ADMISSION ON THE DOOR



## *CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES*

### *CHRISTMAS EVE*

*6.00pm St Robert Bellarmine*

*9.00pm English Martyrs*

### *CHRISTMAS DAY*

*9.30am English Martyrs*

*11.00am St Robert Bellarmine*

*Masses for the week after Christmas will be at 12 noon from  
26<sup>th</sup> December to 1 January*



## Masses and Services for the coming week

DATE	English Martyrs	St Robert Bellarmine
<b>Sunday 30th November</b>  <b>Sanctuary Lamp</b>	<b>9.30am</b> Mary Hoban  <b>Charlie Devlin &amp; Family</b>	<b>11.00am</b> Margaret Chegwin  <b>Safe pregnancy</b>
<b>Monday 1st December</b>	<b>10.00am</b> Nickson family	
<b>Tuesday 2nd December</b>		<b>10.00am</b> Cecilia Ormesher
<b>Wednesday 3rd December</b>	<b>NO MASS</b>	<b>NO MASS</b>
<b>Thursday 4th December</b>	<b>10.00am</b> Marie McGuirk	
<b>Friday 5th December</b>		<b>10.00am</b> Carl Jones
<b>Saturday 6th December</b>	<b>NO MASS</b>	<b>NO MASS</b>
<b>Sunday 7th December</b>	<b>9.30am</b> People of the Parish	<b>11.00am</b> Alexander Briscoe

### English Martyrs Office

School Lane, Litherland, L21 7LX

### St Robert Bellarmine Office

Orrell Road, Bootle, L20 6DZ

0151 928 3471 englishmartyrs@rcaol.org.uk

Office hours Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri 9.30am - 2.30pm

0151 922 1352 strobert@rcaol.org.uk

Office hours Tues, Wed, Fri 9.30am - 1.30pm