



## Parish of St Josephine Bakhita



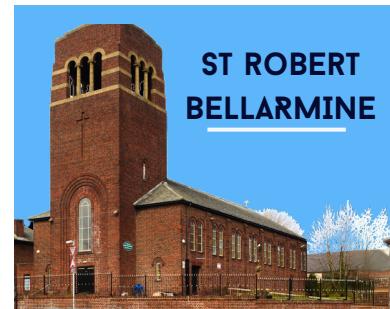
### ENGLISH MARTYRS



### PARISH PRIEST

Very Rev Canon  
Mark B Madden  
KCHS FRSA

### ST ROBERT BELLARMINE



“Whoever loves God must also love his brother.”

Those words could almost be a quiet summary of today’s Gospel. In Matthew’s Beatitudes, Jesus sits, looks out at an ordinary crowd, and describes what a blessed life really looks like. Not powerful. Not perfect. But gentle, merciful, hungry for justice, and willing to stand with those who suffer.

The Beatitudes turn the world upside down. They tell us that God is closest not to the loudest voices or the strongest hands, but to the poor in spirit, the meek, the peacemakers. In other words, God’s heart is drawn to those who know their need—and to those who recognise the dignity of others.

That is why this Gospel speaks so clearly on Racial Justice Sunday. Racism begins when we stop seeing one another as brothers and sisters and start seeing labels instead. It grows when fear replaces encounter, and silence replaces compassion. The Beatitudes challenge that directly. You cannot be merciful and dismiss another’s pain. You cannot hunger for righteousness and ignore injustice. You cannot claim to love God while refusing to love the person God places before you.

St John puts it plainly: “Whoever loves God must also love his brother.” Love of God is never abstract. It is tested in how we speak, how we listen, how we welcome, and how we stand alongside those who feel unseen or excluded.

This week, the Beatitudes invite us to a simple but demanding question: Who is my neighbour today—and how can I love them as God loves me? Sometimes justice begins not with grand gestures, but with a changed heart, a listening ear, and the courage to treat every person as truly blessed.

*Fr Mark*

*How can my love for God be shown in the way I treat others today?*

**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 FEBRUARY**



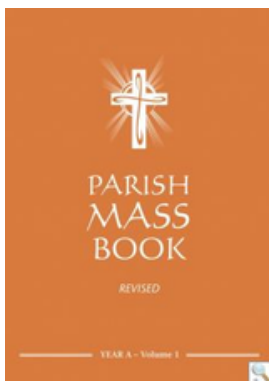
### **For children with incurable diseases**

Let us pray that children suffering from incurable diseases and their families receive the necessary medical care and support, never losing strength and hope.

*Lord in your mercy...*

## **FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

Readings for Mass today can be found on Page 130 of the Parish Mass Book



## **SANCTUARY LAMP**



We are running a bit low on dedications for the Sanctuary Lamp at both Churches. If you would like to sponsor the lamp for a week please just write the dedication on a piece of paper and pass to the Parish Office or place in the collection bags with £5 offering. Thank You.

## PARISH MEETING

The next meeting to discuss the deanery proposals will take place on Monday 9 February at 7 pm at English Martyrs Hall. If you require transport, please call either of the Parish Offices and we will try and arrange this for you.

As we step into 2026, our Archdiocese is blessed with exciting opportunities to reflect Christ's presence and respond with hope to the challenges of our modern world here in Liverpool. These times invite us to embrace renewed faith, vibrant mission, creative action, and deep trust in God's guidance. This journey builds on the grace of our Synod 2020 and the Archdiocesan Pastoral Plan, calling us forward together.

This process of reflection within the 3 Sefton deaneries is being rolled out in other parts of the diocese this weekend.

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## 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.

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The January Catholic Pic is now available free of charge - pick up your copy .

The main article covers the Parish Development Strategy





## CRIB COLLECTIONS 2025

This is your last opportunity to visit the Christmas Crib and to make a donation to our chosen charity this year.



Your generous donations for the crib collection will this year go to help the minor seminarians of the Latin Patriarchal Seminary in Beit Jala, in the Holy Land. These are boys from the age of 13 who are discovering if God is calling them to the priesthood. Because of the recent situation in the Holy Land and the war in Gaza, many of their families have no employment and so are unable to financially support their children through the minor seminary. Our generous donations will help to pay for uniforms, school fees, etc. Please give generously and help support future priests in the Holy Land.

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## EUCCHARISTIC MINISTRY TRAINING DAYS

The Irenaeus Centre will be leading a Eucharistic ministry training day on 14 March 2026. Speak to Fr Mark if you are interested and we can get you registered for the training for this important ministry

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## COME AND SEE

“Lord Teach us to Pray” - Saturday 7 February 10am-4pm

Fr Nicholas King will be the keynote speaker at this week's Come & See Day at Irenaeus. Please come along to The Irenaeus Centre, 32 Great Georges Road, L22 1RD and bring a packed lunch. The event is free, with a suggested donation of £10. For more details, contact [Jenny@irenaeus.co.uk](mailto:Jenny@irenaeus.co.uk) or call 0151 949 1199

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## NATIONAL NOVENA TO ST JOSEPH

This annual event will take place from 10-18 March at St Joseph's Church in Maidenhead. Every year, the Mill Hill Missionaries prepare for the Feast of St Joseph, their Society Patron, with a special Novena of Masses and prayers.

You can be part of the Novena by sending your petitions and requesting a Novena booklet. Please write to the Novena Director at 6 Colby Gardens, Maidenhead, SL6 7GZ, or email [novenamhm@gmail.com](mailto:novenamhm@gmail.com)



## MARRIAGE PREPARATION COURSE

Are you planning to get married in a Catholic church? Are you looking for some time out from the busy wedding planning, providing you and your partner with an opportunity to focus on your relationship and to learn more about each other?

The Liverpool Archdiocese is now offering a marriage preparation course for engaged couples. The course will involve four sessions, meeting in group with other couples. To be led by trained lay facilitators, the course will help the couples develop skills which could facilitate good communication within their relationship and an understanding of unconditional love set within a Catholic faith.

The next course will be available in April 2026:

**Date:** 30 April, 7 May, 14 May, 21 May (all Thursdays)

**Time:** 6.30pm-8.30pm

**Venue:** St Agnes & St Aidan Church, Huyton, Liverpool, L36 5SQ

There is a fee of £50 per couple to help towards materials and other expenses. Please book online here at <https://forms.office.com/e/hgy2JbUpY3?origin=lprLink> For enquiries, please contact Moses Mui, Training Coordinator at [m.mui@rcaol.org.uk](mailto:m.mui@rcaol.org.uk)

“9th Bootle and Litherland, English Martyrs Brownies, currently have spaces for any girls aged between 7 and 10 who wish to join. They meet on a Thursday evening in the Parish Hall, School Lane 6.15pm to 7.45pm.

If you wish for your daughter to join, please register their name on the following website:



[www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-parents/register-your-daughter](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-parents/register-your-daughter).

If you have any queries or questions please email: [engmartbrownies@outlook.com](mailto:engmartbrownies@outlook.com)

## 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.



## 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).

## RACIAL JUSTICE SUNDAY 2026

1 February 2026

“Whoever loves God must also love his brother” (1 John 4:21): Promoting Racial Justice in our Parishes is the theme for Racial Justice Sunday. And, in the current social political climate, the words of 1 John 4:21 resonate strongly – we are called to love all!

It is easy to be drawn into the relentless debate – in the press, in the news, on our social media – about the perceived threat differences in culture have on our society or the idea that everyone should mould to one cultural identity. How can we focus instead on loving our fellow humans because of our different cultures?

Our parishes should be places where we can all truly grow in ever-deeper knowledge and love of each other, ourselves and God.

[www.cbcew.org.uk](http://www.cbcew.org.uk)



## **MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE MASS**

Archbishop John will celebrate the Marriage and Family Life Mass at the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King on Sunday 8th February 2026 at 11:00. The Mass will include the renewal of marriage vows and a special blessing for those celebrating significant anniversaries. Refreshments will be served afterwards in the Gibberd Room. For those couples who are celebrating a significant wedding anniversary, please register online for a certificate which will be collected on the day. For more information, please contact Moses at: [m.mui@rcaol.org.uk](mailto:m.mui@rcaol.org.uk)

## **ADVENTUROUS ACCOMPANIMENT**

Do you work with people in the church, or are you interested in doing so? Have you ever thought about how can you can become an Adventurous Accompanier? Adventurous Accompaniment focuses on walking alongside people in their faith journey. It emphasises listening, presence, and empowering individuals to discover their own path, rather than directing them.

Through the journey of a 6-week programme including 3 full-day workshops, you will not only explore the core principles of accompaniment but also going in-depth to embed those principles in practice.

All costs of the programme will be covered by the archdiocese. Please register online if you are interested. Sign up here  
<https://archdioceseofliverpool.org/accompaniment>

For enquiries, please contact Moses Mui, Training Coordinator at [m.mui@rcaol.org.uk](mailto:m.mui@rcaol.org.uk)  
You will choose either one workshop for each weekend when you sign up.

## **ST HELEN'S CHURCH CROSBY**

St Helen's Church in Crosby will be putting on an extra Sunday Mass at 4pm every week.

## **·OLD AND NEW' REFLECTIONS ON THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW**

Hosted by the Irenaeus Project (Great George's Road, L22 1RD), reflections will be Wednesday mornings (10:30-12:00) the last one is on 4th February. Zoom links are available from [jenny@irenaeus.co.uk](mailto:jenny@irenaeus.co.uk)



## COME BACK TO ME WITH ALL YOUR HEART: A SILENT RETREAT

Led by Sr Moira Meeghan at the Irenaeus Centre (Great Georges Road, L22 1RD) from 18:00 Friday 20 February – 13:00 Sunday 22 February. Those interested are advised to book early:

residential places are £95, non-residential with meals is £70, non-residential (self-catering) is £30. To book and for more information please contact [jenny@irenaeus.co.uk](mailto:jenny@irenaeus.co.uk) or call 01519491199

## FEAST OF THE WEEK

### Blessed Benedict Daswa (1946-1990)

Born on 16 June 1946 in Mbahe, near Thohoyandou in Limpopo, South Africa. Raised in the traditional religion of his parents, he encountered the Catholic faith as a teenager and was baptised at the age of seventeen. Inspired by a local catechist and by Saint Benedict, he chose the name Benedict and shaped his life around the motto *ora et labora* – “pray and work”.

A devoted husband and father, Blessed Benedict made his home a true domestic church, centred on prayer, Scripture, and a deep devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. He took seriously his responsibility to pass on the faith to his children. He was also an active member of his parish, serving as a voluntary catechist, youth leader, and regularly leading Sunday services when no priest was available.

Professionally, Benedict was a school principal and a committed advocate for the welfare of his local community. His Christian faith led him to take a public stand against witchcraft and sorcery, practices that often brought fear and violence to innocent people. Knowing the risks involved, he nevertheless chose to remain faithful to the Gospel.

On 2 February 1990, he was attacked and killed for his beliefs. He left behind his wife and seven children; an eighth child was born after his death. Blessed Benedict Daswa was beatified as a martyr on 13 September 2015. He remains a powerful role model of courage, faith, and Christian family life. His feast day is celebrated today, Sunday 1st February.



## FR MICHAEL DE FELICE

Please pray for the soul of Father Michael de Felice, who died on Saturday, 17 January. He was in the 61st year of the priesthood. For many years, he was the parish priest of St Joan of Arc, Bootle.

Fr Michael was born in Fauldhouse, Scotland, on 26 May 1932. Educated in Glasgow, he later felt called to religious life and joined the Franciscans, being ordained to the priesthood in 1965. Alongside his priestly formation, he trained as a teacher and served in education and parish life in Edinburgh and London.



In 1975 he was appointed Guardian of St Mary of the Angels, Fox Street, Liverpool. After leaving the Franciscans, he was incardinated into the Archdiocese of Liverpool in 1982 by Archbishop Derek Worlock. Following parish appointments in Liverpool and Roby, he became priest-in-charge of St Joan of Arc, Bootle, in 1987, serving the parish faithfully until its closure in 2009.

Fr Michael was known as a gentle, kind and devoted parish priest, especially attentive to the sick and those who had drifted away from the Church. He was also involved in the Eldonian Village and committed to social justice.

After retirement, he continued to serve by supplying in parishes for many years. Proud of his Scottish and Italian heritage.

May he rest in peace.

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## ARCHDIOCESAN YOUNG ADULT GROUP

The Archdiocesan Young Adult Group meet fortnightly at the Pauline Book Centre (Church Street, L1 3AY) in Liverpool City Centre. Anyone aged 18-35 is most welcome.

For enquiries, please contact Moses Mui at [m.mui@rcaol.org.uk](mailto:m.mui@rcaol.org.uk).

On Tuesday 3 February (18:30-20:00), the group will be having a faith-based talk with Fr Peter McGrail. We will talk about our shared priesthood through baptism. Please register here if you are interested

<https://forms.office.com/e/vDKWdNWKLm?origin=lprLink>

*How can my love for God be shown in the way I treat others today?*

## **CIVIC MASS – SUNDAY 15 FEBRUARY**

The Dean of the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King, Liverpool, Monsignor Anthony O'Brien, has pleasure in inviting you to attend the Annual Civic Mass, celebrated by Archbishop John Sherrington. Light refreshments will be served in the Gibberd Room after Mass.

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## **LECTIO FOR YOUNG ADULTS**

Every Friday at 18:00 at St Vincent de Paul's Church, L1 5JN, there is a "lectio" prayer group for young adults.

There will be a Mass at 18:00, followed by a short time of sharing the Sunday readings at 18:30. It's a friendly group and sometimes they also organise trips and retreats.

Follow this link to join my WhatsApp community:

<https://chat.whatsapp.com/H7vBavJ4Jlm2spPNI9d2DT> If you want more information please contact James: [djmoroney@cantab.net](mailto:djmoroney@cantab.net) or 07546667394

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## **CAFOD BIG LENT WALK**

CAFOD are again running their 'Big Lent Walk' challenge to walk 200KM in 40 days to raise funds for life-saving water projects.

You can walk alone or with a group of friends or why not organise a group of parishioners?

Sign up online at [CAFOD.org.uk](http://CAFOD.org.uk)

You will also find an article in this month's Catholic Pic





## CONFIRMATION REGISTRATION IS OPEN

We encourage all young people who wish to be confirmed next year to visit the Liverpool Called website with their parents/guardians.

The details you provide the online form will be shared with the Dean of the area of which you have applied, your local parish, and the Diocesan administration team. It may be shared with other parties associated with Diocesan sacramental preparation and relevant and appropriate Diocesan bodies and authorities.



Your local parish will be in touch after registration period ends on the 13 February (you will not be contacted beforehand) with details about meetings in your local area. You will likely be contacted after Easter. Please do not worry if you are not contacted immediately. If you have any queries, please contact your own parish priest.

The information you provide will be held for the sacramental year (which ends on the day new application forms go online for the succeeding sacramental preparation year) and your contact information may be used to contact you by email, text, letter or phone. For more information on how your data may be used and our retention policy please see <https://www.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk/privacy>

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## 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

### Masses and Services for the coming week

DATE	English Martyrs	St Robert Bellarmine
<b>Sunday 1st February</b>  <b>Sanctuary Lamp</b>	<b>9.30am</b> Patricia Budgen  <b>Patricia Budgen</b>	<b>11.00am</b> People of the Parish  <b>Alice and James O'Meara</b>
<b>Monday 2nd February</b>	<b>10.00am</b> Bob Lambert & Nicola	
<b>Tuesday 3rd February</b>		<b>10.00am</b> Leila Bromilow  <b>1.00pm</b> Funeral Service Elizabeth Lawton
<b>Wednesday 4th February</b>	NO MASS	NO MASS
<b>Thursday 5th February</b>	<b>10.00am</b> Michael O'Neill	
<b>Friday 6th February</b>		<b>10.00am</b> Thomas Callaghan
<b>Saturday 7th February</b>	NO MASS	NO MASS
<b>Sunday 8th February</b>	<b>9.30am</b> People of the Parish	<b>11.00am</b> John and Violet Kelly

**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

*How can my love for God be shown in the way I treat others today?*