



Parish of St Josephine Bakhita



ENGLISH MARTYRS



PARISH PRIEST

Very Rev Canon
Mark B Madden
KCHS FRSA

ST ROBERT BELLARMINE



In this Sunday's Gospel (Matthew 5:17–37), Jesus tells us that he has not come to get rid of the Law, but to fulfil it. Then he takes things a step further. It is not enough simply not to kill; we must deal with anger. Not enough simply to avoid adultery; we must guard our thoughts and hearts. Not enough to make promises; our simple "yes" should mean yes.

Jesus is teaching us that faith is not just about rules on the outside. It is about what is happening inside us.

This week, Lent begins with Ash Wednesday. We will come forward to receive ashes on our foreheads. We hear the words, "Remember you are dust," or "Repent and believe in the Gospel." The ashes remind us that life is short and that we need God.

Lent is not about being miserable. It is about being honest. Honest about our faults. Honest about the ways we hurt others. Honest about the ways we need to grow.

Jesus wants our hearts, not just our good behaviour.

As we begin this holy season, let us ask the Lord for the courage to look within and the grace to change. Step by step, prayer by prayer, he will lead us towards Easter – and towards a deeper, truer faith.



Fr Mark

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

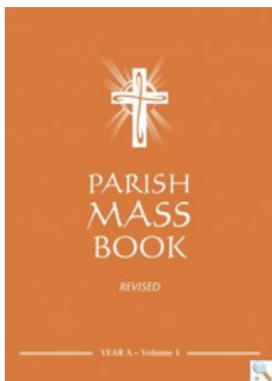


For children with incurable diseases

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...

SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME



Readings for Mass today can be found on Page 136 of the Parish Mass Book

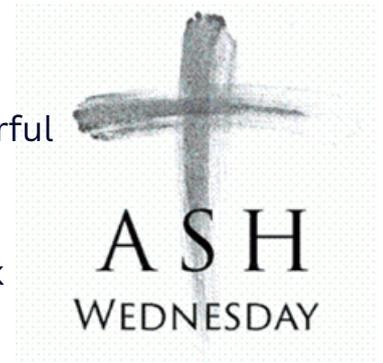
SANCTUARY LAMP



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.

ASH WEDNESDAY 2026

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent — a simple, powerful moment in the Church's year. We come forward to receive ashes on our foreheads and hear the reminder that we belong to God, that our lives are precious, and that we are called back to Him.



Lent is not about gloom; it is about grace. It is forty days to pray a little more deeply, to let go of what weighs us down, and to return to the Lord with trust. It is a fresh start.

Mass with the distribution of ashes will be celebrated at:
10:00am at St Robert Bellarmine
6:00pm at English Martyrs

Everyone is warmly welcome as we begin this Lenten journey together.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Each Friday in Lent, we walk with Jesus on the road to Calvary. The Stations of the Cross invite us not simply to remember what happened long ago, but to stand close to the Lord in His suffering love. At every fall, every encounter, every moment of pain, we see how far God is willing to go for us.

The Stations teach us that we are never alone in our own crosses. Christ has walked this path before us. When we pray the Stations, we place our struggles, our families, our parish, and our world into His wounded hands. Lent gives us this quiet space to slow down, to reflect, and to let His sacrifice shape our hearts.

The Stations of the Cross will be prayed each Friday after the 10:00am Mass at St Robert Bellarmine and on Sundays at 4:00pm at English Martyrs.

There will be some occasions when Fr Mark is unavailable. If you would be willing to lead the Stations on one of those days, please give your name to the Parish Office.

PILGRIMAGE THROUGH LENT

The Irenaeus Centre would like to invite you to a series of Lenten Evenings held on Tuesdays at 7pm on the following dates: 24 February and 3, 10, 17, 24 March.

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

If you are concerned about the safety of a child or vulnerable adult and feel they are in immediate danger, please call the police. If you wish to report any non-urgent concerns, please contact your local social services or our safeguarding team direct

or Mark Robson 0151 522 1013 / 07585761965
Claire Newton 0151 522 1043 / 07384643237 or
safeguarding@rcaol.org.uk



SVP and CAFOD WORK EXPERIENCE

The St Vincent de Paul Society and CAFOD are working together to offer a week of free residential work experience for 20 young adults in England and Wales. The experience will run from 21st – 26th June in London. Candidates must be aged 18-25 years old, but priority will be given to those in their first or second year at university. Apply here. Applications close on the 6th April. For any queries, please contact KeziaH@svp.org.uk

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

You can also donate by picking up a 'Red Box' and fill that with all your loose change. Every little helps!

Speak to either office if you would like a box



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/hgy2JbUp3?origin=lprLink> For enquiries, please contact Moses Mui, Training Coordinator at 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.

If you have any queries or questions please email: 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.



‘COME AND SEE’

On 7th March, we welcome Ronan and Joanne Johnston to lead our ‘Come & See’ day at the Irenaeus Centre, Great Georges Road L22 1RD.



Faith has been a constant inspiration in Rónán’s life, leading him to co-found the Emmaus Christian music band and community. The band has released 15 albums of worship and contemporary Christian music, and Rónán has become an international conference speaker and teacher on praise and worship.

It all began for Rónán – also affectionately known as Rojo – growing up in a musical family in Cabinteely, Co. Dublin.

“It was all about music from an early age,” Rónán says. “I played piano from the age of six and started writing songs from the age of seven. Dad and granddad were both musical, but everyone in the house played and we would sing in the car – music was part of who we were.”

Rónán is married to Joanne, a session vocalist and primary school teacher. They have two children, Naoise and Siún, and they live in Co. Wicklow where Rónán has a music studio.

GUILD OF ST STEPHEN PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES 2026

The Liverpool Archdiocesan Council of the Guild of St Stephen will do their annual pilgrimage to Lourdes in October. It is open to everybody - prices start at £650 per person, and £750 for solo travellers. For more information, please contact Rose Curry 07932 729896

Catholic Family Retreat at Castlerigg Manor // March 27-29th // £160-230 per family-

For the first time since Covid, Castlerigg Manor are bringing back their popular family retreats. There will be streams for different ages and fun activities for everybody including Mass in the evening and time to explore Keswick. For more info >> castleriggmanor.com >> events

May Half Term B&B Stays at Castlerigg Manor - In May half-term, Castlerigg Manor (Catholic retreat centre in Keswick, Cumbria) will once again be opening their doors for B&B stays. A great way for families, groups of friends, and individuals to get an affordable stay in Keswick. Mass will be provided on site. For more info >> castleriggmanor.com >> stay with us

CAFOD Lent Appeal – Family Fast Day collection



This Lent, live out the Gospel call to love your neighbour. By fasting and giving what you save, you join in Christ's compassion and help another family put food on the table. Your donation can help families around the world grow food in difficult conditions – such as on flood-resistant floating gardens or using solar-powered water pumps in times of drought.



Collect a CAFOD envelope to bless others with your support, donate online at cafod.org.uk/envelope or call 0303 303 3030. Text CAFODLENT to 70085 to donate £10.

ADVENTUROUS ACCOMPANIMENT

Do you work with people in the church, or are you interested in doing so? Have you ever thought about how 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. You will choose either one workshop for each weekend when you sign up.

IRENAEUS CENTRE

Irenaeus are again asking for help with donations. They are in desperate need of all personal cleansing products e.g. soaps, shampoo, women's' items, etc plus tinned and packet food and cereals. They are also asking for warm coats, hats, scarves and gents socks

The box for donations is still at the back of St Robert's if you can please help

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 or call 01519491199

FREE CHILDREN'S CHOIRS – OPEN TO ALL CHILDREN IN YEARS 2–8!

Exciting opportunities for young singers to join a Catholic children's choir in your area! Open to all children in school years 2 to 8, our choirs offer free musical training led by DBS-certified musicians from the Archdiocese of Liverpool.

Rehearsal Information:

- Knowsley Catholic Children's Choir - Wednesdays, 4–5pm
Space Centre, St Columba's Catholic Primary School, Hillside Road, Huyton, L36 8BL
- Widnes Catholic Children's Choir - Mondays, 4–5pm
St John Fisher Parish Centre, 55 Moorfield Rd, Widnes, WA8 3JA
- Liverpool Catholic Children's Choir (Central) – New from March 2026! - Mondays, 4:30–5:30pm
Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral, Mount Pleasant, Liverpool, L3 5TQ
- Liverpool Catholic Children's Choir (South) – New from March 2026! - Tuesdays, 5–6pm
St Mary's Church – Parish Hall, Church Rd, Liverpool, L25 5JF

Choir members will have the chance to perform locally and further afield, developing their musical skills while enjoying a fun, supportive environment.

Sign up here:

<https://liverpoolmetrocathedral.us8.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=7578a4f8bc41ae198517aea33&id=34918afeaf>

Carlo Acutis: First Class Relic and Exhibition of Eucharistic Miracles

Our Lady and All Saints Church, Parbold (Lancaster Lane, WN8 7HS) are privileged to be able to host a First Class Relic of Saint Carlo Acutis for nine days in February.

At the same time, they will hold an exhibition of 30 Eucharistic miracles he curated. Each miracle will be displayed alongside historical details and scientific analysis. The Exhibition will be in the adjacent Our Lady and All Saints school (Brandreth Drive, Parbold WN8 7HB) – a short walk from the church. Both events will run from Saturday 14th to Sunday 22nd February and opening times are:
Saturdays and Sundays: 11:30am to 3:00pm
Monday to Friday: 11:30am to 3:00pm and 5:00pm to 7:00pm.

There is parking and accessibility at both locations and exhibition notes, prayer cards and children's activities will be available at the exhibition. (All children must be accompanied by an adult).

Contact details are (01257) 463248, email: parbold@hotmail.com, or via the parish website: www.ourladysparbol.org.uk



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.

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>

FEAST OF THE WEEK**St Robert Southwell (1561-1595)**

Although born in Norfolk, Robert Southwell spent part of his boyhood in Sussex among strong Catholic families. At just fifteen he was sent to Douai and later to Paris. Before he was seventeen, he had resolved to become a Jesuit. With war preventing him from entering the novitiate in the Low Countries, he walked to Rome and was accepted there. Ordained in 1584, he served for a time at the Venerable English College, but longed to return to England.



He came back in 1586 and worked secretly as a priest during a time of intense persecution. A gifted writer, he strengthened imprisoned Catholics, including St Philip Howard, through his letters, later published as *An Epistle of Comfort*. His poem *The Burning Babe* remains widely known.

Betrayed in 1592, Southwell was arrested by the priest-hunter Richard Topcliffe. He was tortured repeatedly and imprisoned in harsh conditions for nearly three years. Refusing to betray others, he was eventually tried simply for being a priest in England and condemned to death.

On 21 February 1595 he was executed at Tyburn. Before he died, he prayed for the Queen and for the conversion of his country. Canonised in 1970 among the Forty Martyrs of England and Wales, he remains a powerful witness to courage, faith and forgiveness.

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 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>

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
Sunday 15th February Sanctuary Lamp	9.30am Elsie Smartt Joe Mulhaney	11.00am People of the parish Deceased members of the Devonald family
Monday 16th February	10.00am Paul Murphy	
Tuesday 17th February		10.00am Sheila Morley
Wednesday 18th February Ash Wednesday	6.00pm Perpetual Mass List	10.00am Eileen and Eugene Callaghan
Thursday 19th February	10.00am John Fairclough	
Friday 20th February		10.00am Leila Bromilow
Saturday 21st February	NO MASS	NO MASS
Sunday 22nd February	9.30am People of the Parish	11.00am Mark Smith

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