



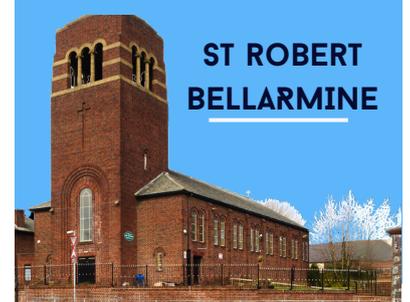
Parish of St Josephine Bakhita



ENGLISH MARTYRS

PARISH PRIEST

Very Rev Canon
Mark B Madden
KCHS FRSA



**ST ROBERT
BELLARMINE**

This Sunday of Lent is known as Laetare Sunday. The word Laetare means rejoice. In the middle of our Lenten journey, the Church gives us a moment of encouragement and joy as we look forward to Easter.

The Gospel tells the story of Jesus healing the man who was born blind. At first, it seems to be simply a story about sight. A man who could not see is given the gift of sight. But the real message goes deeper.

As the story unfolds, the man begins to see more and more clearly who Jesus is. At first he calls him “the man called Jesus.” Later he says that Jesus is a prophet. Finally, he recognises him as the Son of Man and worships him. His eyes are opened not only physically, but spiritually.

On the same day, we also celebrate Mother’s Day. It is a day when we give thanks for the love, care and sacrifices of mothers and all who show us that kind of love.

In many ways, mothers help us to see. They teach us how to live, how to care for others, and how to recognise what really matters. They help us see the world with kindness and compassion.

Laetare Sunday reminds us that God is always opening our eyes. Even in the middle of Lent – a season of prayer, sacrifice and reflection – there is joy. Christ is gently leading us from darkness into light.

As Easter draws nearer, we pray for the grace to see clearly: to recognise God’s love in our lives, to be grateful for those who care for us, and to walk forward with joyful hearts.

Fr Mark

Where in my life might Jesus be trying to open my eyes — helping me to see something, or someone, in a new way?

PLEASE OFFER YOUR PRAYERS FOR THOSE PARISHIONERS WHO ARE CURRENTLY ILL



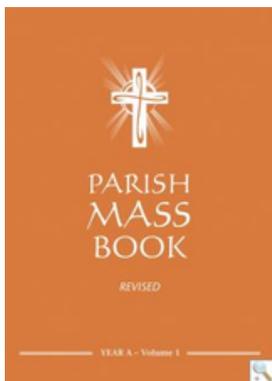
Mary Spofforth
Michael Lundon
Margaret Spencer
Peter Gibbons

POPE'S PRAYER INTENTION FOR MARCH



For disarmament and peace

Let us pray that nations move toward effective disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, and that world leaders choose the path of dialogue and diplomacy instead of violence.
Lord in your mercy...



FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

Readings for Mass today can be found on Page 164 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.

TUESDAY 17 MARCH

Please note - there will be no mass on Tuesday morning at St Robert's

Where in my life might Jesus be trying to open my eyes — helping me to see something, or someone, in a new way?

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.

Please note, that Fr Mark is not available for Stations of the Cross today but we do have a volunteer to lead so please come along at 4pm. Stations will be prayed on Friday 10.30am at St Robert Bellarmine.

FEAST OF THE WEEK

St Joseph

Nothing is known of St Joseph except what is said of him in the Gospels. He was a carpenter; he accepted the will of God; and he supported Mary and brought up Jesus. From the human character of his son we can see that he was a good and responsible father. He is widely venerated as a patron of artisans who honourably do good work with the gifts God has given them, and of workers in general. To those who exercise the role of an adoptive parent, whether formally or informally, whether over one child or as the support of a whole family, he is a source of inspiration.



St Joseph is given two feast days. The primary feast is celebrated on Thursday.

NEWMAN ASSOCIATION TALK: ADVENTUROUS ACCOMPANIMENT - THE UNIVERSAL CALL March 19th 7.30PM St Helen, Alexandra Road, Crosby, L23 7TG

Kate Wilkinson, CEO of Million Minutes, will lead the latest Newman Association Talk on the universal call of Adventurous Accompaniment. All are very welcome to attend.

Where in my life might Jesus be trying to open my eyes — helping me to see something, or someone, in a new way?

CENTRING PRAYER DAY - SATURDAY 21st MARCH

Led by Fr Richard Sloan, this day focuses on teaching and practice of this beautiful way of silent, simple, meditation prayer in the presence of God, lovingly active within you.

Saturday 21st March, 10am – 4pm in St Teresa’s Church, Norris Green, L11 3BW including simple lunch.

No charge: places must be booked by contacting: st.teresasng@rcaol.org.uk

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 directly 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



Where in my life might Jesus be trying to open my eyes — helping me to see something, or someone, in a new way?

ENGLISH MARTYRS JOSPICE "200 CLUB" MARCH DRAW

1st £20 No. 192 L Smith
2nd £15 No. 105 L Smith
3rd £10 No. 14 A Smith
4th £10 No. 166 M Dickinson



There are still spare numbers available for anyone wishing to join, £1 per month. Please contact Myra: 928 1136

PAX CHRISTI - 'NONVIOLENCE: A radical approach to peacemaking in our troubled world'

You are invited to 'NONVIOLENCE: A radical approach to peacemaking in our troubled world' with Nicolas Paz, Director of the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative, on Monday 16th March at the Quaker Meeting House, School Lane, Liverpool, L1 3BT at 6.00pm (tea and coffee) for a 6.30pm start. The meeting is part of a national speaking tour organised by Pax Christi.

Contact : Jan Harper 07591 082195

LENTEN ALMS

During Lent the Church invites us to grow closer to God through prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Almsgiving reminds us to care for those who are most in need. A Lenten Alms collection will be available in the parish throughout the season. Any donations received will go towards supporting charitable work and helping those who are struggling.

Thank you, as always, for your generosity and kindness.

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.



NUGENT SUNDAY 2026

“Love your neighbour as yourself” (Mark 12:31)

As we continue our Lenten journey, we kindly remind our parishes and parishioners that Nugent Collection Sunday takes place this weekend.



This year’s appeal invites us to put into action Jesus’ call to love our neighbour by supporting those within our communities who are most in need. Through your generosity, Nugent is able to continue offering practical support to people facing homelessness, young care leavers, families experiencing poverty, and those escaping domestic violence.

Every prayer, every donation, and every act of kindness helps us continue the mission begun by Fr James Nugent, serving our neighbours across the Archdiocese of Liverpool.

HAPPY MOTHER’S DAY!

Mother’s Day in the UK always falls on Laetare Sunday, the Sunday in the middle of Lent when the Church pauses for a moment of encouragement and quiet joy. Even in the penitential season of Lent, the Church reminds us that hope is always close at hand.



It is fitting that Mother’s Day comes on this Sunday. Mothers are often the ones who quietly bring light, hope and encouragement into our lives. Through countless small acts of love – meals prepared, worries shared, prayers whispered, patience shown – mothers reflect something of the gentle care of God.

Many of us can look back and recognise that the faith we carry today was first nurtured by a mother, grandmother, or another woman who cared for us. Perhaps it was a simple prayer learned at bedtime, being brought to Mass each Sunday, or seeing someone live their faith with kindness and generosity.

Motherhood, in all its forms, is a vocation of love. It asks for sacrifice, patience and deep generosity of heart. It mirrors the love of Mary, the Mother of Jesus, who quietly trusted God and accompanied her Son even to the foot of the Cross.

On this special day, we give thanks for all mothers: those who are with us, those who have died, and those who show a mother’s love in many different ways. We pray that God will bless them, strengthen them, and reward their love.

EASTER BINGO AND RAFFLE



Easter Bingo will take place on Wednesday 25 March in English Martyrs Parish Hall. Doors open at 6.30pm for 'eyes down' at 7pm.

Tickets for bingo and raffle on sale at back of church. Last year was a sell out so get your tickets asap! Cost for both is just £1

Entry to Bingo will be ticket only

Donations for prizes would be greatly appreciated

HELP US TO SHAPE A VISION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUR CHURCH

We are currently reviewing youth ministry across our archdiocese, and we need your insight, enthusiasm, and ideas to help us live out the pastoral plan and become a Church where young people and young adults flourish.

Everyone is welcome and has a valued voice. Whether you are young or old, lay or ordained, a parent, carer or grandparent, have experience of working with young people or not. If you bring creativity, faith, enthusiasm, or simply a desire to help guide and shape the future of your local Church, then please join us and share your thoughts.

We especially want to hear from young people.

If you are in Year Seven or above, please come along- **YOUR CHURCH NEEDS YOU!** Come along to ONE of our open meeting on **TUESDAY 21ST APRIL 7 - 9.30pm St Monica's Fernhill Road, Bootle, Merseyside, L20 9GA**

For more information, contact Sarah McGeehan on s.mcgeehan@rcaol.org.uk or 07415099048.

LENT TALKS AT ST FRANCIS XAVIER

Join us for weekly sessions each Monday during Lent for a talk from Fr Chris McCoy on Lent. We will be discussing the meaning of Lent, how to make sense of Holy Week, and the Resurrection. The next session, "Running the Wrong Way: Making Sense of Holy Week", will be on Monday 16 March at 7-8pm.

A PRACTICAL WAY TO LIVE THE FOURTH WEEK OF LENT

The Fourth Sunday of Lent, Laetare Sunday, is a moment of joy in the middle of our Lenten journey. The word Laetare means rejoice. Even while we continue our prayer, fasting and charity, the Church reminds us that Lent is leading us toward the joy of Easter. A simple way to live this week is to practice gratitude and encouragement.

The Gospel of this Sunday tells the story of the man born blind whose eyes are opened by Jesus. Lent invites us to ask the Lord to open our own eyes – to see the good that is already around us.

During this week, try one small, practical step each day:

- Notice the good. Take a few moments each evening to thank God for one blessing you experienced that day.
- Encourage someone. A kind word, a message, or a small act of help can bring light into someone's life.
- Pray with the Gospel. Spend five minutes reading the story of the man born blind (John 9) and ask Jesus to help you see more clearly.
- Show gratitude. As we celebrate Mother's Day this weekend, take time to thank those who have cared for you and helped shape your life.

Lent does not only ask us to give things up. It also invites us to grow in joy, gratitude and kindness.

This week, ask the Lord for the grace to see with new eyes – to recognise his presence in everyday moments and to share that light with others.

CONTINUING ALONG THE PATH OF SYNODALITY

Pope Leo has invited us to continue to embrace the journey of synodality recognising that 'our relationships do not respond to the logic of power but to that of love.' As we journey through Eastertime towards the great feast of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost we have an opportunity to reflect on the document that came from the final session of the Synod on Synodality called by Pope Francis that Pope Leo is now urging us to embrace at every level in the life of the Church.

Tuesday evenings 21, 28 April, 5, 12, 19 May, 7pm to 8.30pm

To join the zoom meeting:

Meeting ID: 899 8355 5285

Passcode: 981267

LENTEN PRACTICES

Lent has a very particular feel to it – and that is quite deliberate.

From Ash Wednesday, the Church gently changes her tone. The sanctuary looks simpler. The rubrics are clear; flowers disappear, and we won't see any until Easter, although some pink flowers are allowed on the 4th Sunday. The Gloria falls silent. Even the music becomes more restrained and can only be used if it includes people singing. It can feel a little stark at first – especially if we're used to colour and celebration – but this simplicity is not about gloom. It is about focus.

The absence of flowers is not because beauty doesn't matter. It is because we are creating space. Just as we might clear a room before beginning something important, the Church clears away what is decorative so that we can concentrate on what is essential: prayer, repentance, and renewal. When the flowers return at Easter, they will speak all the more powerfully of resurrection and joy.

You may also notice that the Gloria is not sung during Lent (except on certain feasts), and the word "Alleluia" disappears entirely from the liturgy until the Easter Vigil. Music remains an important part of our worship, but it is simpler and more reflective. The organ is used more sparingly. Silence is allowed to breathe. All of this helps us enter more deeply into this sacred season.

Lent is not meant to be miserable. It is meant to be intentional. The Church, like a wise mother, adjusts the environment so that our hearts can adjust too.

Over these forty days, may the simplicity of our liturgy help us rediscover what truly matters – and prepare us to rejoice with full hearts when Easter dawns.



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.

MISSIONARIES OF CHARITY: CARRYING OF THE CROSS - SATURDAY 28 MARCH

The annual Carrying of the Cross will take place on Saturday 28 March 2026 at 2PM. Led by Fr Peter Ross of St Bede's Parish, Widnes, we will begin from Church Street, passing through Bold Street and finishing at St Luke's Church (bombed out church), and will be followed by a short service.

Please join us from 1:45pm at the junction of Church Street and Lord Street, Liverpool for a 2pm prompt start.

You are very welcome to join. We also need stewards – if you would like to steward, please contact Jim Ross on email: jimmy.ross7@gmail.com

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



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: 17, 24 March.

EASTER RAFFLE

St Robert's are holding an Easter Raffle and tickets will be on sale at the back of church this weekend.



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

CATHOLIC PIC

March Catholic Pic is now available. Fr Mark has an article included – 'A Land Wounded – A people of Hope' following his recent trip to the Holy Land

Masses and Services for the coming week

DATE	English Martyrs	St Robert Bellarmine
Sunday 15th March Sanctuary Lamp	9.30am Bridget McDermott Kitty & Tom Murphy	11.00am People of the Parish Moira Hanton
Monday 16th March	10.00am Peter Cherry	
Tuesday 17th March		NO MASS
Wednesday 18th March	NO MASS	NO MASS
Thursday 19th March	10.00am Peter Wynne	
Friday 20th March		10.00am Thanksgiving - Sheini's birthday 11.45am Funeral service Joan Ward
Saturday 21st March	NO MASS	NO MASS
Sunday 22nd March	9.30am People of the Parish	11.00am Moira Hanton

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
 Orrell Road, Bootle, L20 6DZ

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

Where in my life might Jesus be trying to open my eyes — helping me to see something, or someone, in a new way?