



Parish of St Josephine Bakhita

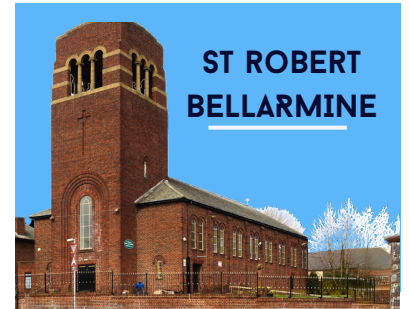


ENGLISH MARTYRS



PARISH PRIEST

Very Rev Canon
Mark B Madden
KCHS FRSA



**ST ROBERT
BELLARMINE**

This Sunday's Gospel tells the familiar parable of the sower. The seed is always good. The difference lies not in the generosity of the sower but in the condition of the soil on which it falls. Jesus invites each of us to ask a simple but important question: what sort of soil am I?

This weekend is a joyful one for our parish. We warmly welcome Salameh, a seminarian from the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, who will spend the coming weeks with us. We are also delighted to welcome Archbishop John, together with the Knights and Dames of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem. Their presence reminds us that our faith unites us with Christians throughout the world, especially in the land where Jesus lived, died and rose again.

I have just returned from spending the past week near Bethlehem, attending the ordination of three new priests and visiting the Latin Patriarchate Seminary. It was inspiring to witness the faith and hope of those preparing for the priesthood, particularly the young boys of the newly reopened Minor Seminary, who are beginning to discern God's call.

Yet alongside that hope, I also saw the painful reality facing the Christian community. After almost three years without pilgrims, many family businesses have closed, unemployment remains painfully high, and there is little sign of an immediate recovery. The Holy Places remain, but the living stones, the Christian people, continue to struggle to remain in the land of Christ's birth.

The seed of faith first took root in the Holy Land, and despite enormous hardship it continues to bear fruit through the courage and perseverance of its people. As we reflect on today's Gospel, may our hearts be good soil for God's word. Let's continue to pray for peace, support our brothers and sisters in the Holy Land in every way we can, and never forget that they remain an essential part of the universal Church. May our prayers, generosity and friendship help keep hope alive until pilgrims can once again return in greater numbers.

Fr Mark

What kind of soil is my heart at the moment, and what can I do this week to help God's word grow more deeply within me?

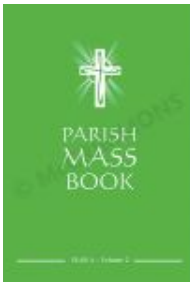
Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time 12 July 2026

PLEASE OFFER YOUR PRAYERS FOR THOSE PARISHIONERS WHO ARE CURRENTLY ILL



Mary Spofforth
Michael Lundon
Margaret Spencer
Peter Gibbons

Esther Gibbons



FIFTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Readings for Mass today can be found on Page 102 of the Parish Mass Book

POPE'S PRAYER INTENTION FOR JULY

For respect for human life
Let us pray for the respect and protection of human life in all its stages, recognizing it as a gift from God.

Lord in your mercy...



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SAFEGUARDING

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 you can contact our safeguarding team direct- Ring Mark Robson 0151 522 1013 / 07585761965 or Claire Newton 0151 522 1043 / 07384643237, or email - safeguarding@rcaol.org.uk

FRIENDS OF THE HOLY LAND – LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEER AMBASSADORS

Friends of the Holy Land are looking for volunteer ambassadors to speak up to 8 times per year at Catholic parishes, schools and colleges. To apply, please contact the team by email office@friendsoftheholylan.org.uk, telephone 01926 512980, or contact Edmund Adamus, Advocacy and Engagement Manager on Edmund.adamus@friendsoftheholylan.org.uk.


Friends of
the Holy Land

Volunteer Ambassador

**Do you have room in your heart for
Christians suffering in the Holy Land?**

- Will you take a practical step in response to the devastating news reports of the catastrophe unfolding every day in the land where Jesus walked?
- Will you speak on behalf of your brothers and sisters in the founding communities of our faith, largely forgotten in this conflict?

What We Ask of You

- A commitment to deliver up to 8 talks a year in Catholic parishes
- Willingness to deliver presentations to Catholic schools/colleges to help raise awareness of our work and inspire fundraising activity among young people

 Be a voice for the forgotten in our Mother Church



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SALAMEH AZAR

Welcome home to Fr Mark and Salameh!

Salameh is 26 years old and comes from the town of Beit Jala, situated just outside Bethlehem. He is currently studying for the priesthood for the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem and is looking forward to spending some time with us here in the parish.



Salameh will remain with us until the final week of July. During his visit, he hopes to experience the life of the Church outside the Holy Land, improve his English, and enjoy a period of rest and relaxation before continuing his formation for the priesthood.

God willing, Salameh will be ordained to the Diaconate shortly before Christmas as he enters the final stages of preparation for his priestly ordination, hopefully in the Summer of 2027. We are privileged to accompany him for a small part of that journey and to support him with our friendship and prayers.

His visit is also a reminder of some of the realities faced by Palestinians in the Holy Land. Although Salameh lives less than an hour from Tel Aviv Airport, he is not permitted to travel through it. Instead, he and Fr Mark will have to travel into Jordan and fly from Amman, adding an extra day or two to their journey. It is one of the many practical difficulties that affect everyday life for Palestinians.

Over the ten years that Fr Mark has served in Litherland, the parish has welcomed many seminarians and priests from the Holy Land. Many parishioners will remember meeting them, sharing stories with them, and supporting them with prayers and friendship. Salameh will be the last seminarian to visit the parish before Fr Mark moves to St Paul's, West Derby, in September, making this visit particularly special.

The Christian community in the Holy Land faces many challenges, and opportunities such as this are both valuable and encouraging for seminarians preparing for ministry. We hope that Salameh will feel at home among us and will take away happy memories of his time in Liverpool.

Please join us in extending a warm welcome to Salameh when he arrives. Keep him in your prayers as he continues his journey towards ordination, and please make him feel very much part of our parish family during his stay.

What kind of soil is my heart at the moment, and what can I do this week to help God's word grow more deeply within me? Page 4

FR MARK ANNIVERSARY

On Monday 13th July Fr Mark reaches an amazing milestone in his priestly life. On that day he will celebrate 30 years since his ordination. The Parish Mass on that day will be at 10am in English Martyrs school and will be for those children in Year 6 who will be leaving us for High School in September. Parishioners are invited to attend. The Mass will be held in the new Prayer Garden (weather permitting!) to enable Fr Mark to bless the lovely new worshipful place in school.

St Robert's leavers mass is on the same day at 1.30pm and is for the Year 6 children and parents.

Ad Multos Annos Fr Mark!



Congratulations!

Save The Date: Adventurous Accompaniment Day Workshop - 19 September at St Margaret Clitherow Centre

"In the relationship of accompaniment, [we] are provided a space in which [we] can come to deeply know the love of Jesus Christ through friendship, guidance, and authenticity..." Whether you are new to the concept of accompaniment, or regularly incorporate it, this workshop is for you. There is no cost and we would just ask that you bring your own lunch.

Sign up here <https://forms.office.com/e/9zxSLAndhm>

For enquiries, please contact Moses Mui, Training Coordinator at m.mui@rcaol.org.uk

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time 12 July 2026

ANNUAL ARCHDIOCESAN LOURDES MASS

Annual Lourdes Mass - Sunday 19 July

All are welcome to bring petitions to the annual Lourdes Mass taking place at 3pm in the Metropolitan Cathedral.

Archbishop John Sherrington will be the celebrant.

Following Mass, all petitions will be packaged and taken to Lourdes with the Archdiocese of Liverpool pilgrimage this year.



PETITIONS FOR
Lourdes

Bring the prayers and intentions of your parish to our Annual Lourdes Mass.

 **SUNDAY
19TH JULY**

 **3:00 PM**

 **IN THE
CATHEDRAL**

Following Mass, all petitions will be packaged and taken to Lourdes with the Archdiocese of Liverpool pilgrimage this year.

 Please collect petitions from your parish community and bring them with you.

Together in prayer, united in hope.



FLAME

The archdiocese is organising a trip to FLAME - the largest Catholic youth event in the country where 10,000 young people gather together at Wembley Arena to listen to speakers, pray and praise.

It is open to young people in Year 9 and above. If you're interested in bringing a group of young people, please contact Sarah McGeehan on s.mcgeehan@rcaol.org.uk or 07415099048.

Please note: young people must be accompanied by a teacher, youth leader or chaplain.

More information: <https://cymfed.org.uk/flame/>

WHAT'S ON AT IRENAEUS PAUL, AN APOSTLE OF OUR TIME

Scripture sharing with strawberries and cream.
Tuesdays 7pm, 14 July 2026 at the Irenaeus Centre, L22 1RD. zoom link available
centreirenaeus@gmail.com

AGAPE MASS

7pm Thursdays 6th August '26



What kind of soil is my heart at the moment, and what can I do this week to help God's word grow more deeply within me?

FEAST OF THE WEEK

Blessed John Sugar, Priest, and Robert Grissold

On 16 July, we commemorate Blessed John Sugar and Blessed Robert Grissold, two of the English Martyrs who gave their lives for the Catholic faith during the persecution following the Reformation.

Blessed John Sugar was born in Warwickshire and was ordained a priest abroad before returning to England to minister secretly to Catholics. Knowing the danger he faced, he continued to celebrate the Mass and bring the sacraments to the faithful.



Blessed Robert Grissold was a layman, a husband and father, who generously offered shelter and support to Fr Sugar. Both men were arrested, tried, and executed together at Warwick in 1604. Their courage and steadfast faith remind us that holiness is not limited to priests or religious but is the calling of every baptised Christian.



Beatified in 1987 as one of the Eighty-Five Martyrs of England and Wales, they remain inspiring witnesses to fidelity, courage, and unwavering trust in Christ, even in the face of persecution. May their example encourage us to remain faithful to our own calling and to witness to the Gospel with quiet confidence and love.

RETREAT DAY – FRANCIS: A SAINT FOR TODAY? - SATURDAY 1st AUGUST

with Hazel Bradley of the L'Arche Community - 9.30am for a 10am start, finishing 4pm. At St Joseph's Prayer Centre, Blundell Avenue, Freshfield, Formby, L37 1PH. Sign up here: <https://forms.office.com/e/r1T8RkZshD>

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SUMMER FAITH CHALLENGE

Most of us know that physical fitness requires regular exercise. The same is true of our spiritual lives. Faith grows stronger when it is nourished by prayer, Scripture and acts of charity. A few minutes each day can make a real difference.

Over this Ordinary Time of the Church year, why not choose one simple spiritual habit and practise it each day?

Read a few verses of the Gospel.

Spend five minutes in prayer before bed.

Visit church for a few moments of quiet prayer.

Pray a decade of the Rosary.

Thank God each day for one blessing you have received.

Reach out to someone who may be lonely or in need.

Small acts of faith, practised faithfully, can make a big difference. Which one will you choose this summer?

VOLUNTEER YOUR TEACHING TALENT

Are you a retired or part time qualified teacher? You could be part of the Cathedral's Education Service team! Come and help hundreds of school children and young people learn about this wonderful Cathedral.

Contact education@metcathedral.org.uk for more information.

ENGLISH MARTYRS PENSIONERS CLUB

The group are looking for new members. It is a lovely few hours each Tuesday afternoon with bingo, refreshments and some wonderful company. If you are interested just call into the hall any Tuesday to have a chat with the group

All are welcome!

What kind of soil is my heart at the moment, and what can I do this week to help God's word grow more deeply within me?

STRATEGIC PLANNING CONSULTATION

There are a number of ways in which you can respond to the two current proposals from the Strategic Planning Group:

- Complete the online response form using the QR code or web address provided in the consultation leaflet, available at the back of church.
- Write your comments on a sheet of paper and place them in the consultation box at the back of church.
- Leave a Post-it note with your comments on the consultation poster.

This period of consultation will end in mid September.

CAFOD-DEC Venezuela Earthquake Appeal

On Wednesday 24 June, two catastrophic earthquakes struck near Caracas in Venezuela within seconds of each other. Buildings collapsed in minutes, leaving widespread destruction across the country.



Thanks to our supporters, we have allocated £100,000 to our trusted Church partners in Venezuela to help provide emergency water, food and hygiene kits to people affected by the earthquakes.

You can help our neighbours affected by the 24 June earthquakes in Venezuela with emergency shelter, water and food. CAFOD is already working with local Church partners to support people who have lost their homes, but we need your support to help more survivors. Your donation will provide essential supplies and help families rebuild their lives.

Donate to the CAFOD-DEC Venezuela Earthquake Appeal today: cafod.org.uk/Venezuela or call 0300 999 0030 or scan the QR code.

Please keep our neighbours in Venezuela in your prayers.



Crafting the Word of the Lord

An exhibition of knitted Bible scenes created by Francesca Vause will be on display at Our Lady & All Saints Church, Parbold, WN8 7HS, from Monday 7 to Friday 11 September.

The exhibition is free to visit and all are welcome.

Opening times

Monday: 11.00am - 3.00pm

Tuesday: 3.30pm - 6.00pm

Wednesday: 11.00am - 3.00pm

Thursday: 11.30am - 4.00pm

Friday: 11.00am - 3.00pm

Free entry and parking on site.

Enquiries: parbold@hotmail.com



WeBelieve Festival– 24 - 27 July, St Mary's College, Oscott

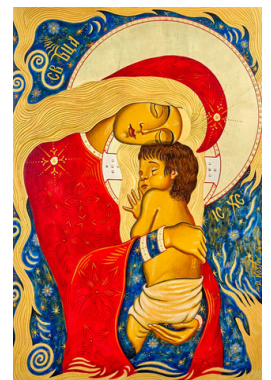
WeBelieve festival brings thousands together to encounter Jesus Christ in His Church. it's an unmissable opportunity to discover the traditions and charisms that flow through the Church, to grow in authentic community, and to encounter the transforming love of God.

Tickets: <https://www.webeliefefestival.com/tickets>

A MOTHER'S WARMTH: ICON EXHIBITION AT THE METROPOLITAN CATHEDRAL 30 JUNE – 30 AUGUST

The Metropolitan Cathedral will be hosting Mother's Warmth, an exhibition by Bulgarian artist and iconographer ian Kostov. Through contemporary artwork inspired by the image of the Virgin Mary as Mother, the exhibition considers how compassion and care for one another can bring hope and healing in a divided world.

Admission free.



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ST BENET'S CHAPEL

If you are interested in helping to conserve and celebrate the gift of St Benet's in Netherton, an initial meeting will take place on: Monday 13th July at 4.00pm in the Chapel.

We will be joined by representatives of the Archdiocese, who will explain the conditions attached to the return of the chapel by the Historic Chapels Trust. These conditions form part of the Deed of Covenant which must be honoured.

The meeting will also provide an opportunity to look around the chapel and begin discussing an initial vision for its future, including both restoration work and the long-term sustainability of St Benet's as an historic Catholic building serving the local community.

All are welcome. St Benet's Chapel, Chapel Lane, Netherton

CATHOLIC MEDICAL ASSOCIATION UK

Are you a doctor, nurse, healthcare student, or allied health professional? The Catholic Medical Association UK invites Catholics working in healthcare to join a growing community of fellowship, prayer and formation.

The Association supports healthcare professionals in living out their faith and vocation, while providing opportunities to connect with others working in the medical and healthcare professions.

Find out more about membership and upcoming events at catholicmedicalassociation.org.uk

Due to the growing need to support Catholic patients at the Royal Liverpool University Hospital and Broadgreen Hospital, the Chaplaincy Management invites kind and caring individuals to join the Catholic hospital volunteer team.

This apostolate involves listening, praying, bringing Holy Communion to patients, and offering a comforting Catholic presence.

To get started: Contact the Catholic Chaplaincy at the Royal Hospital via the Chaplaincy Office on 0151 706 2828 or email the Lead Chaplain at faustinus.ugwuanyi@rlbuht.nhs.uk.

Masses and Services for the coming week

DATE	English Martyrs	St Robert Bellarmine
Sunday 12th July Sanctuary Lamp	9.30am Margaret Willcox Patrick and Mary Donaldson	11.00am People of the Parish and Mass of Welcome Noreen
Monday 13th July	10.00am Private intention (MM)	
Tuesday 14th July		10.00am Rita Knight
Wednesday 15th July		
Thursday 16th July	10.00am Steve Mercer	
Friday 17th July		10.00am Kevin Molloy
Saturday 18th July	NO MASS	NO MASS
Sunday 19th July	9.30am People of the Parish	11.15am Rita Morgan

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

What kind of soil is my heart at the moment, and what can I do this week to help God's word grow more deeply within me?