



Parish of St Josephine Bakhita



ENGLISH MARTYRS



PARISH PRIEST

Rev Fr
Anthony Roger Afaako

ST ROBERT BELLARMINE



Settling into this amazing Parish this past week has been a bit like learning the parish's secret rhythm.

I'm still discovering which light switch controls what, and yesterday I accidentally set off the house alarm, which I'm convinced has a mind of its own. But in all of this, your warmth has made the transition a grace-filled joy.

On this 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time, the readings invite us to reflect on the themes of mercy and forgiveness. In Sirach, we hear that if we cherish anger, how can we expect our prayers to be heard? It's a bit like showing up to a potluck dinner empty-handed while expecting the best dish - it just doesn't work!

In the Gospel, Peter generously suggests forgiving seven times, thinking he's the gold-star student of mercy. But Jesus, in His divine wit, answers not just seven times but seventy times seven! Maybe Peter was confused; perhaps he thought the divine calculator had gone haywire! Forgiveness, friends, isn't about tallying scores; it's about freeing ourselves from the shackles of bitterness.

Remember, forgiveness isn't a favour we do for others; it's an act of love to ourselves. It's like letting go of a hot coal! Forgiveness is not weakness; it is strength. It is the quiet courage to say, "I will not let hurt define me."

This week, let's let go of some bitterness, perhaps starting with small things. Let's pray for big hearts, good laughs, and, occasionally, a little help with directions. Amen.

Fr Anthony

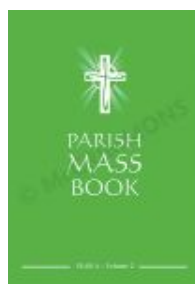
Twenty Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time 13 September 2026

PLEASE OFFER YOUR PRAYERS FOR THOSE PARISHIONERS WHO ARE CURRENTLY ILL



Mary Spofforth
Michael Lundon
Margaret Spencer
Peter Gibbons

Esther Gibbons
John Wilkinson
John Power



TWENTY FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Readings for Mass today can be found on Page 128 of the Parish Mass Book

POPE'S PRAYER INTENTION FOR SEPTEMBER



For the care of water

Let us pray for a just and sustainable management of water, a vital resource, so that everyone may have equal access to it.

Lord in your mercy

EVENING PRAYER WITH THE APOSTOLIC NUNCIO - Sunday 13 September at 3pm

All are invited to assemble as our archdiocesan family at the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King on Sunday 13 September at 3pm for the culmination of the Apostolic Nuncio's visit to the archdiocese.

This date coincides with the 175th anniversary of the establishment of the Metropolitan Chapter of Liverpool. The celebration will take the form of Evening Prayer sung in the Cathedral. There will be a drinks reception following in the Cathedral crypt..

A Little About Me – Fr Anthony Roger Afaako

Hello everyone!

Please forgive me for taking a little while to properly introduce myself! I suppose I have been busy finding my feet and perhaps finding my way around the parish too!



I am Fr Anthony Roger Afaako, born on 1 March 1977 in Elmina, a beautiful coastal town in Ghana. Although Ghana is my birthplace, I spent much of my childhood and adult life in Nigeria, particularly in Ondo, Kwara and Adamawa States.

My journey to the priesthood began in 1995 in Nigeria and took me through Ghana, Senegal, Mauritania, and Cameroon. I was ordained a deacon in Douala in 2005 and a priest in the Archdiocese of Kumasi, Ghana, in 2006.

After several years of pastoral ministry in Kumasi, I was sent to Rome for further studies. At the Pontifical Gregorian University, I studied Social Sciences from undergraduate level through to a PhD (2009–2016), while living at the Pontifical French College. I sometimes think that completing a doctorate deserves its own sacrament but, sadly, I never found one!

From 2016 to 2024, I taught at the Spiritan University in Ghana as well as becoming the Vice Rector. In addition, I served as a formator in priestly formation at the Spiritan Formation House in Ejisu and a Seminary Lecturer at St Gregory the Great Provincial Seminary, Parkoso, in Kumasi, which serves 5 dioceses in the central part of Ghana.

My connection with the Archdiocese of Liverpool began back in 2010, when I came from Rome during the summers to help in parishes, particularly in Widnes, as well as Eccleston, Leyland, Chorley, Knowsley Village, Huyton and Gateacre. In 2024, I moved permanently to the archdiocese and served at Our Lady, St Philomena and Holy Name, Fazakerley, alongside my ministry as a hospital chaplain at Aintree Hospital.

Now, by the grace of God and through the appointment of Archbishop John Sherrington, I am delighted to begin a new chapter with you as the Priest-in-charge of St Josephine Bakhita Parish from 1 September 2026.

I come with gratitude, enthusiasm and, above all, a desire to serve. I look forward to getting to know you, listening to you, praying with you and working alongside you as we continue to grow as a welcoming and faith-filled parish community. There is much more to discover about one another, so I hope this is only the beginning of many conversations. And please, if “Fr Anthony Roger Afaako” feels like a bit of a mouthful, “Fr Anthony” will do!

With every blessing,

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Marriage Preparation Catechists Training – 1 October, 8 October, 15 October, 22 October, 29 October

Would you like to accompany the engaged couples in their journey of marriage preparation? The archdiocese is now recruiting catechists to join the marriage preparation team. The catechist training will be provided at St Joseph's Church, Penketh, Warrington WA5 2BB and consists of five sessions.

Upon completion of training, the catechists will be asked to offer marriage preparation course taking place across the archdiocese. If this is something you are interested in, please sign up here <https://tinyurl.com/5c52zbbz>

For more information, please contact Moses at m.mui@rcaol.org.uk

ADOREMUS – Saturday 10 October 9am – 6pm at Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral

Join us on the 10th of October for this year's Adoremus. The theme this year is "How we are Eucharist". Come and join us to adore the Lord Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. The event itself is free and available to all. At the Metropolitan Cathedral, there will be Eucharistic Adoration throughout the day, Holy Mass, opportunities for confession, a variety of workshops and a shared time of prayer during the day for all. Celebrated with Archbishop John Sherrington, this is an event not to be missed! Sign up for workshops here: archdioceseofliverpool.org/adoremus2026

MASS OF ANOINTING AND PRAYERS AT THE SHRINE OF ST PEREGRINE - Saturday 19th September 12noon

Our Lady of the Assumption Church, L25 2RW. St Peregrine is the patron saint of those with cancer and serious illnesses. All are welcome to pray for healing and comfort for themselves or loved ones who are ill or received difficult news. There will be Coffee and Cake to follow to raise money for MacMillan Cancer Support. All welcome!

HOME MISSION SUNDAY – 20 September

On Home Mission Sunday, previously known as Evangelii Gaudium, Catholics across England and Wales are invited to pray for the work of evangelisation and to support the Mission Directorate of the Bishops' Conference through the annual second collection.

The day is a reminder that we are all called to share the joy of the Gospel in our homes, workplaces, parishes and communities, witnessing to Christ in our everyday lives.

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PAULINE BOOK CENTRE – TALK BY Mgr PETER FLEETWOOD - Saturday 19 September, 2pm

Monsignor Peter Fleetwood will be hosting a talk on the use of AI and what it means for Catholics to use AI whilst following the guidelines not only set by the Church but also outlined within Pope Leo XIV's recent encyclical "Magnifica Humanitas". Please sign up via Pauline Book Centre – Liverpool@pauline-uk.org or 0151 709 1328.

ALIVE Worship celebration: Sun 27th Sept, 4-5pm - PLEASE NOTE DATE CHANGE Our Lady of the Assumption Church, L25 2RW

Come and experience worship and prayer led by One Hope Project, a Catholic collective bringing impactful music, fresh creativity and building community. ALIVE celebrates God's active presence in our lives. There will be prayer, adoration, friendship and hospitality to follow. All are welcome!

IRENÆUS WATERLOO

Fr Chris at Irenaeus is asking for volunteers to give up just a few hours of their time to help at the centre. They particularly need help on a Monday afternoon. If you have any spare time please contact either him or Jenny on 0151 949 1199

Marriage Preparation Course – Monday 26 October, 2 November, 9 November, 16 November

Are you planning to get married in a Catholic church? The archdiocese is now offering the marriage preparation course for engaged couples. To be led by trained lay facilitators, the 4-session course will help the couples develop skills which could facilitate good communication within their relationship and an understanding of sacramental marriage within Catholic faith.

The next course will be available on Monday 26 October, 2 November, 9 November and 16 November (for 4 consecutive Wednesday), at St Anne's Church, Prescott Road, Ormskirk, L39 4TG. There is a non-refundable cost of £50 per couple to help towards materials and other expenses. If you are interested to join, please book online here <https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/cMQ1fpza3G?origin=lprLink>

More information about upcoming courses for this year, please refer to the archdiocesan website <https://tinyurl.com/mr6p8vne>

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SHOWING OF "THE PEOPLE'S EMERGENCY BRIEFING" - Tuesday 15 September – 7PM

A showing of the film "The People's Emergency Briefing" in the parish rooms of St Anne's, Overbury Street, Liverpool L7 3HJ.

The film features footage from last year's National Emergency Briefing, bringing together leading UK experts in climate science, food security, health, economics, national security and nature. It presents a clear, measured overview of how the climate and nature crisis is affecting life in the UK.

The initiative is non-partisan and has support from organisations including National Trust, Church of England, Exeter University, the Royal Meteorological Society, WWF, National Education Union, and many more.

Following the 50-minute film, we will host a 45-minute discussion on what it means for our community

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

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

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TODAY IS EDUCATION SUNDAY

"Education does not measure its value only on the axis of efficiency: it measures it according to dignity, justice, the capacity to serve the common good."

Pope Leo XIV

The Catholic Church was a pioneer in the provision of education in England and Wales more than 1,000 years ago, with state involvement beginning only in the 19th century. The Church has continued to provide education in partnership with the government of the day ever since.

Established by the Bishops in 1848, Education Sunday is one of the oldest Days of Special Prayer in the liturgical calendar of England and Wales.

Education remains the Church's biggest charitable activity, from establishing schools for poor immigrant children in the Victorian era through to welcoming pupils from Ukraine and Hong Kong today.

In many other countries around the world governments do not fully fund Catholic schools, and a Catholic education is only available from a fee-paying, independent school.

Catholic education isn't just about the network of more than 2,100 schools and colleges in England and Wales, however. There are also four Catholic universities: Birmingham Newman; Leeds Trinity; Liverpool Hope; and St Mary's, at Twickenham. Originally established as teacher training colleges, they continue to train teachers today, and in greater numbers than the average for a university in the Russell Group.

The success of Catholic education is, of course, dependent on many thousands of teachers, lecturers, academics, support staff, leaders, governors, directors, advisers and others who have found their vocation in Catholic education, and without whom this would be impossible.

Catholic education continues to serve local communities and is an achievement worth celebrating - happy Education Sunday.

There will be a retiring collection after masses today. Please give generously to continue supporting our wonderful schools

50 YEARS OF LOURDES MEMORIES CAPTURED IN ONE BEAUTIFUL SCRAPBOOK

From iconic photos to quirky facts and the stories that shaped our pilgrimage family, this anniversary edition is something truly special.

■ £10

■ £15 with commemorative badge

Every penny supports our Youth Pilgrimage, helping the next generation make their own memories.

To purchase, contact: admin@animateyouth.co.uk or 01744 740461



SAFEGUARDING SURVEY

In October, the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA) will conduct an audit on the archdiocesan safeguarding team and the work they do to keep our parishes safe.

As part of this audit, we're asking everyone within the Archdiocese of Liverpool – whether you are a victim, survivor, layperson, clergy, volunteer or parishioner – to take a few minutes to complete this survey.

The survey opened on Monday 24 August and will close on Friday 25 September.

Please complete the form by scanning the QR code or visiting: forms.cloud.microsoft/e/KU4BAFEYt2



STAY CONNECTED – JOIN OUR 'WhatsApp' CHANNEL

Keep up to date with the latest news, events and announcements from the Archdiocese of Liverpool by joining our WhatsApp Channel!

Receive regular updates direct to your phone and never miss what's happening across the archdiocese.

Join our WhatsApp Channel here:

<https://whatsapp.com/channel/0029Vb8B5Hu2f3EJJwDzn72z>

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTER TRAINING

Irenaeus Waterloo are running a Eucharistic Minister Training day on Saturday 26th September 2026 from 9.15am to 4.00pm. If you are interested in becoming a Minister please have a word with Fr Anthony and we will get you booked on the course.

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ST FRANCIS: CELEBRATING 800 YEARS – SUNDAY 4 OCTOBER, 6pm

Pilkington Choir will be performing a special concert, followed by tea and coffee and a raffle, to mark the 800th anniversary of the death of St Francis of Assisi. The event will be held at St Francis of Assisi, Garston, L18 1RT, and all are welcome to attend. Tickets cost £5 and can be bought from Fr David Potter, or from Anne (01744 732504), or bought with cash at the door.

WEEKEND OF PRAYER AND RENEWAL - Retreat at St Joseph's Prayer Centre – 25th – 27th September

“The Lord heals, restores, and renews...” Keynote Speaker: Ros Powell. Booking is essential. Residential stay: £190; Non-residential with meals: £50 per day; self-catering: donation.

DO YOU HAVE GREEN FINGERS?!

Our lovely ladies at English Martyrs who have given us wonderful flower arrangements for many years have decided to hang up their secateurs! We thank them for all they have done – just quietly volunteering week in and week out. They have been amazing.

Do you enjoy flower arranging? Would you like to help with the flowers at English Martyrs? It really is a lovely job and an important part of our Church life.



Have a word with Bernie in English Martyrs office who can give you more information.

ENGLISH MARTYRS JOSPICE “200 CLUB” SEPTEMBER DRAW

1st £20 No. 57 H Birrell
2nd £15 No. 181 M Whittaker
3rd £10 No. 3 M Lovelady
4th £10 No. 142 S Bulger



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

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WE DON'T LISTEN AS WELL AS WE THINK WE DO - Tuesday 22 & 29 September

Most of what people try to tell us never actually lands. Not because they didn't say it – but because we weren't really listening.

What gets in the way of listening to one another? What might change if we learned to listen differently – not just to information, but to the person in front of us?

Because when we truly listen, something happens. It stops being transactional – one person giving, another receiving – and becomes an exchange of gifts, often unexpected. Every person carries something worth hearing, however small or unlikely it might seem to them, or to us.

This is what synodality is really about: not more talking, but a different way of being together – one shaped by prayer, silence, and the discipline of genuine attention. Not a talking shop. A way of walking together that actually moves.

The School for Synodality is offering a 2 session Introduction to Synodality course for anyone new to synodality or wanting to go deeper.

Course details - There are 2 options – morning or evening sessions – both via zoom.

Session 1: Tuesday 22 September 2026 11 am - 1pm UK time (BST/GMT+1)

Session 2: Tuesday 29 September 2026 11 am - 1pm UK time (BST/GMT+1)

More information here: www.schoolforsynodality.org.uk/events/introduction-to-synodality-autumn-2026morning

OR

Session 1: Tuesday 22 September 2026 7pm - 9pm UK time (BST/GMT+1)

Session 2: Tuesday 29 September 2026 7pm - 9pm UK time (BST/GMT+1)

More information here: www.schoolforsynodality.org.uk/events/introduction-to-synodality-autumn-2026-evening

Find details of our other courses here:

www.schoolforsynodality.org.uk/news/formation-and-training-with-school-for-synodality-new-dates

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NUGENT SLEEP OUT 2026 - Thursday 24 September, 6pm

Support Nugent Sleep Out 2026 and help raise vital funds and awareness for people experiencing homelessness, poverty and social isolation across our communities. By spending one night outdoors, participants will help support Nugent's life-changing work with children, young people, adults and families, while reflecting on the challenges faced by some of the most vulnerable in society.

The Reader, Mansion House, Calderstones Park, Liverpool L18 3JB

Whether you take part yourself or sponsor someone who does, your support will help provide care, opportunity and hope to those who need it most. All are welcome.

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

CAN YOU HELP THE ROYAL HOSPITAL?

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.

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Masses and Services for the coming week

DATE	English Martyrs	St Robert Bellarmine
Sunday 13th September Sanctuary Lamp	9.30am Debbie & John Vondy Sara Lyon and Baby Frances	11.00am People of the Parish The Jones Family
Monday 14th September	10.00am Joan Lloyd	
Tuesday 15th September		10.00am Cathy Morrisroe
Wednesday 16th September	NO MASS	NO MASS
Thursday 17th September	10.00am Mary Ellis	
Friday 18th September		10.00am John Spencer
Saturday 19th September	NO MASS	NO MASS
Sunday 20th September	9.30am People of the Parish	11.00am Anne Hunter

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