

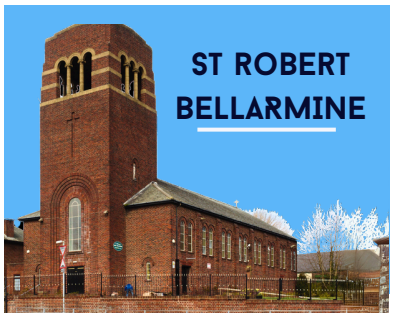
Parish of St Josephine Bakhita





PARISH PRIEST

Very Rev Canon
Mark B Madden
KCHS FRSA



A main feature of the Easter season is our reading from the Acts of the Apostles at Mass each day, it offers us a timely and reassuring reminder about the life of the Church.

The Acts of the Apostles, written by Saint Luke around 80–90 AD, is the continuation of his Gospel. It tells the story of what happens after the Resurrection and Ascension — how the Church begins and grows under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

What stands out very quickly is that the Church is never static. From the very beginning, it is a community on the move. New situations arise, new communities are formed, and new challenges appear. The apostles and early Christians are constantly having to respond, to adapt, and to find their way forward.

And that feels very familiar.

We are living through a time when the Church is changing. We see it in the patterns of parish life, in communities coming together, and in the realities we are being asked to face. At times, that can feel uncertain, even unsettling.

But Acts reminds us of something essential: change is not a sign that God has abandoned His Church — quite the opposite. The same Holy Spirit who guided the early Christians through uncertainty, growth, and challenge is still present and active today.

They did not always have a clear plan. They did not always know what would come next. But they trusted, they prayed, and they moved forward with courage.

That is our call too.

As we listen to Acts in these weeks, we are invited not simply to look back, but to recognise our own place in that same story — and to trust that the Holy Spirit will continue to guide the Church, and each one of us, into the future.

Fr Mark

Where might God be asking me to trust Him more in times of change?

Third Sunday of Easter

19 April 2026

PLEASE OFFER YOUR PRAYERS FOR THOSE PARISHIONERS WHO ARE CURRENTLY ILL



Mary Spofforth
Michael Lundon
Margaret Spencer
Peter Gibbons

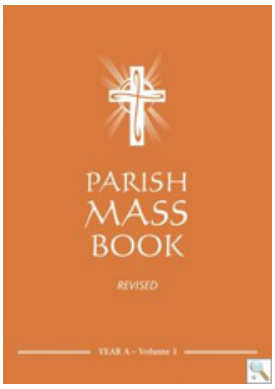
POPE'S PRAYER INTENTION FOR APRIL



For priests in crisis

Let us pray for priests going through moments of crisis in their vocation, that they may find the accompaniment they need and that communities may support them with understanding and prayer.

Lord in your mercy...



THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

Readings for Mass today can be found on Page 258 of the Parish Mass Book



SANCTUARY LAMP

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.

Where might God be asking me to trust Him more in times of change?

HOLY HOUR

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales has invited Catholics across the country to unite in prayer through a special Holy Hour for the dignity of human life, to be held on Sunday 19 April at 4:30pm.

Communities are encouraged to join spiritually with the bishops by holding a Holy Hour locally, offering a visible and prayerful witness to the sanctity of life. The initiative comes as peers in the House of Lords continue to debate proposed legislation on assisted suicide.

In a recent Lenten message, Archbishop John Sherrington, Lead Bishop for Life Issues, reaffirmed the Church's opposition to the Terminally Ill (Adults) End of Life Bill. He called on the faithful to pray particularly for those nearing the end of their lives, for their carers, and for all parliamentarians engaged in this important debate. Here in the archdiocese, Archbishop Sherrington has echoed this call, encouraging parishes to participate in the Holy Hour as a sign of unity with the wider Church in England and Wales. This shared moment of prayer offers an opportunity to commend the gift of life to the Lord and to seek His guidance for society at a critical time.

The Holy Hour in the Archdiocese will take place at Christ the King, Childwall, this Sunday at 4.30pm

EASTER HOLY WATER- A SIGN OF NEW LIFE

At the Easter celebrations, the blessing of water is a quiet but powerful moment. This year, it took place both at the Easter Vigil and again on Easter morning, reminding us of our baptism—when we were brought into the life of the risen Christ.

Fr Mark blessed the Easter water with the new Paschal Candles—a beautiful sign of the light and life of the Risen Lord.

Each time we bless ourselves with holy water, we are not just recalling the past; we are renewing who we are now: people of the Resurrection.

The Easter water is available in both churches throughout the Easter season, and you are warmly invited to take some home. Let it be a simple, daily reminder: Christ is risen, and His life is alive in you.

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

GIFT AID ENVELOPES - ENGLISH MARTYRS

Envelopes for the new year are now at the back of Church for collection
As we are that beginning of a new tax year if you don't already Gift Aid and you are a tax payer please consider joining the Gift Aid Scheme as this is a way of increasing our income without having to ask people for more money. For every £1 you give 25p extra will be claimed back by the parish. It is a simple process of completing a form

You can also make your contributions by completing a standing order form which means that the payment is taken direct from your account and reduces the amount of cash to be handled.
Both forms are available from the Parish Office.

PENTECOST CELEBRATIONS/ 2 CATHEDRALS SERVICE



Sunday 24 May. 3.00 pm starting at the Metropolitan Cathedral.

This year, the stalls will focus on the Manifesto for Hope launched last November. CTMR Church Leaders have also extended an invitation to our Civic Leaders.

This year Pentecost falls on the May bank holiday weekend.

GUILD OF ST STEPHEN PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES 2026

The Liverpool Archdiocesan Council of the Guild of St Stephen will doing 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

ST JOSEPH'S PRAYER CENTRE
Discerning your gifts- embracing your call
Weekend Retreat 8-10 May 2026

An opportunity to reflect on our unique calling and gifting so that we can be fruitful in our mission.
Come and enjoy a peaceful and illuminating weekend with Michelle and Peter Moran in the tranquil settings of Freshfield close to the coast and in the wonderful 'Red Squirrel' territory ideal for reflection and peaceful walks

Costs for weekend – Full Board / Residential £190
The retreat starts on Friday 8th May at 4pm with Holy Mass followed by supper and 1st session
Saturday Discerning our gifts, Adoration, walks, Free time and Healing Mass at 7pm
To book or for further information please call Kathy on 01704 875850
OR Email – theprayercentre.stj@psmgs.org.uk

St Joseph's Prayer Centre, Blundell Avenue, Formby, Liverpool L37 1PH
Visit our website at www.stjosephsprayercentre.com/

HELP FOR IRENAEUS

The box for donations to Irenaeus is at the back of St Robert's Church.

They are asking for food eg soups, tins of spuds, tins of macaroni cheese etc. NO PASTA needed. Toothpaste, shampoo, soap, etc will be useful. They are also in need mens socks - these would be helpful.

Any donations can be placed in the box and will be taken to Irenaeus

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.



THE PRIEST TRAINING FUND 2026

The priesthood has always been essential to the life of the Church, from the time of Jesus until today. In the Archdiocese of Liverpool, we are blessed to have men answering the call to the Priesthood and Diaconate and choosing to dedicate their lives to Christ and His people.

Your donation to the Priest Training Fund will support our Seminarians in supporting their seminary fees and their living costs.

Please support the retiring collection NEXT weekend.

CATHOLIC FAMILY HOLIDAYS IN THE LAKE DISTRICT

Castlerigg Manor in Keswick (heart of the Lake District) is offering budget-friendly holidays for Catholic families during May, August, and early September. Breakfast and evening meal are included and there will be Mass on site. Guests have full use of the site including the grounds, games room, chapel, and lounges, and Castlerigg is just a short walk from Keswick and Lake Derwentwater. Ideal for individuals, couples, families, or groups of friends. Head to www.castleriggmanor.com >> stay with us or contact director@castleriggmanor.co.uk / 017687 72711

ST BENET'S CHAPEL

St Benet's Chapel is a cherished part of our community's history—a place that has stood for generations as a testament to our shared heritage. We are now hoping to form a small group of local people who are interested in helping to preserve this special site and open it to visitors on selected days throughout the year.

By volunteering, you'll be helping others appreciate the chapel's unique story and ensuring it continues to be enjoyed for years to come. Whether you have a passion for history, enjoy welcoming visitors, or simply want to play a part in safeguarding our local heritage, we'd love to hear from you. If you're interested in joining the group or would like more information, please contact: Fr Grant Maddock @ g.maddock@rcaol.org.uk

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.

ALL AGES PILGRIMAGE TO ASSISI: 26-30 October 2026

The Parishes of St Mary's Woolton and St John Vianney invite you to join us on Pilgrimage to Assisi Monday 26 - Friday 30 October 2026, led by Fr Peter McGrail and provided by Joe Walsh Tours.

This is a very special year to visit Assisi since Pope Leo XIV has proclaimed 2026 A JUBILEE YEAR OF ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI, which marks 800 years since his death Pope Leo announces the Franciscan Jubilee Year for 2026. - Centro Laudato Si.

The cost is £1,165.00 per person to include: Direct return flights from Manchester to Rome, 10kg bags included (optional 20kg at extra cost), all transfers and tours by private coach, 4 nights in Hotel Frate Sole – Assisi on a half board basis (drinks excluded), full religious programme led by Fr Peter McGrail, fully guided with tours and visits as per itinerary. Travel Insurance required at the time of booking.

For more information, contact Joe Walsh Tours: www.joewalshtours.co.uk

PRAY IN MAY – MARY'S MEALS

During the month of May, Mary's Meals is inviting churches and schools to take part in their Pray in May campaign, encouraging prayer and reflection for children around the world who rely on a daily school meal.

Mary's Meals provides nutritious school meals to children living in poverty, enabling access to education and long-term hope.

The charity website gives more information and resources for you to take: wwwmarysmeals.org.uk or you can contact Anna Houghton at: anna.houghton@marysmeals.org

SPRING DANCE

A Spring Dance for people aged 18-30 is being held at St Margaret Mary's Parish Centre on the 8th May. The Spring Dance will have food, wine, music and dancing with a Scottish Ceilidh Band as well as from a local jazz pianist. For more information about tickets, contact: springdance00@gmail.com

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

ENGLISH MARTYRS JOSPICE "200 CLUB" APRIL DRAW

1st £20 No. 186 B Morrin
2nd £15 No. 200 M Stoops
3rd £10 No. 22 C Smartt
4th £10 No. 181 M Whttaker

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

Vocations Weekend for Women (20s and 30s) -Discerning God's Call in your life 15th - 17th May, Liverpool

The weekend is organised by the Sisters, Faithful Companions of Jesus (FCJ). Jesus invites each of us to 'Come and See' - this weekend will give the opportunity to explore the vocation to religious life and to reflect on God's call to you.

If you are wondering if God is calling you to religious life and would like to find out more why not come along?
There will be opportunity for prayer, reflection and input, chance to live alongside the religious community and to ask questions and to meet others who are also wondering where God is calling them.
For more information contact Sr Lynne fcJ at fcjvocationeurope@gmail.com or visit our website www.fcjsisters.org To register: https://bit.ly/Vocation2026

CHOIR CHAPERONE OPPORTUNITY
The Department of Music within the Archdiocese of Liverpool is seeking Choir Chaperones to support their work with young singers.

This role involves supervising Cathedral choristers and ensuring their safety, wellbeing, and pastoral care at rehearsals, services, and performances.
Chaperones help with organisation, attendance, and communication with parents, while supporting a safe and welcoming environment in line with safeguarding policies.

A rewarding opportunity to support young people and the Cathedral's music ministry.
Closing date is 23 April. For more information, take a look at the job section of the Archdiocesan website: www.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk

CELEBRATING ST GERARD, THE MOTHER'S SAINT -

Bishop Eton, Saturday 25th April 2026
April 6th 2026 marks the 300th anniversary of the birth of St Gerard Majella C.Ss.R., patron saint of a good confession and of mothers. To mark the occasion, Bishop Eton will be hosting a special day of events, including Mass with the Archbishop, Blessing services, Exposition and a Taizé service.

The church will be open all day and a team of Redemptorists and parishioners will be available to ensure that all those who wish may reverence the relic of St Gerard and receive medals and prayer cards. The first copy of the icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour to leave Rome will be on display.

Light refreshments, crafts for children and young people, and information on St Gerard will be available in the parish hall.

We look forward to welcoming you and your families for this very special occasion.

The full schedule and information on St Gerard can be found by visiting www.bishopeton.org.uk/a-day-in-honour-of-st-gerard.html

On Saturday 25 April we welcome, at English Martyrs, the first of our groups of children to receive their First Holy Communion. They have all worked hard over the past six months following the preparation programme and we can now celebrate this most special occasion. Please keep them all in your prayers.



Further groups will make their First Communion in May and June

GENERAL CATECHIST COURSE 2026
Beginning from 6 May until 27 June, a General Catechist Course will be provided by the archdiocese. The course will be taking place over 8 weeks at St John Fisher Church, Widnes. We will talk about the key elements of Catholic faith and how they can be explored through
Catechesis. If you are considering being catechist or are existing catechist (e.g. RCIA, first holy communion, confirmation etc) looking to refresh your knowledge, this course is for you.If you are interested, please sign up here https://forms.office.com/e/vXWAjbxJdc?origin=lprLink. For more information, please contact Moses at m.mui@rcaol.org.uk

FEAST OF THE WEEK
St George (-c303)



Saint George is one of the most well-known and loved saints in the Church, and the patron saint of England. Although many of the stories about him have grown over time, the heart of his life is clear and compelling.

George was a Roman soldier, probably born in what is now modern-day Turkey, and served in the army of the Emperor Diocletian. During this time, Christians were being persecuted. George refused to renounce his faith in Christ and spoke openly about it, despite the danger. For this, he was arrested and eventually put to death around the year 303 AD.

His reputation for courage and faith spread quickly across the Christian world. By the Middle Ages, he had become especially venerated in England. He was declared patron saint of England in the 14th century, particularly under King Edward III, who placed England under St George's protection and founded the Order of the Garter in his honour. St George came to symbolise courage, chivalry, and the defence of the Christian faith.

The famous story of St George and the dragon is a later legend, but it expresses a deeper truth: the triumph of good over evil, and of faith over fear.

St George reminds us that holiness is not about extraordinary things, but about fidelity — standing firm in our faith, whatever the cost.

His feast day is celebrated on Thursday.

NOTRE DAME SCHOOL REUNION

Did you attend a Notre Dame School in the Archdiocese of Liverpool? There will be a reunion on 17th May for all ex-pupils & teachers, consisting of Mass at 11.00am followed by a complimentary light lunch & a social finishing at 3.00pm, at the Irenaeus Centre, Waterloo. A donation for our current charity & a raffle prize would be appreciated.
Please try to attend, all are welcome.
Reply by 3rd May to Bernie Shaw, 0161 483 0173 or berniemshaw@hotmail.com

Where might God be asking me to trust Him more in times of change?

Third Sunday of Easter

19 April 2026

Masses and Services for the coming week

DATE	English Martyrs	St Robert Bellarmine
Sunday 19th April **Sanctuary Lamp**	**9.30am** People of the Parish **Thanksgiving (NL)**	**11.00am** Carl Jones **Michael Rumsey**
Monday 20th April	**10.00am** Colin Littler	
Tuesday 21st April		**10.00am** Funeral Mass Agnes (Bunty) Gavan
Wednesday 22nd April	**NO MASS**	**NO MASS**
Thursday 23rd April	**10.00am** Joseph Maloney	
Friday 24th April	**11.00am** Funeral service Mary Kennedy	**10.00am** Tom O'Brien **1.30pm** Funeral service Alen Thompson
Saturday 25th April	**NO MASS**	**NO MASS**
Sunday 26th April	**9.30am** Marie Smith	**11.00am** People of the Parish

English Martyrs Office 0151 928 3471 englishmartyrs@rcaol.org.uk
School Lane, Litherland,L21 7LX Office hours Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri 9.30am - 2.30pm
St Robert Bellarmine Office 0151 922 1352 strobert@rcaol.org.uk
Orrell Road, Bootle, L20 6DZ Office hours Tues, Wed, Fri 9.30am - 1.30pm

Where might God be asking me to trust Him more in times of change?