

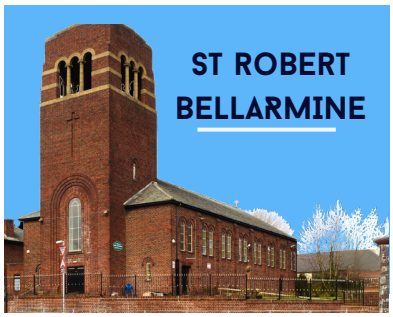
Parish of St Josephine Bakhita





PARISH PRIEST

Very Rev Canon
Mark B Madden
KCHS FRSA



One of the deepest human thirsts is the thirst to be truly known and loved. In the Gospel for the Third Sunday of Lent, we meet the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:5–42). She comes to draw water in the heat of the day, perhaps avoiding others, perhaps carrying the weight of her past. Yet it is there, in that ordinary moment, that she encounters Jesus.

Jesus begins with a simple request: “Give me a drink.” It is a striking moment. The Son of God asks something of her. He meets her where she is, not with condemnation, but with conversation.

Very quickly the discussion moves from ordinary water to something deeper. Jesus speaks of “living water” — the life of God within us. The woman initially thinks only of the well in front of her. But slowly she begins to understand that Jesus is speaking about the deeper thirst of the human heart: the thirst for meaning, forgiveness, hope and love.

Like the woman at the well, we all carry our own stories, struggles and disappointments. Yet the message of this Gospel is simple and beautiful: Jesus meets us there. He does not wait for us to become perfect before speaking to us. He meets us in the middle of ordinary life and offers us the living water of his grace.

Lent is a time to rediscover that living water. Through prayer, reconciliation, and time with the Scriptures, Christ gently draws us back to the well.

And when we truly encounter him, like the Samaritan woman, we cannot keep the good news to ourselves.
Fr Mark

Where might Jesus be wanting to meet me this Lent?

PLEASE OFFER YOUR PRAYERS FOR THOSE PARISHIONERS WHO ARE CURRENTLY ILL



Mary Spofforth
Michael Lundon
Margaret Spencer
Peter Gibbons

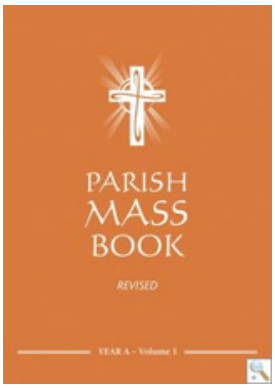
POPE'S PRAYER INTENTION FOR MARCH



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...

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT



Readings for Mass today can be found on Page 158 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.

Where might Jesus be wanting to meet me this Lent?

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 for the next two Sundays. We have a volunteer to lead today and would ask if someone could 'step forward' for next Sunday - 15th. Stations will be prayed on Friday 10.30am at St Robert Bellarmine.

CENTRING PRAYER DAY - SATURDAY 21st MARCH

Led by Fr Richard Sloan, this day focuses of 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

CAFOD LENT APPEAL – FAMILY FAST DAY

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.

Where might Jesus be wanting to meet me this Lent?

EUCHARISTIC 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

Where might Jesus be wanting to meet me this Lent?

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

FRIENDS OF THE METROPOLITAN CATHEDRAL UPDATE – Treasurer Wanted

The Friends of the Metropolitan Cathedral had a superb evening to meet Archbishop John, which was fully booked and enabled all those attending to hear of Archbishop John's hopes for the archdiocese and the chance to meet him, as well as having an enjoyable hotpot, cake and wine supper! Other events are planned to include a crypt tour and a Dinner - details will follow. Why not join the Friends!

Also, the Friends are looking for a Treasurer for the Committee if you might be interested contact the Secretary Ultan Russell on u.russell@rcaol.org.uk

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 on the 4th Sunday of Lent, 15th March 2026.

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.

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 first session, "From Ashes to Eggs: What does Lent really mean?", will be on Monday 9 March at 7-8pm.

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

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

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

"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

FEAST OF THE WEEK
St John Ogilvie (1579-1615)



John Ogilvie was born of noble Calvinist parents in 1579 at Drum-na-Keith in Banffshire, Scotland. As a boy he was sent to the continent to further his education. With the help of Father Cornelius van den Steen, he was received into the Catholic Church. He entered the Jesuits on the 5th November 1599, and was ordained priest at Paris in 1610. He returned to his native country, but his ministry was cut short by his betrayal and capture in Glasgow. After extreme suffering he was hanged on the 10th of March 1615. The principal cause of his martyrdom was his insistence on the primacy of the Pope in spiritual matters, a primacy he affirmed with great constancy to the very end. His last words were "If there be here any hidden Catholics, let them pray for me but the prayers of heretics I will not have." After he was pushed from the ladder, he threw his hidden Rosary beads out into the crowd. One of his enemies caught them, and he became a devout Catholic for the rest of his life.

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT – Thirst for Living Water

On the Third Sunday of Lent we meet Jesus at the well with the Samaritan woman. It is a very ordinary place — a well at midday, a tired traveller, a woman coming for water. Yet in that simple moment something extraordinary happens. Jesus speaks to her heart.

He says: "Whoever drinks the water I shall give will never thirst."

At first the woman thinks Jesus is talking about ordinary water. But Jesus is speaking about something deeper — the thirst within every human heart. We all know that thirst. The desire for meaning, forgiveness, peace, love. We try to satisfy it in many ways, but only God can truly fill it.

Lent is a time when we allow Jesus to meet us at our own "well". So what might that look like in practice this week?

1. Notice your thirst.
Take a moment each day to ask yourself: What is my heart really longing for right now? Peace? Strength? Forgiveness? Bring that honestly to the Lord in prayer.

2. Let Jesus speak to you.
Spend a few quiet minutes with the Gospel story this week (John 4:5-42). Imagine yourself sitting beside the well with Jesus. Let one phrase stay with you during the day.

3. Share the water.
After meeting Jesus, the woman runs back to her town and tells others. When our faith touches our hearts, it naturally flows outward. A kind word, encouragement, a simple act of patience — these can be ways of sharing that living water.

The Samaritan woman came to the well expecting ordinary water. She left with something far greater — hope.

This week keep it simple:
Bring your thirst to Jesus.
Listen to his voice.
And let his living water flow into the lives of others.

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: 10, 17, 24 March.

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

JOHN SPENCER – Rest in Peace

English Martyrs parishioners will remember Margaret Spencer's husband – John. Sadly, John died recently. Margaret would like to let people know that his funeral will be held at St Philips Church on Wednesday 11th March at 1.15pm.

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

Where might Jesus be wanting to meet me this Lent?

Masses and Services for the coming week

DATE	English Martyrs	St Robert Bellarmine
Sunday 8th March **Sanctuary Lamp**	**9.30am** People of the Parish **Kath, Jack & John Bracken**	**11.00am** William Chegwin **Joe Morley**
Monday 9th March	**10.00am** Paul Nickson	
Tuesday 10th March		**10.00am** Leila Bromilow
Wednesday 11th March	**NO MASS**	**NO MASS**
Thursday 12th March	**10.00am** Tony Coady	
Friday 13th March		**10.00am** Thomas Callaghan
Saturday 14th March	**NO MASS**	**NO MASS**
Sunday 15th March	**9.30am** Bridget McDermott	**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 Jesus be wanting to meet me this Lent?