

THE PARISH OF ST CHARLES AND ST THOMAS MORE

The 4th Sunday in Lent

Laetare Sunday



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Dear all,

We are living through extraordinary times and in this bumper edition of the Newsletter we will address some of the difficulties this new situation brings us All Masses and baptisms have all been cancelled, weddings are being postponed and funerals will only take place either at the Crematorium or at the graveside.

I am feeling the pain of separation already being only able to communicate this news with you through this Newsletter. I am sure the decision made by the Bishops' to suspend the public celebration of Masses in our Churches came as something of a shock for you. For the first time in most peoples' lives there will be no public Masses in our Church and for many knowing this is particularly painful.

In line with the Archbishop's request we are going to try and keep the Church here open as much as possible for people to visit for private prayer. I encourage you to use this opportunity when you are passing for shopping etc. I also encourage you to discover what fruitful resources are available on line which will allow you to listen to the God who will still speak to us in and through these difficult times.

It is a good opportunity to spend time to explore the Word of God given to us each Sunday. It is also an opportunity to explore traditional devotions such as the Stations of the Cross or the Rosary which allows us to context with the mystery of Christ's life, death and resurrection.

Keeping in touch is so important so we will aim to still produce some sort of Newsletter each week which will be available on line and as I have said during the week we hope the Church will be able to remain open for private individual prayer.

I will continue to celebrate Mass each day in St Charles Church bringing our whole community before the Lord in prayer.

Take care and God bless, Fr Ron

While the Parish Office will be officially closed this coming week as Val is on holiday I will be present often through out the day so please feel free to telephone if you are feeling isolated or alone and need a chat.

If you have to self isolate because of age or ill health and need help with shopping or other tasks then please call and leave a message and if I am not present I will call you when I get back in.

If you can offer assistance to others please either email or telephone your details in to the parish office.

FROM FR RON'S DESK...

Contact us...

Parish Telephone 0151 727 2493

Parish Email Address stcharles@rcaolp.co.uk



*A letter from the President and Vice-President
on behalf of all the Bishops of the Conference*

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In response to the Coronavirus pandemic, so many aspects of our lives must change. This includes the ways in which we publicly express our faith. It is very clear that, following official advice and in order to keep each other safe, save lives and support the NHS, at this time we must not gather for public acts of worship in our churches. This will begin from Friday evening, 20th March 2020, until further notice.

Our churches will remain open. They are not closing. They will be a focal point of prayer, where you will find solace and strength. In visiting our churches at this time, we will observe with great care the practices of hygiene and the guidance on social distancing.

However, the celebration of Mass, Sunday by Sunday and day by day, will take place without a public congregation.

Knowing that the Mass is being celebrated; joining in spiritually in that celebration; watching the live-streaming of the Mass; following its prayers at home; making an act of spiritual communion: this is how we share in the Sacrifice of Christ in these days. These are the ways in which we will sanctify Sunday, and indeed every day.

We want everyone to understand that in these emergency circumstances, and for as long as they last, the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days is removed. This is, without doubt, the teaching of the Church (Catechism of the Catholic Church 2181). This pandemic is the 'serious reason' why this obligation does not apply at this time.

You will find more details about the pathway of prayer and sacramental life we are now to take in the accompanying document and on the Bishops' Conference website (www.cbcew.org.uk). Your own bishop and parish priest will provide further support, encouragement and information about our way of prayer together in the coming weeks.

The second vital aspect of these challenging times is our care for each other. There are so many ways in which we are to do this: being attentive to the needs of our neighbour, especially the elderly and vulnerable; contributing to our local food banks; volunteering for charitable initiatives and organisations; simply keeping in touch by all the means open to us.

During these disturbing and threatening times, the rhythm of the prayer of the Church will continue. Please play your part in it. The effort of daily kindness and mutual support for all will continue and increase. Please play your part in this too. For your commitment to this, we thank you.

'The Lord is my shepherd, There is nothing I shall want.'

May God bless us all.

Vincent Cardinal Nichols
President

Archbishop Malcolm McMahon OP
Vice-President

18th March 2020



As there will be no public celebrations of Mass arrangements have been made to live stream Masses on Sunday 22 March as follows:

Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King

Live stream at 9.00 am at

www.facebook.com/liverpoolmetrochurch

A recording will be available from 11.00 am at:

<https://m.youtube.com/channel/UCOiDR9mRmfnAu05Yg3ifyMw>

St Gregory, Chorley

Details: www.stgregoryschorley.org.uk

St Mary of the Isle, Douglas, Isle of Man

Details:

<https://www.mcnmedia.tv/camera/st-mary-of-the-isle>

St Monica, Bootle

Details:

<https://www.mcnmedia.tv/camera/st-monicas-church-bootle>

St Teresa, Penwortham

Details: <https://www.mcnmedia.tv/camera/st-teresas-penwortham>

During this coming week our Church will be open...

Monday

10 am - 12 noon,

2.30 - 4.30 pm

&

6.30 - 8.00 pm

Tuesday

10 am - 12 noon,

2.30 - 4.30 pm

&

6.30 - 8.00 pm

Wednesday

10 am - 12 noon,

2.30 - 4.30 pm

&

6.30 - 8.00 pm

Thursday

10 am - 12 noon,

2.30 - 4.30 pm

&

6.30 - 8.00 pm

Friday

10 am - 12 noon,

2.30 - 4.30 pm

&

6.30 - 8.00 pm

Saturday

10 am - 12.30pm

&

3.00 - 6.00 pm

Sunday

10 am - 12 noon

&

3.00 - 6.00 pm

I hope this arrangement will allow plenty of opportunities for people to visit our Church both during the day or in the evening for those who are working.

Other suggested sights...

The Vatican website

vatican.va

Vatican News website

vaticannews.va

EWTN website

ewtn.com

Archdiocesan website

liverpoolcatholic.org.uk

Bishop Conference website

cbcew.org.uk



*Jesus said,
"You are looking at him; he is speaking to you."
The man said,
"Lord, I believe", and worshipped him.
John 9:38*

Keeping Connected...

Introduction

In the name of the Father,
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Examen

*Before reading the Word of God
take a moment to reflect.*

For what am I grateful to God for today?

Where did I stray from God:

through words, actions or things I did not do.

How might I do better tomorrow?

What grace do I ask from God in order to live
more closely in his love?

You may wish to conclude by saying:

Lord Jesus, you have revealed yourself as the
way to the Father:

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

You have poured out on your people
the Spirit of truth:

Christ, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.

You are the Good Shepherd,
leading us to eternal life:

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

First reading 1 Samuel 16:1,6-7,10-13

David is anointed by Samuel

The Lord said to Samuel, 'Fill your horn with oil and go. I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem, for I have chosen myself a king among his sons.' When Samuel arrived, he caught sight of Eliab and thought, 'Surely the Lord's anointed stands there before him,' but the Lord said to Samuel, 'Take no notice of his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him: God does not see as man sees: man looks at appearances but the Lord looks at the heart.' Jesse presented his seven sons to Samuel, but Samuel said to Jesse, 'The Lord has not chosen these.' He then asked Jesse, 'Are these all the sons you have?' He answered, 'There is still one left, the youngest; he is out looking after the sheep.' Then Samuel said to Jesse, 'Send for him; we will not sit down to eat until he comes.' Jesse had him sent for, a boy of fresh complexion, with fine eyes and pleasant bearing. The Lord said, 'Come, anoint him, for this is the one.' At this, Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him where he stood with his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord seized on David and stayed with him from that day on.

Psalm 22(23)

The Lord is my shepherd;

there is nothing I shall want.

Fresh and green are the pastures

where he gives me repose.

Near restful waters he leads me,

to revive my drooping spirit.

He guides me along the right path;

he is true to his name.

If I should walk in the valley of darkness

no evil would I fear.

You are there with your crook and your staff;

with these you give me comfort.

You have prepared a banquet for me

in the sight of my foes.

My head you have anointed with oil;

my cup is overflowing.

Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me

all the days of my life.

In the Lord's own house shall I dwell

for ever and ever.

Second reading Ephesians 5:8-14

Anything exposed by the light will turn into light

You were darkness once, but now you are light in the Lord; be like children of light, for the effects of the light are seen in complete goodness and right living and truth. Try to discover what the Lord wants of you, having nothing to do with the futile works of darkness but exposing them by contrast. The things which are done in secret are things that people are ashamed even to speak of; but anything exposed by the light will be illuminated and anything illuminated turns into light. That is why it is said: Wake up from your sleep, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.

Gospel John 9:1-41

**The blind man went off and washed himself,
and came away with his sight restored**

As Jesus went along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. His disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, for him to have been born blind?' 'Neither he nor his parents sinned,' Jesus answered 'he was born blind so that the works of God might be displayed in him. As long as the day lasts I must carry out the work of the one who sent me; the night will soon be here when

no one can work. As long as I am in the world I am the light of the world.'

Having said this, he spat on the ground, made a paste with the spittle, put this over the eyes of the blind man, and said to him, 'Go and wash in the Pool of Siloam' (a name that means 'sent'). So the blind man went off and washed himself, and came away with his sight restored.

His neighbours and people who earlier had seen him begging said, 'Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?' Some said, 'Yes, it is the same one.' Others said, 'No, he only looks like him.' The man himself said, 'I am the man.' So they said to him, 'Then how do your eyes come to be open?' 'The man called Jesus' he answered 'made a paste, daubed my eyes with it and said to me, "Go and wash at Siloam"; so I went, and when I washed I could see.' They asked, 'Where is he?' 'I don't know' he answered.

They brought the man who had been blind to the Pharisees. It had been a sabbath day when Jesus made the paste and opened the man's eyes, so when the Pharisees asked him how he had come to see, he said, 'He put a paste on my eyes, and I washed, and I can see.' Then some of the Pharisees said, 'This man cannot be from God: he does not keep the sabbath.' Others said, 'How could a sinner produce signs like this?' And there was disagreement among them. So they spoke to the blind man again, 'What have you to say about him yourself, now that he has opened your eyes?' 'He is a prophet' replied the man. However, the Jews would not believe that the man had been blind and had gained his sight, without first sending for his parents and asking them, 'Is this man really your son who you say was born blind? If so, how is it that he is now able to see?' His parents answered, 'We know he is our son and we know he was born blind, but we do not know how it is that he can see now, or who opened his eyes. He is old enough: let him speak for himself.' His parents spoke like this out of fear of the Jews, who had already agreed to expel from the synagogue anyone who should acknowledge Jesus as the Christ. This was why his parents said, 'He is old enough; ask him.'

So the Jews again sent for the man and said to him, 'Give glory to God! For our part, we know that this man is a sinner.' The man answered, 'I don't know if he is a sinner; I only know that I was blind and now I can see.' They said to him, 'What did he do to you?

How did he open your eyes?' He replied, 'I have told you once and you wouldn't listen. Why do you want to hear it all again? Do you want to become his disciples too?' At this they hurled abuse at him: 'You can be his disciple,' they said 'we are disciples of Moses: we know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.' The man replied, 'Now here is an astonishing thing! He has opened my eyes, and you don't know where he comes from! We know that God doesn't listen to sinners, but God does listen to men who are devout and do his will. Ever since the world began it is unheard of for anyone to open the eyes of a man who was born blind; if this man were not from God, he couldn't do a thing.' 'Are you trying to teach us,' they replied 'and you a sinner through and through, since you were born!' And they drove him away.

Jesus heard they had driven him away, and when he found him he said to him, 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?' 'Sir,' the man replied 'tell me who he is so that I may believe in him.' Jesus said, 'You are looking at him; he is speaking to you.' The man said, 'Lord, I believe', and worshipped him.

Jesus said: 'It is for judgement that I have come into this world, so that those without sight may see and those with sight turn blind.'

Hearing this, some Pharisees who were present said to him, 'We are not blind, surely?' Jesus replied: 'Blind? If you were, you would not be guilty, but since you say, "We see," your guilt remains.'

Spiritual Communion - Prayer of St Alphonsus

My Jesus,

I believe that you are present
in this Holy Sacrament of the altar.

I love you above all things and
I passionately desire to receive you
into my soul.

Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally,
come spiritually into my soul
so that I may unite myself wholly to you
now and forever.

Amen.

Conclusion

In the name of the Father,
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

***Pastoral Letter
For Sunday 22 March 2020***

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

“The Lord is my shepherd,
there is nothing I shall want”

I send my best wishes and prayers to you and those you love at this time of uncertainty, unprecedented in modern history. We are living in challenging times and as such are called to live as the Church in a different way in these days. We are unable to gather for the Holy Eucharist and other times of prayer and praise in our communities and parishes but our hope and trust in the Lord Jesus’ presence continues.

With the threat of Covid-19, the English and Welsh bishops have unanimously agreed to suspend all public celebrations of Mass and other liturgies in the Cathedrals and Churches up and down the land from Friday March 20th. This is done to protect us all. Your priests will continue to offer the Holy Mass without a congregation physically present to ensure our prayers and concerns are offered to God as always. We are seeking new ways to express and live our faith in these trying times. But we should remember that as God’s holy, faithful people we are filled with hope and the belief that Christ always walks by our side and accompanies us in our trials and tribulations. The Lord is present to us; He hears our prayers; He understands our concerns. You and I are being called now, more than ever, to pray, to place ourselves in His presence in these days and walk humbly with our crucified and risen God.

I know that you understand that we must do everything we can in the battle against Covid-19 and to offer this necessary sacrifice of gathering as the Church for a short while in order to assist with this. This will also mean doing other things differently but social distancing and limiting gatherings with others does not mean that we close in on ourselves and forget others, rather our faith turns us outwards to those in need.

There are those in our community who are more vulnerable to Covid-19. We can telephone them to ask how they are doing and if they need shopping or medication. We can all do our part to be the hands and eyes and ears of Jesus Christ as St Teresa of Jesus suggested in her prayer. These new circumstances allow us to be closer through social media. Holy Mass will be live-streamed from the Metropolitan Cathedral, St Anne’s, Overbury Street, St Gregory’s, Chorley and St Mary’s on the Isle of Man; and the archdiocesan website will keep you abreast of new initiatives which will unite us in our prayer.

In these strange and peculiar circumstances let us ask the prayers of Our Lady;

*We fly to thy protection, O holy Mother of God,
despise not our petitions in our necessities, but
deliver us always from all dangers, O glorious and
blessed Virgin.*

Once again, assuring you of my spiritual closeness at this time.

May God bless you and your families,

Most Rev Malcolm McMahon OP
Archbishop of Liverpool

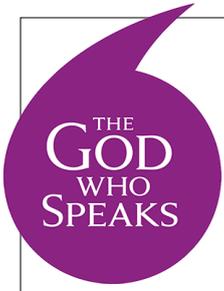


*From the
Most Rev. Malcolm McMahon
Archbishop of Liverpool*

**A PRAYER
IN TIME OF DANGER AND ILLNESS**

God Our Father,
each person is precious to You.
You are the Giver of life.
Have mercy on us and protect us at this time,
as the Coronavirus threatens health and life.
You are an ever-present Helper in time of trouble.
Watch over those who are suffering,
give strength to those who are aiding the Sick
and give courage to all in this time of anxiety.

We ask this of you
in the name of your Son Jesus Christ.
AMEN.



Fourth Sunday of Lent...

‘It was your eyes he opened!’

The Gospel today tells the story of the healing of the man born blind who, like us, is being invited to see more clearly, until he finally worships Jesus. In contrast, the Pharisees in the story are becoming more blind.

The more clearly the man can see, the more opposition he faces, as those who hold power object to him and his new-found vision.

How can we as parish communities work for justice for our brothers and sisters who are in need?

We need to see them, to see their struggle, to see the systems which contribute to the crisis.

Through small actions we can live in solidarity and challenge those in power to work for transformation.

‘Transformation... begins with the people of God who start turning the things of death into things of life. And the kings and presidents and nations will follow.’



**Liverpool Archdiocesan
Lourdes Pilgrimage
Association**

The Executive and organisers of the Liverpool Pilgrimage to Lourdes are aware of the uncertain times we are in. We are keeping this year’s summer pilgrimage (24 July) under review.

AT PRESENT THE PILGRIMAGE IS NOT CANCELLED.

It may be difficult to take assisted/sick pilgrims on this year’s pilgrimage. It is still hoped to have a Liverpool presence at Lourdes in July.

There will be further updates as circumstances change on 30 March and 20 April.

Many thanks for all your cooperation and help.

Yours sincerely,

Rev Desmond Seddon
Director

***A message from the
Hospital Chaplaincy Team***

Dear Parishioners,

The Catholic Chaplaincy is proud to have 50 dedicated volunteers who usually visit Catholic patients on the wards, offering them a friendly face, a listening ear, and any pastoral, spiritual, emotional and religious support they require. This is an invaluable service for any patients who may be feeling low, anxious, facing difficult decisions, or those who are just really missing Church. We offer these patients a chat, prayer, Holy Communion or opportunity to see a priest.

Due to the current situation we are no longer allowed to send our volunteers on to the wards. Most of our volunteers are over 70 and their safety, and the safety of our patients, is our priority.

However, the chaplaincy staff – Fr Stephen Lee, Natasha Pritchard and Liam Redmond – will be on hand every day to visit any patients on request. **We won’t be visiting the wards without a request so please do call us if you need us!** Please call us if you are (or a relative or friend is) a patient (religious or not) who is low, anxious, lonely, has no visitors, dying, or in need of a friendly face, Holy Communion or a priest.

Emergency on call priests will be working as normal during this time.

Non-emergency visits: call **0151 706 2828**. Leave a message with patient’s name and ward in case we are out visiting someone else when you call.

Emergency: same as usual – call switchboard from the ward and ask to speak to the emergency on call Catholic priest.

Finally, please pray for us and all of our hospital staff!

God bless,
Fr Stephen, Natasha and Liam

Parish Meeting and Groups

In addition to the cancelation of all Masses and Services, the normal routine of parish meetings and events have been suspended until further notice.

LUCKY NUMBERS

1st Prize: 2 £60.00 Kerry & Andy Cave
2nd Prize: 84 £40.00 Johanna Hookes
3rd Prize: 77 £25.00 Angela Jones

You have to be in it to win it!

If you have changed address or contact phone number since joining the Lucky Numbers draw can you please email your new details to assinfos@gmail.com

Offertory 14/15 March

Plate: £386.04 Envelopes: £301.61
S/O: £379.50 **Total: £1067.15**

Easter Bingo: £143.20

Thank you for your generosity.

Mass Attendance 14/15/March

5.00 pm: 142

9.30am: 140

11.00am: 157

Total: 439

Candle Intentions This Week:



Sanctuary Candle:

Mary Norah Toohey

Marian Candle:

Jim Doyle

Sacred Heart Candle:

Special Intention

Easter Raffle

1st prize £50 - Yellow 746-750

2nd prize Wine Hamper - Green 341-345

3rd prize Easter Goodies Basket - Green 841-845

Thank you for your support.

Thought for the week:

If we practise love of neighbour with great perfection, we will have done everything.

St Teresa of Avila

Pastoral Associate Update:

In these uncertain times, be assured of my prayers for all of you and your families especially on Mothering Sunday. In keeping with archdiocesan guidelines, I am now working from home, but am still able to support and help “virtually”. If you know of any who would like to receive a phone call especially if they are self-isolating or on their own, please do either let your parish priest know and I can arrange a regular call in the next weeks or please do pass on my phone details: 07449 633977. I will be available to call and receive calls Mon-Sat from 11am – 5pm. Perhaps we could all commit to contacting someone regularly during this time of social distancing – everyone likes to be thought of (including your parish priests!) Some parishes will already have volunteers to help to especially ensure that those without technology are supported. We can also send out messages of support to those who are known to us, who are on their own/without technology and to Care Homes. Again, do let your parish priest (or myself) know if you are aware of anyone who would appreciate this as I will be sending out cards etc to various people. Our website www.liverpoolsouthpastoralarea.org.uk has a COVID-19 section which includes details of Mass livestreaming in our Pastoral Area, and under the Churches section will show when churches are open for private prayer or exposition.

Resources include materials for Spiritual Communion as well as retreats and from Churches Together information regarding foodbanks etc.

This Mothering Sunday at 7pm there is a national call to prayer – to light a candle of hope in solidarity – may our lights be a symbol of our humanity.

“~~Social distancing~~ – Physical Distance + Social Solidarity ü ” quote from a Facebook feed.

Stay safe.

God Bless Helen

www.liverpoolsouthpastoralarea.org.uk

Sunday 22 March – St Anne’s hoping to livestream Mass, time tbc (link on Liverpool South website)

Sunday 22 March – 7pm, Light a candle of hope in a window for all to see:

Churches Together www.cte.org.uk/calltoprayer