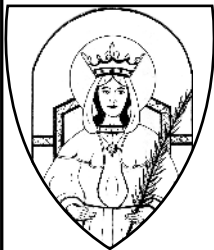
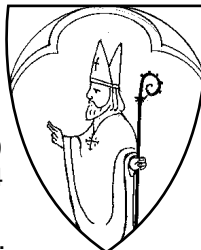


# Our Lady Queen of Martyrs & St Swithin.



**Stonebridge Lane Croxteth Liverpool 11**  
**Tel: 546 3574 - Email: olqom@rcaol.org.uk**  
**Website: queenofmartyrs.org.uk**



## PASTORAL AREA of St Raphael and St Paul

Holy Name and Our Lady & St Philomena 476 0289  
Blessed Sacrament 474 2682. St Teresa's 226 1354

**Parish Priest: Fr Anthony Kelly.**

Deacons: Chris Housbey & Malcolm Fletcher.

Safeguarding Representatives: Catherine Housbey & Malcolm Fletcher.

**Christmas Week 1**

**25th December 2022**

## **Reflections of Christmas Day Mass**

*Isaiah 52:7-10; Psalm 97; Hebrews 1:1-6; John 1:1-18*

Today we read in Isaiah how the Lord has come to redeem his people and how *"all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God."* The author of the letter to the Hebrews tells us in the second reading that God had spoken to his people in past times through various prophets and in various other ways. But now he has spoken to us through his own Son, a Son who has destroyed the power of sin and death. In the gospel, we read the opening passage of St John's gospel in which he speaks of Christ as being the Word of God, a Word which has been with God since the beginning, a Word which was God. He reminds us that this Word was in the world from the very beginning but the world did not recognise it. Those who did recognise it and accept it were saved. We too will be saved if we truly accept that the Son who is born to us today is the Son of God and has the power to save.

## **CHRISTMAS 25th December**

**"A saviour is born to you, He is  
Christ the Lord." Lk. 2:11 JB**

We have every reason to be proud of our human nature. Why? Because Jesus Christ, the second person of the Blessed

Trinity, took it to Himself at his conception in the womb of His Mother Mary. What is more is that when He returned to Heaven he did not abandon it but took it with Him there to reign at His

Father's right hand. Jesus, at this Christmastide we thank you for sharing our humanity and giving us a share in your divinity.



## **Saint Stephen 26<sup>th</sup> December**



“As the number of disciples continued to grow, the Greek-speaking Christians complained against the Hebrew-speaking Christians, saying that their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. So the Twelve called together the community of the disciples and said, ‘It is not right for us to neglect the word of God to serve at table. Brothers, select from among you seven reputable men, filled with the Spirit and wisdom, whom we shall appoint to this task, whereas we shall devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.’ The proposal was acceptable to the whole community, so they chose Stephen, a man filled with faith and the Holy Spirit...” (Acts 6:1-5).

Acts of the Apostles says that Stephen was a man filled with grace and power, who worked great wonders among the people. Certain Jews, members of the Synagogue of Roman Freedmen, debated with Stephen, but proved no match for the wisdom and spirit with which he spoke. They persuaded others to make the charge of blasphemy against him. He was seized and carried before the Sanhedrin.

In his speech, Stephen recalled God’s guidance through Israel’s history, as well as Israel’s idolatry and disobedience. He then claimed that his persecutors were showing this same spirit. “...you always oppose the holy Spirit; you are just like your ancestors”. Stephen’s speech brought anger from the crowd. “But he, filled with the holy Spirit, looked up intently to heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, and he said, ‘Behold, I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.’ ...They threw him out of the city, and began to stone him. ...As they were stoning Stephen, he called out, ‘Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.’ ...‘Lord, do not hold this sin against them’”.

### **Salesian Sisters Pop-In Café**

Each Thursday 1pm – 4pm come along to our Community Room at Queen of Martyrs for delicious soup, toast, a hot drink and good company.

All welcome

### **Write a message of love**

Baubles are at the back of church for you to write a message or dedication to put on our Christmas tree. There is a box for any donations which will be sent to Woodlands Hospice.

### **CPMM,**

### **Publishers of Catholic Pic and other publications**

have vacancies for self-employed drivers to deliver across the Liverpool Archdiocese. Job takes a few days each month and is paid work. Own van required. Would suit self-employed driver looking for extra work or retire person looking for an interest. Work available from January 2023.

Please call 077148 14662 if interested.

## **Reflections of New Years Day Mass**

Num 6:22-27; Psalm 66; Gal 4:4-7; Luke 2:16-21

### **Mary, the Holy Mother of God**

Throughout the Church's liturgical calendar there are several solemnities, feast days and memorials of Our Lady. Today we celebrate Our Blessed Lady as the Mother of God which is not accepted by all Christians. For us, Jesus Christ is God the Son, the second person of the Most Holy Trinity. Therefore, as his mother, Mary is the Mother of God. However, this does not place Mary in a position superior to God or to her Divine Son but simply acknowledges her special connection with Jesus Christ. The Vatican II document, *Lumen gentium*, says: "At the message of the angel, the Virgin Mary received the Word of God in her heart and in her body, and gave Life to the World. Hence she is acknowledged and honoured as being truly the Mother of God and Mother of the Redeemer" (*Lumen gentium* 52).

### **The Most Holy Name of Jesus 03<sup>rd</sup> January**

Although Saint Paul might claim credit for promoting devotion to the Holy Name because Paul wrote in Philippians that God the Father gave Christ Jesus "that name that is above every name" (see 2:9), this devotion became popular because of 12th-century Cistercian monks and nuns but especially through the preaching of Saint Bernardine of Siena, a 15th-century Franciscan. Bernardine used devotion to the Holy Name of Jesus as a way of overcoming bitter and often bloody class struggles and family rivalries or vendettas in Italian city-states. The devotion grew, partly because of Franciscan and Dominican preachers. It spread even more widely after the Jesuits began promoting it in the 16th century. In 1530, Pope Clement V approved an Office of the Holy Name for the Franciscans. In 1721, Pope Innocent XIII extended this feast to the entire Church. Jesus died and rose for the sake of all people. No one can trademark or copyright Jesus' name. Jesus is the Son of God and son of Mary. Everything that exists was created in and through the Son of God (see Colossians 1:15-20). The name of Jesus is debased if any Christian uses it as justification for berating non-Christians. Jesus reminds us that because we are all related to him we are, therefore, all related to one another.

### **Mother of Mercy Raffle**

The proceeds of the raffle which raised over £200 will be used to buy new flasks and Christmas gifts for our homeless people, BIG thank you also for all the hats & gloves kindly donated.

### **Saint Sylvester 31<sup>st</sup> December**

It takes deep humility and courage in the face of criticism for a leader to stand aside and let events take their course, when asserting one's authority would only lead to useless tension and strife.

St Sylvester teaches a valuable lesson for Church leaders, politicians, parents, and others in authority.

He undertook important ecclesiastical projects at the urging of Emperor Constantine.

# **Pastoral Letter for the Solemnity of Mary the Mother of God**

**To be read at a  
31 December 2022 and**

My dear friends in Jesus Christ,

Today is the octave day of Christmas. It is exactly one week since we celebrated the birth of our saviour Jesus Christ, and it is also the first day of the new year. The celebration of the birth of our saviour continues into a new year. It is not over.

Christ comes to us as Emmanuel – God with us, and that is true for all time. God is with us, and came to us as a human person, like us, to save us and give us life to the full. Mary's part in this is celebrated today as the Solemnity of Mary the Mother of God.

Jesus's earthly life began and ended with Mary. He was conceived in her womb, and she was present at his death on the cross. But her involvement didn't end there; she was with the disciples in the Upper Room when the Holy Spirit descended on them, in other words her fidelity to Jesus and his Church is constant.

Mary stays with us as Jesus's mother and therefore our mother. One of the ancient saints of the church, Saint Athanasius wrote, "This was no mere fiction, as some have thought. Far from it! Our Saviour really did become man, and this brought about the salvation of the whole man. Our salvation is no illusion, nor is it salvation of the body only; the salvation of the whole person, body and soul, was really brought about in the Word himself. What was born of Mary, was by nature human, the Lord's body was a real one – real because Mary was our sister, since we are all descended from Adam".

Because of her closeness to us Mary has been a companion to many Christian disciples throughout their lives, and she will be a companion to us as we begin 2023.

We are under no illusion that the coming months are going to be easy for us.

Soaring energy prices and the rising cost of living has brought many people to the edge of despair, unable to make ends meet. Our food banks are under greater pressure than ever before, and people are beginning to use the 'warm and cosy hubs' provided by

churches and local authorities. Mary is no stranger to these hardships as we learnt from the Christmas story and the account of the flight into Egypt with her baby son and Joseph. That is why we have a unique friend in Mary the Mother of God who is our mother too. When Mary was given the title Mother of God it wasn't simply to give recognition for her part in our salvation. This doctrine is also about us. It tells us who we are. It gives us our identity as children of God. In our times the human person is so often devalued and degraded. People become commodities, like goods that are bought and traded. We see this with the exploitation of refugees and migrants.

# **Unity of the Mother of God**

## **II Masses on**

**and 1 January 2023**

Nearer home, we buy and wear cheap clothes made by people who earn a pittance for their labour in sweatshops in developing countries.

The current war in the Ukraine puts a low value on human life as many are slaughtered. Television brings into our homes the horrors of war and exploitation, and the resultant loss and degradation of human life. We believe as Catholic Christians that people matter, that all people matter, and that the whole person matters, body and soul. That's a powerful message we give to the world.

In declaring Mary as the Mother of God we are asserting that we are brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ, Son of Mary and Son of God. We are therefore sisters and brothers of Jesus, the Prince of Peace, and that our dignity is given us by being created in love by our Father in heaven. If Jesus is our brother, then Mary is our mother too. This means that every person is very special to God – he has given them a special dignity as his child, yet we don't always see our fellow human beings in that way. Nor do we treat others with the dignity that they deserve.

To treat others with more respect could be our first resolution for the new year. Just think of the difference that that would make to your personal lives and the lives of others. We should also try to be more like Mary, woman of faith. Mary was probably from the poorest section of Jewish society in her day.

They were called the 'Poor of the Lord'. Living in poverty with no place in society teaches you to be dependent on others and reliant on God. Mary who was from that group who wanted nothing for themselves yet relied on God for everything was chosen to fulfil God's promise made to his people.

Can we realise how little we can achieve on our own and develop a strong sense of dependence on each other? Can we be more open to God's grace? The year ahead is a time of endless possibilities.

Just think how different it would be if we could be just a little like Mary the Mother of God?

May the new year ahead be a time of unity, peace and health, and may the Lord bless you and your families.

Most Rev Malcolm McMahon OP  
Archbishop of Liverpool  
Archbishop's House  
Liverpool L19 0PH

**Christmas Message of  
The Most Reverend Malcolm McMahon OP,  
Archbishop of Liverpool**

We always speak of Christmas celebrations as being a time of joy and happiness, and a time to gather with family and friends. We see this in the weeks leading up to the feast - a time of preparation when people want to make sure that everything is perfect. This year may have to be different – a recent survey suggested that 54% of people in this country will be cutting back on Christmas celebrations against a backdrop of rising food prices and energy costs. It's very easy to lose sight of the real meaning of Christmas amidst the tinsel, glitter, food and drink, and yet the realities of the first Christmas are all around us today and we don't have to look far to see them.

Life was uncertain for Mary and Joseph too as they travelled the long road to Bethlehem where they had to take part in a census called by an occupying power. Christ was born in a stable on a cold winter's night – not an ideal time or place for our saviour to be born. His first visitors were shepherds who had been looking after their sheep on a cold, bleak hillside, not the visitors you might expect.

Our times may be uncertain, and our Christmas may be different this year but the reason for our celebrations remains unchanged. Our annual celebration of Christmas is one of love and peace and nothing can change that.

We believe that our love for one another is a sign of God's love for us - 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son' – and through our celebrations we give thanks to God for sending us Jesus, born of Mary in Bethlehem, announced by the angels, and visited by those shepherds and later by wise men.

It is the love of God that shines through this great feast, and we show that love by the ways in which we reach out to those around us. To our relatives and friends, to those alone at Christmas, to those in need who have much less than ourselves and by the way in which we welcome those seeking refuge in our country.

While some things may have to change for us the message of Christmas remains the same, precious moments with those we love and care for, this is the warmth, the comfort and the joy which Christmas brings to us and those around us.

Above all Christmas is, has always been, and always will be a time of hope. The hope which the birth of Jesus brings is for all time and eternal. In his Gospel St John says, 'the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it'. Jesus is the light of the world shining through any darkness in our lives. May this Christmas be a time of hope for us all.

I wish you a happy, peaceful and blessed Christmas.

The Most Reverend Malcolm McMahon OP

Archbishop of Liverpool

December 2022

## God Who Speaks

New resources including 2 new Bible and Art videos on The Madonna and Child and The Nativity; a look at the 'O Antiphons' and a variety of family activities:

- **Christmastide** - [www.godwhospeaks.uk/christmas/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/christmas/)
- **Videos:**
  - The Madonna and Child - [www.godwhospeaks.uk/the-madonna-and-child/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/the-madonna-and-child/)
  - The Nativity - [www.godwhospeaks.uk/the-nativity/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/the-nativity/)
- **New Sunday Reflections series** by David Jackson - [www.godwhospeaks.uk/sunday-reflections/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/sunday-reflections/)
- **Good Work: Working Towards the Common Good** - [www.godwhospeaks.uk/friday-working-towards-the-common-good/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/friday-working-towards-the-common-good/)
- *This month David McLoughlin tackles legislation for workers' rights and our vocation to image God's creative love in all our relationships, including our place of work.*
- **Bible Society Christmas resources** here - [www.godwhospeaks.uk/saints-seasons-christmas-celebrate-christmas-with-bible-society/](http://www.godwhospeaks.uk/saints-seasons-christmas-celebrate-christmas-with-bible-society/)

### ONLINE EVENTS

The Ignatian Spirituality Centre offers you material for daily prayer  
[https://www.onlineprayer.net/advent-retreat/?mc\\_cid=6603de1a40&mc\\_eid=be9e521fee](https://www.onlineprayer.net/advent-retreat/?mc_cid=6603de1a40&mc_eid=be9e521fee)

St Beuno's Outreach team, led by Father Damian Jackson SJ, have developed Advent reflections  
<https://stbeunosoutreach.wordpress.com/prego/>

For 2023 - online

Light of Truth: An Apostolate of the Dominican Sisters of St Joseph  
<https://www.lightoftruth.uk/> is now live.

There are a variety of online courses available which you can join at  
<https://www.lightoftruth.uk/join> **Forthcoming events include:**

- Catholic Mothers' Q+A: Friday January 6th, 7.30pm-9pm
- Pentecost - the work of the Holy Spirit in the saints: Friday January 13th, 7pm-8.30pm

## Live Streaming System

All services are live streamed via Church Services TV. You can view Services via the link on our website, Facebook and Twitter sites or at [www.churchservices.tv/croxteth](http://www.churchservices.tv/croxteth)

## Liturgy for the Week

### Our Lady Queen of Martyrs & St Swithin

<b>Saturday</b>	<b>24th</b>	<b>6.00pm</b>	Sr. Edith C.P. (S.I)
<b>Christmas Eve</b>	<b>Midnight Mass</b>		Hilary Gordon
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>25th</b>	<b>11.30am</b>	Margaret Sherry (Anniv)
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>28th</b>	<b>7.00pm</b>	Mary Kelly (Anniv) & Sr. Kathleen Hamilton
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>31st</b>	<b>6.00pm</b>	Family & Friends of David McLoughlin
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>1st Jan</b>	<b>11.30am</b>	Crowder & Heard Families Near & Far
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>3rd</b>	<b>9.00am</b>	Eucharistic Service and Adoration until 3pm
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>4th</b>	<b>7.00pm</b>	Mass: Sarah Corson L.D
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>5th</b>	<b>7.00pm</b>	Mass: Nicola Brocklehurst L.D.
<b>Friday</b>	<b>6th</b>	<b>6.30pm</b>	Mass: Special Intention
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>7th</b>	<b>6.00pm</b>	Sr. Patricia of the Heart of Mary
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>8th</b>	<b>11.30am</b>	Ann & Frank Doran

**Your prayers are asked for those who have**

#### Died recently

Kathleen White, Josie Riley.

#### Anniversaries and Birthdays

Mary Kelly.

**Please pray too for all those who are lonely or housebound and for those who are sick, at home or in hospital, especially.**

Angela Adlen	<i>Eileen Guy</i>	<i>Paul &amp; Kate</i>	<i>Christine &amp; David</i>
Angela Gregory	<i>Ellen Cooke</i>	<i>Peter Fraser</i>	<u><i>Fitzsimmons</i></u>
Baby Bella	<i>Janet Clark</i>	<i>Robbie Ross</i>	<i>Joan,</i>
Bernie Boyde	<i>John Murphy</i>	<i>Toni Dal</i>	<i>Andreas <u>Samaras</u></i>
Brian Threlfall	<i>Josie Dunne</i>	<i>Joan Turner</i>	<i>Margaret &amp;</i>
David Holgate	<i>Kenny Morley</i>	<i>Canon Brendan Alger</i>	<i>Joseph <u>Maloney</u></i>
Diane Bell	<i>Margaret Bradley</i>	<i>Julie Pearce</i>	<i>Vassilis</i>
Eddie Unsworth	<i>Margaret Lace</i>	<i>Eleanor Mawdsley</i>	<u><i>Alamaniotis</i></u>
<i>G., + MP., + TC.,</i>	<i>Sr Edith Culliton</i>	<i>Peter &amp; Jane Kelly</i>	<i>Ann Shreeve</i>