



CATHOLIC CHAPLAINCY TO THE LIVERPOOL UNIVERSITIES

The University Church of St Philip Neri Church ~ "The Oratory Church"

30 Catharine Street L8 7NL Tel: 0151-709 3858

Chaplain: Fr Neil Ritchie

www.cathchap.org.uk unichap@rcaol.org.uk

[Liverpool CathChap Facebook Page](#) [liverpoolcathsoc](#)



26th November 2023

Solemnity of Jesus Christ, Universal King



Email addresses: unichap@rcaol.org.uk is a general address.
If you want to contact Fr Neil privately, use:
n.ritchie@rcaol.org.uk. To contact Hana, use
h.koubkova@rcaol.org.uk

Events for Students and University Members:

Masses & Services This Week:

Monday: 8.15am Mass at the MC Convent (55 Seel St)
Tuesday: 8am Morning Prayer / breakfast; **6.00pm** Mass*
Wednesday: 12.30 Mass at Faith Express]
Thursday Adoration 5.30pm*
*events in the chaplaincy; Blackburne Place entrance
Sunday: Mass 6pm

On **Tuesday** – start the day at the chaplaincy with **Morning Prayer** (15m) at 8pm, followed by **breakfast** – fresh coffee, cereal, orange juice & toast!



An Introduction to Moral Theology

Wednesdays at Faith Express after 12.30 Mass. Starts this week!

What is morality? - How does our faith shape our choices and actions? - What are the sources of morality? -How do we go about resolving moral issues? – What is virtue? We will look at several applies areas of moral theology.

***Please note that Faith Express is open to all students of LJMU, LIPA and UoL ***



Thursday evening this week:

Adoration (5.30-6.00pm);
£1 supper. All welcome!



Chaplaincy Christmas Party

Monday 4th December! The evening starts with **Mass in Church** at 6pm.

Then we go across

the road to the Blackburne Arms hotel for our Christmas meal.

Afterwards, we return to the

Chaplaincy till late! **Now is the time**

to pay if you haven't already! You can pay today after **Mass**. The deadline for payments is this **Tuesday 28th November**. If you haven't paid by then, we won't put an order in for you, even if you have made a menu selection!



Weekly Collection & other donations, you can pay online at philipnerihouse.sumupstore.com
Thank you so much for your contributions



LJMU students - Fr Neil is visiting the Student Life

building tomorrow (Monday 27th) and would love to meet any LJMU students or staff who are free. SLB room 203 [24] for 2.30pm-3.30pm

Tuesday 12th December: Mass for the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, followed by 'Hispanic social'!!
The Rite of Mass will be said in Spanish, but everyone is welcome!

Readers & Servers: Thanks to all of you who have volunteered to read at Mass and to serve. This will really enhance our liturgy. We are always looking for more! There are WhatsApp groups on the CathSoc hub for each.

If your are **musical, play a musical instrument, or would just be happy to sing**, we'd also love to hear from you!

Please note: all chaplaincy events are open to university members who are **18 yrs of age or older**. If you are under 18 at the moment, please make yourself known to Fr Neil or to Hana

Vegetarian, Vegan or special diets: for events with catering, we are happy to provide suitable alternatives if you let us know in advance you are coming, and tell us what you can or can't have!

Exploring our Faith: Dogma

What are Dogmas, in the Catholic Church? Originally, I set out to write a reflection on Dogma, Doctrine and Tradition, but there was so much to say on each it has ended up being three separate reflections!

Dogmas are defined by the Church's Magisterium (teaching authority) based on the truth revealed to us by God (CCC #88) Here's an early example: in Acts Chapter 15, we have a meeting in Jerusalem of the leaders of the early Church. There is disagreement: Can gentiles (non-Jewish people) be admitted to the Christian Church, or must they first be circumcised, and follow the Law of Moses, as some said? They debate the issue. St Peter makes a speech, echoed by Paul and Barnabas, describing how he witnessed that the Holy Spirit had already been given to gentile Christians. ***Their experience of what God was doing*** was a form of **revelation**, which they accepted as guiding them as to the right thing to do. A **decision** is made by the elders, and a letter to the different church communities written and disseminated, which **authoritatively instructed** that gentile converts had only a few guidelines to follow, but did not have to follow the Law of Moses. The decision was defined by the authority (elders), but based on the wider **experience of the people of God**.



Mary, the 'God-bearer' (Theotokos)

Dogmas are needed when the Church is confronted with a problem about what it believes, or where error has crept in about what is revealed by God. For instance, that Mary is the Mother of God (which as you may have noticed, is inscribed above the door of our church in Latin and Greek: 'Deipara' / 'Thetokos' – literally – 'God bearer') was defined as a dogma at the Council of Ephesus in 431, because some said that she was only the mother of the *human* nature of Jesus, not his divine nature. Debate led to the formulation of a dogma. Transubstantiation (that the bread and wine at Mass are transformed in substance into the Body of Christ) was defined as a dogma at the Council of Trent in the mid 16th

Century, because some Protestant Reformers rejected transubstantiation in favour of consubstantiation (the belief that the substance of bread and wine remain, but the substance of the body and blood of Christ are present alongside).

But there are many truths which are central to Catholic faith which are not defined as dogmas; e.g. the reality of Grace, or that the Church is the Mystical Body of Christ. They have not need to be defined as dogmas because they have never been called into question.

Dogmas are therefore clarifications about what we believe God has revealed. Arriving at them requires interpretation, which is done authoritatively by the Magisterium, the teaching office of the Church – but often informed by the experience of the wider people of God. Dogmas are not the whole of revelation: the Catholic faith is much greater, so to speak, than the sum of its dogmas! But dogmas deal with specific things that the Church wants to define. To deny a dogma of the Church would be to commit heresy. But more positively, the Catechism says: 'there is an organic connection between our spiritual life and the dogmas. Dogmas are **lights along the path of faith**; they illuminate it and make it secure (#89)'. Somewhat more technically, my New Dictionary of Catholic Theology says that dogmas are truths communicated to the church 'in order that each person within the community could become existentially engaged with God's truth'. We shouldn't see them as simply intellectual formulations or juridical pronouncements (p. 295).

The terms **dogma** and **doctrine** are often used interchangeably, but they mean different things. Dogmas relate the truth of revelation, but doctrines explain and teach how a particular dogma may be understood. There may be more than one acceptable explanation of how a particular dogma may be understood. 'It is on the level of doctrine that the Church admits of pluralism, not on the level of dogma (ibid.). More about doctrine, and tradition, in future weeks!

Have a great week!

Fr Neil