



# 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

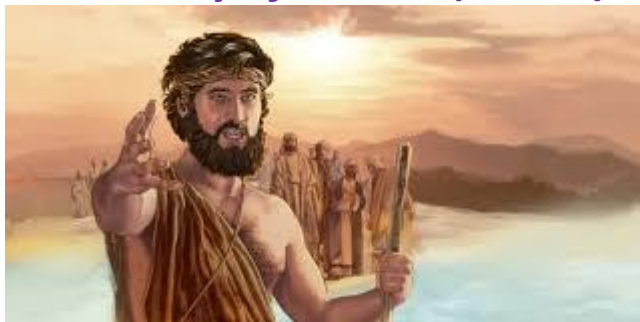
[www.cathchap.org.uk](http://www.cathchap.org.uk) [unichap@rcaol.org.uk](mailto:unichap@rcaol.org.uk)

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



**10<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

**2nd Sunday of Advent (Year B)**



Email addresses: [unichap@rcaol.org.uk](mailto:unichap@rcaol.org.uk) is a general address.

If you want to contact Fr Neil privately, use:

[n.ritchie@rcaol.org.uk](mailto:n.ritchie@rcaol.org.uk). To contact Hana, use

[h.koubkova@rcaol.org.uk](mailto: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: Morning prayer 8am, followed by or breakfast \***

**6.00pm** Mass in honour of Our Lady of Guadalupe \*

**Wednesday** : 12.30 Mass @ Faith Express;

**Thursday** Mass 6pm\* prior to CathSoc film night

\*events in the chaplaincy; Blackburne Place entrance

**\*\*\*No Sunday Mass until 7<sup>th</sup> January\*\*\***

Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> 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!



**On Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> December. Cathsoc are organising a Christmas film night Mass in the Chaplaincy @ 6pm**

**You are invited to join the Missionaries of Charity Sisters for Carol Singing at the Roadside Crib  
2pm on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> December**

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December, 5pm

**Festival Carol Service at the Metropolitan Cathedral**

A mix of seasonal music and readings as well as congregational carols.

**One room left** in the student house for 2024-25...we'd be particularly interested to hear from any girls who might consider staying...

**Weekly Collection & other donations, you can pay online at** [philipnerihouse.sumupstore.com](http://philipnerihouse.sumupstore.com)  
Thank you so much for your contributions



I am very happy that 2 of you have decided to train as volunteers for Mary's Meals. What can we do here to help raise money? Suggestions when we met a couple of weeks ago were: bake sale, ticketed social event, making the Thursday £1 supper a "£2 supper" with the extra donated to Mary's Meals...any others? It costs just £19.15 to feed a child for a whole school year, so a donation of any amount will go a long way!

way!

**'Thanks...'** to each and every one of you, for helping to make this term even more fun, lively and spiritually inspired than ever! We've had all kinds of events – worship & prayer, catechetical, theological and not least social!

I want to thank particularly Kasia, who works in the back office and is usually unseen, Hana, our chaplaincy assistant, and Sr Rachel, the resident community and also our fantastic CathSoc committee for all their hard work. Next term we have much to look forward to, including of course our chaplaincy retreat weekend in February (23<sup>rd</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>). Please also keep our enquirers, who are exploring the Catholic faith, in your prayers – Yasmin, Rosie and Maria. I hope you all have a wonderful vacation, and are able to enter deeply into the spirit of Christmas. God bless,

**Fr Neil**

**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!

# Doctrine

...what does it mean?

What's it got to do with you??

A couple of weeks ago I wrote about **Dogma** in the life of the Church, which if you recall are specific defined beliefs that the Church believes to have been revealed by God. The need to define them may come about as a result of some dispute or confusion which calls for a resolution by some definition by the teaching authority of the Church – the Magisterium.

Here I want to explore a little more the meaning of another related term:- **Doctrine**. Since the beginning of the Church, its core belief, or doctrine, has been that Jesus Christ, God made man, came on earth, and by his death and Resurrection has set us free from sin. For those who receive Jesus as the Christ, the meaning of his words and deeds have continued to be the focus of reflection, study and teaching. The primary source of this is of course the Bible, especially the Gospels. The Church communicates the meaning of Christ's life not only in its preaching, but also in its liturgy, in the lives of saints, in its culture – hymns, sacred art, customs, as well as in papal pronouncements and encyclicals. But all of these must be in harmony with the scriptures, and recognise its authority.

Church doctrines share certain characteristics: they are rooted in the person of Christ, and are not merely repetitions of his words and deeds, but “faithful interpretations of the meanings of these for particular times and circumstances (Komonchak, Collins & Lane, *New Dictionary of Theology*, 1987) Doctrines enunciate truth, but, even taken together, cannot exhaust the truth of the Mystery of Christ. They are shaped by the language, thought patterns and concerns of the particular time and milieu of the church community in which they are formulated.

“It can be seen that the whole purpose of this complex of doctrinal expressions is to provide Christians with a worldview by means of which they can understand themselves and their relations to God and to Jesus Christ (ibid.)” So

the doctrines of the Church are there to help you connect your life to the Jesus of the Gospel.

There is a ‘reciprocity’ between the teaching of the Church and the members of the Church who receive it. Authentic teaching is not arbitrarily exercised. A Pope, for instance, can't simply ‘decide’ by himself to make a new teaching; he has to discern that this is the faith of the People of God. Doctrines in other words are expressions, or clarifications of the faith of God's people. From the beginning, the Church has believed that the Holy Spirit is with us and guides us into the truth (cf. Jn 14:26), and protects the Church as a whole from error.

“...the whole purpose of this complex of doctrinal expressions is to provide Christians with a worldview by means of which they can understand themselves and their relations to God and to Jesus Christ”

Dogmas are the teachings of greatest significance, and are very central, and unchanging. They express truths we believe have been revealed by God. There are doctrinal teachings, however, geared more to specific situations, which are considered neither revelatory or unchanging. The teaching of the Church about specific things may change. This can be due to the Church penetrating more deeply into the Gospel message and recognising new ways in which it must be understood. An example is

slavery, which for centuries was considered acceptable, or even part of the natural order – yet which in more recent centuries, as the whole concept of human dignity and the right to freedom came into view, we now see to be wrong, and is clearly reflected in church teaching.

Perhaps the most important thing to say about the doctrine of the Church is that it is a mistake to reduce it to dry formulations or legalities; the teaching of the Church is there to help us to

engage with the Christ of the Gospel, develop our relationship with Him, and put his message into practice in our own life.

God bless

*Fr Neil*

