



# CATHOLIC CHAPLAINCY TO THE LIVERPOOL UNIVERSITIES

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

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Chaplain: Fr Neil Ritchie

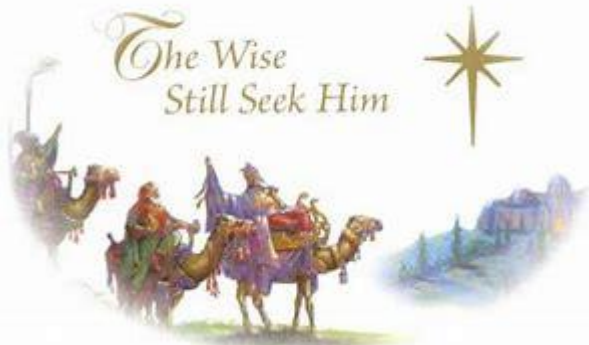
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**5<sup>th</sup> January 2025**

## **The Epiphany of the Lord (Year C)**



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Events for Students and University Members:

### **Masses & Services This Week:**

**Monday:** 8.15 Mass at the [Missionaries of Charity](#) house, 55 Seel street L1 4AZ, – students are always welcome!  
**Tuesday:** Morning Prayer/breakfast 8am; Mass 5.30pm  
**Wednesday:** 12.30pm Mass at Faith Express  
**Thursday:** 5.30 Adoration  
**Sunday:** Next Mass 6pm January 5th

**We would like to wish you all a very Happy New Year...every blessing for the year ahead!**

Welcome back to a new term! There is a lot to look forward to! The first House Prayer & Fellowship takes place next week, on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup>. In addition to the usual round of weekly events, we have many different things to look forward to. Visiting speakers will include Fr Taras Khomych, lecturer in theology at Hope University, on the Jesus Prayer, Dr Paige de Polo, lecturer in the Science Faculty at LJMU, on Science and Religion, and Canon Luiz Ruscillo, scripture scholar. In addition, Fr Neil is preparing talks on the vocation of the laity in the Church and on Psychology and Catholicism.

We are also firming up plans for the June pilgrimage walk and will soon be having a planning meeting for everyone who is interested.

Additionally, we hope to arrange an Interfaith event this term together with members of other faith societies.

In February we will have our annual **retreat at Freshfield** (where we were last year) Sisters Angela Marie OP and Bernadette Marie OP will once again be joining us.

**February 21<sup>st</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup>. Mark the dates in you diary now!**

The **filming of Mass** by two students from Manchester University as part of their Masters project in Visual Anthropology is due to take place today, January 5<sup>th</sup>. The main purpose of the film is to look at the details and processes that take place during a Catholic mass, and how these processes contribute to a feeling of community and sanctity for the congregation. The film will not be broadcast or distributed anywhere, & will form part of their assessment; it will only be seen by our small masters cohort (18 people) and the course leaders. They also wish to interview a few of us afterwards.

**Philip Neri Student House: would you like to be part of the resident community at the Chaplaincy, living at Philip Neri House?**

Residents play a vital role in supporting CathSoc & the Chaplaincy. (They also have one of the best garden views in Liverpool!) If you are interested, come and have a chat with Fr Neil.

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



**Thursday Evening: Adoration @ 5.30pm.** Our weekday chapel in the chaplaincy has had a re-arrangement during the vacation! This is for a trial period; please let us know whether the new arrangement works well, and is to your liking! Following Adoration, we will sit down to eat. This term, we will be reverting to the custom of having a more simple meal of soup and bread. It'll be a fairly substantial soup though!

**The Jubilee Year has now begun!**

*Here is a reminder of its main themes, based on the document by which the Holy Father promulgated in a few months ago:*



Hope is the central message of this 8,400 words decree, known by its Latin title "Spes non Confundit" ("Hope does not disappoint"). In the bull, Pope Francis told believers that in this Jubilee Year "we are called to be **tangible signs of hope** for those of our brothers and sisters who experience hardship of any kind." He emphasized the need for diplomacy to resolve the wars and armed conflicts around the world, called on leaders to address the needs of "the billions" of poor people in the world who lack food and water, and appealed—as Pope John Paul II did in Jubilee Year 2000— (continues overleaf...)

for the cancellation of the debts of poor countries and amnesty or pardon for prisoners.

"Everyone knows what it is to hope. In the heart of each person, hope dwells as the desire and expectation of good things to come," the pope said in the decree that does not shy away from the dramatic situation humanity is experiencing.

"Christian hope does not deceive or disappoint because it is grounded in the certainty that nothing and no one may ever separate us from God's love," he emphasized, drawing inspiration from St. Paul's Letter to the Romans.

He prayed that this Jubilee Year may provide an opportunity "to be renewed in hope" not only for the more than 30 million pilgrims who are expected to travel to Rome for this Jubilee but for the countless millions who, unable to do so, will celebrate it in their local churches or through pilgrimages to Marian shrines across the world. He presented it also as an opportunity for conversion, reconciliation with God through the sacrament of penance, obtaining indulgences through God's mercy, renewing our faith and love through hope, and proclaiming God's love to the many people suffering in today's world.

He reminded believers that "the Christian life is **a journey, calling for moments of greater intensity** to encourage and sustain hope as the constant companion that guides our steps toward the goal of our encounter with the Lord Jesus" (italics in the original).

"In addition to finding hope in God's grace" in this Jubilee Year, he said, "[w]e are also called to discover hope in the signs of the times that the Lord gives us." He said, "We need to recognize the immense goodness present in our world, lest we be tempted to think ourselves overwhelmed by evil and violence."

Francis identified "the first sign of hope" in "the desire for *peace* in our world, which once more finds itself immersed in the tragedy of war." He asked, "How is it possible... [that] the desperate plea for help is not motivating world leaders to resolve the numerous regional conflicts in view of their possible consequences at the global level?" He said that "the need for peace challenges us all and demands that concrete steps be taken" and called for diplomacy to "be tireless in its commitment to seek, with courage and creativity, every opportunity to undertake negotiations aimed at a lasting peace."

A second sign of hope should "entail having enthusiasm for life and a readiness to share it," he said. "Sadly this is lacking," he noted, pointing to the declining birthrate in many countries.

During the Jubilee Year, Pope Francis said, "we are called to be tangible signs of hope for those of our brothers and sisters who experience hardship of any kind." He proposed many concrete ways to do this.

He called on believers to care for prisoners, and appealed to governments to restore hope to prisoners by "forms of amnesty or pardon." He said believers and their pastors "should be demanding dignified conditions for those in prison" and the abolition of the death penalty. He announced that he wishes "to open a Holy Door" in a prison, just as he will open the Holy Doors in the four major Roman basilicas.

He appealed to believers to care for "the sick, at home or in hospital" through "closeness and affection" and to care for the elderly who so "often feel lonely and abandoned."

He said it was particularly important to give signs of hope to young people in today's world. "It is sad to see young people who are without hope" because they lack employment, job security or realistic prospects for the future "and grow discouraged," take to drugs or seek other escape routes. "The Jubilee Year should inspire the church to make greater efforts to "draw close to them," he said.

He called on believers in this Jubilee Year to offer "signs of hope" to migrants who leave their homelands in search of a better life for themselves and their families. He insisted that "exiles, displaced persons and refugees...ought to be guaranteed security and access to employment and education, and the means to find their place in a new social context"

Then in a powerful plea, Francis said, "I ask with all my heart that hope be granted to the billions of the poor, who often lack the essentials of life...It is scandalous," he said, "that in a world possessed of immense resources, destined largely to producing weapons, the poor continue to be the majority of the planet's population, billions of people."

Pope Francis said the Jubilee Year reminds us that "the goods of the earth are not destined for a privileged few, but for everyone" and said that "the rich must be generous and not avert their eyes from the faces of their brothers and sisters in need." He appealed to governments to divert money away from military spending toward a global fund dedicated to ending hunger and aiding the development of poor countries.

He called on more affluent nations "to forgive the debts of countries that will never be able to repay them. More than a question of generosity, this is a matter of justice." This injustice is compounded by the "ecological debt" that exists between the Global North and South "connected to commercial imbalances with effects on the environment and the disproportionate use of natural resources by certain countries over long periods of time."

The Argentine pope recalled that the Jubilee Year coincides with the 1,700th anniversary of the first great ecumenical council in Nicaea "that sought to preserve the Church's unity, which was seriously threatened by the denial of the full divinity of Jesus Christ and hence his consubstantiality with the Father" but "after various debates, by the grace of the Spirit they unanimously approved the Creed that we still recite each Sunday at the celebration of the Eucharist."

That council "was a milestone in the Church's history" and "represents a summons to all Churches and Ecclesial Communities to persevere on the path to visible unity," he said. He recalled that the date of Easter was discussed at Nicaea and lamented that the "different approaches" of the Eastern and Western churches prevent all Christians from celebrating "the fundamental event of our faith on the same day." But, he said, "[p]rovidentially a common celebration [of Easter] will take place in the year 2025. May this serve as an appeal to all Christians, East and West, to take a decisive step forward toward unity around a common date for Easter."

From the beginning of his pontificate, the Jesuit pope has encouraged people to seek God's forgiveness through the sacrament of reconciliation. He did so again in the bull. Moreover, he added that the Jubilee Year indulgences would be made available to the faithful as happened in the past.

Francis concluded by saying that "the death and resurrection of Jesus is the heart of our faith and the basis of our hope" and "by virtue of the hope in which we were saved, we can view the passage of time with the certainty that the history of humanity and our own individual history are not doomed to a dead end or a dark abyss, but directed to an encounter with the Lord of Glory."

*Taken From America magazine, May 9<sup>th</sup> 2024*

