



# 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

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## 29<sup>th</sup> October 2023

### 30<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A



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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 : All Saints Day: Mass at 6pm in Church** [No Mass at Faith Express]

**Thursday** Adoration 10.15-11.15am (see below), 5.30pm **Mass of All Souls** followed by "£1 supper"

\*events in the chaplaincy; Blackburne Place entrance

**Sunday: Mass 6pm**

## Wednesday is the Solemnity of All Saints

...which is a **Holy Day of Obligation** – so we all make a point of making Mass part of our Day. Mass will take place here at 6pm in church (come to the main church doors)

The Staff and PhD Group meets on Wednesday evening, from 7pm (after Mass) -9pm

### Thursday Morning: 10.15-11.15 Eucharistic Exposition & Adoration



*Jesus Youth* is a Catholic organisation which aims to help young people encounter Christ. 'Encounter Enroute' is a 3 day pilgrimage around England and Wales in which the Blessed Sacrament is taken in a motorcade,

stopping at different university chaplaincies and churches.

Next Thursday they are coming here! There will be a one hour prayer service in church, with exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, silence, music and prayers. If you are free, please come along!

Thursday evening, since we will have had Exposition earlier in the day, there will be **Mass at 5.30pm**, which will

be All Souls Day. During our shared meal, we will be joined with local representatives of the charity **Mary's Meals**. The **Mary's Meals** campaign was born in 2002 when Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow visited Malawi during a famine and met a mother dying from AIDS. When Magnus asked her eldest son Edward what his dreams were in life, he replied simply: "I want to have enough food to eat and to go to school one day." That moment was a key part of the inspiration which led to the founding of Mary's Meals, which began by feeding just 200 children in Malawi in 2002. Today, we feed **2,429,182** hungry children every school day across 18 countries.

The charity is named in honour of Mary, the mother of Jesus, who brought up her own child in poverty.

**Holy Water bottles** already filled with holy water are available at the back of church – we ask for a £1 donation to the chaplaincy – the water itself comes free, and you can come for a free top up when its empty!! Thanks to (big) AI for sourcing a suitable holy water vessel which is in the chaplaincy and where you can get a free top up!



If you want to **bless your room or your home** – there is a simple prayer service on the back page which you can use yourself

\*\*\*If you are coming regularly to the chaplaincy, please ask Fr Neil or Hana for the **digital door code**.\*\*\*

**November is the month of the Holy Souls**, when we make a special point of praying for those who have died – both those we have known and loved, and those many people who have no-one to pray for them. On Wednesday you will have the chance to make a written list ("Pious List") of names of people who have died. These will be placed before the altar in church and remain there throughout the month

*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!*

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

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



**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.

Here is a simple formula which you can use to  
bless your room or house here in Liverpool:

**“In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit”**

**Let us listen to the words of Our Lord, according to John:**

“There are many rooms in my Father’s house, and I am going to prepare a place for you. I would not tell you this if it were not so (John 14:2)”

**Prayer of Blessing**

**Lord, be close to us, your servants, who live here in this room / house, and who ask for your blessing.**

**Bless all that we undertake here: the work we do, the rest we take, the hospitality we extend to friends, the food we enjoy.**

**In all things, may we stay close to you and never depart from your will.**

**Keep us safe from all that would harm us or take us away from you. May your holy angels stay here and guard us in peace.**

**When our life journey on earth is ended, may we be welcomed into that special place that you yourself have made ready for us in your Father’s house.**

**We make this prayer through Christ our Lord.**

**The Sprinkling**

**Let this water call to mind our baptism into Christ, who has redeemed us by his death and Resurrection.**

Now sprinkle a *small* amount of Holy Water into each corner of your room, or each room of your house. A few drops is sufficient, and avoid getting it on electrical equipment, laptops, etc!!

Conclude the Rite by saying:

**May the peace of Christ rule in our hearts,  
And may the word of Christ in all its richness dwell in us  
so that whatever we do, in word and work,  
we will do in the name of the Lord.**

## *Hallowe'en....*

In the email that Jesus Youth sent me some time ago, they explained that the 'Encounter Enroute' pilgrimage with the Blessed Sacrament sets out on the 31<sup>st</sup> of October for a reason: it's Hallowe'en, and they wanted to '**reclaim Hallowe'en for Christ.**' 'Reclaim' is a good word, because we can see how secularised (and commercialised) Hallowe'en has become over the years, and it's all too easy for us to get caught up the 'Hallowe'en hype' without giving proper thought to the significance of the occasion, and how it should fit with the rest of our faith.

The significance of Hallowe'en comes from the fact that it is the 'eve' before the great feast of All Saints, or 'All Hallows.' Devotion to the Saints is a feature of our Catholic faith which was suppressed in these lands at the Protestant Reformation. But it was traditionally one of the great feasts of the year. The 1<sup>st</sup> of November also marks to start of the month of the Holy Souls – when we make a special point of praying for those who have gone before us – another Catholic practice

which was disapproved of by the Protestant reformers. So November starts with thanking God for all the **saints** who have graced the Church, and continues with remembrance of **all the dead**. They need our prayers because most of them will be in Purgatory (another concept which, you guessed it, was 'junked' by the reformers). I say 'most' because we have all known people who we have quietly suspected were saints, and who could well have gone straight to Heaven, though they may never be canonised – 'unsung saints'. But as the Bible tells us, it is a 'holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins' (Macc 12:46).

But back to Hallowe'en. "The customs now associated with Halloween have disparate origins, resulting from a fusion of folklore, Catholic tradition and modern popular culture. Trick-or-treating is a survival of the once-widespread practice of "begging customs", when children would go door-to-door asking for small gifts of food or money. At Halloween they would beg for "soul cakes", in memory of the souls in Purgatory...Driven underground, these customs survived in some parts of England as late as the 19th century: there were local traditions of going out to fields or hilltops at midnight on Halloween and lighting fires to pray for the souls of departed family and friends." (Catholic Herald, 29.9.2020).



The tradition of carving 'jack o' lanterns' and dressing up in costumes associated with ghosts or the occult probably originated from folk tales, influenced by even older pagan traditions, which suggested that at certain times of the year, including

Hallowe'en, the boundary between the visible and invisible worlds was very thin, and that spirits were more present in our world. Disguising yourself as a ghost or evil spirit might give you some protection from them. The same principle applied to mounting 'devil charms' on doors, or gargoyles on medieval cathedrals. Personally, I think saying your prayers and attending the sacraments are far better protection!

It's easy to dismiss these things as 'just a bit of fun'. But whatever you make of the traditions, the belief in the reality of invisible world and the existence of evil is intrinsic to our faith. Many of you were at Canon Montjean's fascinating talk on angels a couple of weeks ago. **Do not, whatever you do, become drawn into 'occult' practices** – seances, witchcraft, Tarot cards etc. You'd be surprised how often I have heard people – practising Catholics – say they have dabbled in these things, often thinking it was 'just harmless fun'. It can open doors within people which can lead to serious trouble- spiritual and psychological. And it is clearly defined in our faith as a sin. If you have, don't panic – go to confession and have an honest chat with the priest.

You don't have to sit miserably at home on Hallowe'en – you can go out and have fun, but do so intelligently, knowing the significance of this night and with moderation – and with a prayer for the 'Holy Souls'!

God bless and have a blessed week!

*Fr Neil*