



# CATHOLIC CHAPLAINCY TO THE LIVERPOOL UNIVERSITIES

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

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**22<sup>nd</sup> September 2024**

**25<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year B)**



**"Anyone who welcome one of these children in my name welcomes me" Mk 9:37**

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**Events for Students and University Members:**

## Masses & Services This Week:

**Monday:** 8.15am Mass at the **Missionaries of Charity** house, 55 Seel street L1 4AZ, – students are always welcome!

**Tuesday: Mass 5.30pm**

**Sunday:** Confessions 5.15-5.30pm; **6pm Mass**

**Welcome!**

Welcome to all of you, especially those coming here for the first time – you are all very welcome. We hope that you will find the chaplaincy a true 'home from home' and will discover new friendships, and become involved in all that we have going on here. There are plenty of ways of becoming involved. At Mass for instance we are looking for new readers, altar servers and eucharistic ministers. We also want to grow our music group, so if you have musical talents, or are just prepared to sing, please let us know!

This week we are still in 'welcome week' mode. We have a chaplaincy stall at the UoL Management school on Wednesday (a

first for us) and there will be CathSoc & Chaplaincy stalls at LJMU's Societies' Fair on Friday.

The normal weekly pattern of events will commence the following week.

This week however we do have **Mass on Tuesday at 5.30pm**, in the chaplaincy (enter via the Blackburne Place entrance), and afterwards the chaplaincy will be open till 8.30 – call it 'hang out' time! Chat, board games, cards...whatever people want!

Next Sunday we have our **start of term BBQ** after Mass in the chaplaincy – bring drinks and desserts if you want!

Finally, a big welcome to **Arran**, our chaplaincy assistant, who has just joined us. Many of you have already met him, and he will be sharing a little bit of his story in next Sunday's newsletter.

## Gardening

*The next monthly gardening morning will be on Saturday, 5<sup>th</sup> October, 10am-12, followed by bacon butties for lunch!*

The next meeting of the **Staff and PhD** group will take place at the chaplaincy at 6pm on Wednesday 2nd October. This is open to any staff members (teaching, support, research etc) of either university, and PhD candidates. If you are interested please let Fr Neil know.

**Weekly Collection & other donations, you can pay online at [philipnerihouse.sumupstore.com](http://philipnerihouse.sumupstore.com)**

*Thank you so much for your contributions*



# Transitions

Are you coming to study in Liverpool, perhaps having left home for the first time? If so, I don't have to tell you it's a time of huge transition, one of the biggest transitions you will make in your life! Transitions can be exciting – full of new opportunities, the first exciting step on our journey into the future. But transitions can also be scary, unsettling, full of anxieties and worries. How will we cope? Will we make friends? Will we manage to do all that we have to do? Will we manage to keep up with our course? Perhaps some of you might say you feel 'all of the above' – both excited and energised, but a little daunted as well!

Thinking back quite a few years to when I left home to come to college, I recall a strange sense of unfamiliarity – a kind of 'twilight' sense, perhaps what Martin Heidegger called in his German tongue *unheimlich*. Adjusting and settling in can take a while, until the unfamiliar becomes familiar. Yet, I found that this transition, which took a while, led to some new and unexpected possibilities, which literally changed the course of my life.

The pages of the Bible are full of stories of transition. To name just a few, Abram [Abraham] being called to leave his home to become the father of a great nation (Gen 12); Moses calling the Israelites to rise up and leave Egypt (Ex 13), and 40 years later, to cross the Jordan and enter the 'promised land' (Jos 3); Mary, being told by the Archangel Gabriel that she has been chosen by God to bear his Son (Lk 1) – a future that must have been literally unimaginable to her at the time! ...the disciples being sent out by Jesus to bring the Good News to all nations (Mk 16). The Bible is indeed a record of constant movement, of new beginnings. It's the story of a relationship – between God, humanity, the chosen people, the Church – and God seems constantly to be calling his people to new beginnings, new things. We might see this to be true also of the Church at the present time – Pope Francis is calling us to be 'open to the Spirit' in a renewed way through *synodality*.

Can we relate our coming to university to our relationship with God? (Let me add here that when I came to Liverpool as an 18 year-old, I certainly had no concept at the time of having any relationship with God! ...but that was about to change!) One of the things about university chaplaincy that I like is the chance to help people relate their university studies and vocational preparation to their faith. Perhaps you have come to study history, or data



analytics, or medicine. Whatever it is, you are on a journey of being shaped and formed – or 'informed'. That is why you have come. Studying will change you. But, you have some agency in the process. How can you maximise the way it will change you for the better- so that you can truly become what God wants you to be? And how does your particular field of study shape the world? Can you see it as a participation in the way God wants to shape the world...according to his plan?

Can you see your journey to Liverpool to study here as a 'call' (vocation) from God? Catholics generally think of a vocation in terms of being a priest, or a religious sister or brother...they may also know that a vocation can be to the married state, or the consecrated single state. All this is true. But your vocation doesn't begin at some point in the future...it begins *now*, because what you are doing now is part of the path that leads to your future...whatever that may be!

At the chaplaincy we provide opportunities for prayer and worship, for meetings others and socialising, and for exploring our faith. People may find their way here for the first time for any of these three things – either because they are looking for a church to go to Mass in, or because they are looking for community (or a friend has brought them here), or because they want to explore the Catholic faith. Whichever has brought you, you are welcome, and we hope that you will find here a community of life-minded people, opportunities for prayer, and the chance to deepen your faith. May all this help you discover who God is calling you to be, and where he might be leading you! And if you need help with the transition...just ask; we are here to help.

Have a great week, a great term, and a great year!

Fr Neil