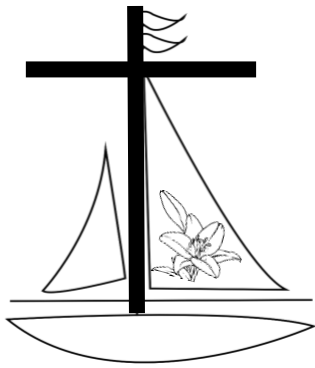




Parish of Holy Cross, Our Lady & Saint Paul

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26th July 2026 – 17th Sunday in Ordinary Time

CYCLE OF CATECHESIS – JUBILEE 2025. JESUS CHRIST OUR HOPE. III. THE PASSOVER OF JESUS. 8. THE DESCENT. IN THE SPIRIT "HE ALSO WENT TO PREACH TO THE SPIRITS IN PRISON" (1 PT 3:19).

Dear friends, this descent of Christ does not relate only to the past, but touches the life of every one of us. The underworld is not only the condition of the dead, but also of those who live death as a result of evil and sin. It is also the daily hell of loneliness, shame, abandonment, and the struggle of life. Christ enters into all these dark realities to bear witness to the love of the Father. Not to judge, but to set free. Not to blame, but to save. He does so quietly, on tiptoe, like one who enters a hospital room to offer comfort and help.

The Fathers of the Church, in pages of extraordinary beauty, described this moment as a meeting: that between Christ and Adam. An encounter that is the symbol of all the possible encounters between God and man. The Lord descends where man has hidden out of fear, and calls him by name, takes him by the hand, raises him up, and brings him back to the light. He does so with full authority, but also with infinite gentleness, like a father with the son who fears that he is no longer loved.

In the eastern icons of the Resurrection, Christ is depicted breaking down the doors of the underworld, stretching out his arms and grasping Adam and Eve by the wrists. He does not save only himself; he does not return to life alone, but carries all of humanity with him. This is the true glory of the Risen One: it is the power of love, it is solidarity with a God who does not want to save himself without us, but only with us. A God who does not rise again unless he embraces our miseries and lifts us up to a new life.

Holy Saturday, then, is the day in which heaven visits earth most deeply. It is the time in which every corner of human history is touched by the light of Easter. And if Christ was able to descend all the way down there, nothing can be excluded from his redemption. Not even our nights, not even our oldest faults, not even our broken bonds. There is no past so ruined, no history so compromised that it cannot be touched by mercy.

Dear brothers and sisters, to descend, for God, is not a defeat, but the fulfilment of his love. It is not a failure, but the way by which he shows that no place is too far away, no heart is too closed, no tomb too tightly sealed for his love. This consoles us, this sustains us. And if at times we seem to have hit rock bottom, let us remember: that is the place from which God is able to begin a new creation. A creation made of people lifted up, hearts forgiven, tears dried. Holy Saturday is the

silent embrace with which Christ presents all creation to the Father to restore it to his plan of salvation.

OUR PARISH VISION & MISSION

We are a warm & welcoming community of faith rooted in the love of God revealed to us in Jesus Christ. Belonging is at the heart of what we do as members of the body of Christ. We believe worship is not just found in prayer; it's something expressed in everything we do.

MASSES FOR WEEK				
Sunday	SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	9:30am	People of the Parish	SP
		11am	Pauline Ryan	OL
<i>Tea & Coffee are served after both Sunday Masses</i>				
Monday	Ferial	9am	Michael Brown (Speedy recovery)	OL
Tuesday	Ferial	9:30am	Billy Boylan R.I.P	OL
<i>Tea & Coffee are served in the Saint Joseph chapel after Mass on Tuesday morning. Everyone is welcome!</i>				
Wednesday	<i>Saints Mary, Martha and Lazarus</i>	9am	Sean Rudd (Birthday blessings)	OL
Thursday	Ferial			
Friday	<i>Saint Ignatius of Loyola</i>	9:30am	Canon Niall Mullaley	SP
Saturday	<i>Saint Alphonsus Liguori</i>			
Sunday	EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	9:30am	People of the Parish	SP
		11am	Carol Dalziel R.I.P.	OL

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

Those who are sick

Stuart & Jackie, Samuel Adodo, Lily Baker, Michael Brown, Christopher Browne, Gerard & Paul Carey, Pat Cockran, Anna Coughlan, Teresa Denye, Chloe Fortune, Anne Gillet, Aidan Hampsen, Colin James, Clare McElroy, Kerry Morgan, Canon Philip Moor, Helen Ryan, Philip Smith, Eileen & Julia Ward, Sarah & Gary Williams & Pat Wise.

Those who have died

Thomas Burns, Carol Dalziel & Moira McLaughlin

POPE'S PRAYER INTENTION FOR JULY 2026

For respect for human life – Let us pray for the respect and protection of human life in all its stages, recognising it as a gift from God.

SAINT JOSEPH LAMP

The lamp burns for the intentions of Joan Jones (R.I.P. Anniversary) at Our Lady's and Andrew & Clare (Just married) at Saint Pauls. Envelopes for intentions are at the back of each church. A £5 donation is requested.

PARISH

LOURDES PILGRIMAGE – On Wednesday our Youth section will depart for the 75th Anniversary Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes & the main pilgrimage will leave by coach on Thursday & the planes on Friday. Join us for the International Mass next Sunday 2nd August at 9.30am (8.30am UK time) and Grotto Mass on Monday 3 August at 10am (9am UK time). Both Masses will be available to watch on Lourdes TV, via the Sanctuaries website <https://www.lourdes-france.com>

Please remember us in your prayers, as we will remember you in ours. This year Bishop Mark has invited the Pilgrimage to pray for the following intentions:

- ❖ For our Holy Father, Pope Leo.
- ❖ For all who have gone before us in the pilgrimage of Lourdes over the 75 years of our Diocesan Pilgrimage.
- ❖ That we and all pilgrims will respond to the message of prayer and conversion, walking together in Eucharistic faith and love, all our lives.
- ❖ That we will generously respond to our calling and for an abundance of new vocations in our Diocese to the great callings of Marriage, the Priesthood and the Consecrated Life.
- ❖ For the peace of the world amid many dangers and conflicts.
- ❖ That the threat of euthanasia to the sick and the aged will be averted and the lives of the most vulnerable cherished and safeguarded.
- ❖ That through the pilgrimage of life we will always remain in the joy of the Gospel.

LOURDES PETITIONS – any petitions people may have, please place in a sealed envelope marked “Lourdes petitions” (and post through the presbytery letterbox before Wednesday. Please do not include money in them as the envelopes will not be opened. Fr Michael will take the intentions with him & place them in the box at the grotto.

WIRRAL FOODBANK are seeking new volunteers to work in their distribution centres, warehouse or driving their vans. Please see the poster for more information or visit <https://wirral.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/volunteer/>

OPPOSE ASSISTED SUICIDE – Act now, contact our MP Alison McGovern. The Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill will have its Second Reading and vote on Friday, 11th September 2026. Our clear principled objection to this Bill remains and we renew our call for Catholics and people of goodwill to unite in prayer and compassionate action. Archbishop Richard Moth, President of the Bishops' Conference, explains our strong opposition to this legislation: “This bill is wrong in principle. It is also deeply flawed and, if passed, could lead to vulnerable people feeling pressured into ending their lives. The Bill has a serious lack of protection for health and social care staff and risks putting many wonderful hospices and care homes in the position of no longer being able to operate. I urge you to write to your Members of Parliament to petition them to vote against the Bill at Second Reading.”

FR BERNARD FORSHAW thanks the many parishioners who sent him greetings for his Ruby Jubilee last Sunday along with the gifts. He will offer Mass for you this week, the card he sent is at the back of Our Lady's for people to see.

INTERESTED IN BECOMING A CATHOLIC OR NEVER BEEN CONFIRMED? – the programme will continue on Monday 7th September at 7pm in Our Lady's. Come along & find out more!

MARRIAGE SUPPORT (RETROUVAILLE) – From relationships that are 'Just in a Rut', needing some refreshment or more serious issues – if you are open to try again – Retrouvaille could be the solution. We have helped thousands of couples get their relationship back on track as they rediscovered hope and trust in the marriage. Next dates are 2nd to 4th October. To find out more visit www.retrouvaille.org.uk/info or phone 07887 296 983.

SUPPORTING OUR PENSIONERS – A & K Community Hub, 310 Park Road North, are hosting a free of charge *Live entertainment light lunch* this Wednesday from 12:30pm to 3:00pm. For further information about this and other activities held there during the week contact Laura on 0151 458 5562 or Laura.akcommunity@gmail.com.

BOOGIE BEARS MUSIC & MOVEMENT – Sessions at 9:30am & 11am; Tuesday @ Little Centre, Beechwood; Thursday @ A&K community hub. No booking required: £5 per child, discount for siblings. Tea & Coffee for grown-ups, snack for little ones.

BONUS BALL SCHEME – The winning number on Saturday 18th July was 10 congratulations to the winner from Our Lady's. If you would like to continue, the next payment is due 16th August or to join, a list of available numbers is at the back of each church. Thank you for your continued support.

EASY FUNDRAISING – As you are shopping online, don't forget to use the Easy Fundraising! *Our latest payout was an amazing £171.35!!!!* Thank you to everyone who has used it. Don't forget to use it when shopping for car, home or travel insurance!

PARISH FINANCES

Sunday 19th July 2026

Offertory £377.84 (Cash); £77.50 (Standing Orders)

£0 (Card/Contactless/Web); Zambia/Caritas £13

Stella Marris (Sea Sunday) £32.12

Thank you for your continuing generosity.

To donate online,
please scan the
QR code.



CHARITY

WIRRAL FOODBANK – The immediate shortages are Shampoo, Tinned Fruit & custard, Tinned vegetables. Donations can be left outside the Saint Joseph chapel at Our Lady's or in the sacristy at Saint Paul's. Please see the poster in the porch for further details or visit www.wirral.foodbank.org.uk

Emergency Food is not the solution – Through their Food Bank plus project delivered by Citizens Advice on their behalf Wirral Food bank is helping people get support with some of the underlying issues that can lead to them needing emergency food.

Council Tax reduction campaign – Some people who are on a low income are eligible for a reduction in their council tax but due to a recent policy change they could be paying an additional £34 per month. Individuals on a low fixed income are having to spend more to cover essential costs. This could result in them having less money for essentials, getting into debt & increased Food Bank use.

STAMPS & GLASSES – These are donated to the RNIB to support their work with those suffering sight loss. There is a box at the back of each church for any used stamps or glasses you have.

USED TABLET BLISTER PACKS TO SUPPORT THE MARIE CURIE CHARITY – can be donated at each church but **PLEASE ENSURE THAT NO OTHER ITEMS ARE INCLUDED.**