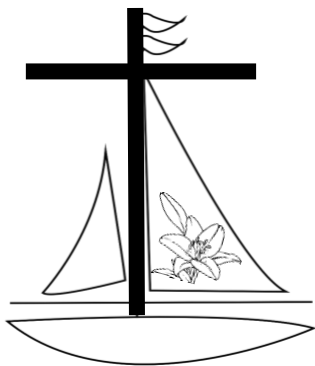




Parish of Holy Cross, Our Lady & Saint Paul

Parish Priest: Fr Michael Coughlan 652 1074
Parish Deacon: Bernard McConnell 07724 643883
Parish Sister: Sr Pauline 07710 717207
Parish Secretary: Lorraine Forshaw 652 1074 / 07709 186201
Web: <http://www.holycrossourladysaintpaul.org>
Livestream: <https://our-lady-birkenhead.click2stream.com/>
E-mail: info@holycrossourladysaintpaul.org

19^h July 2026 – 16th 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 brothers and sisters, good morning!

Today, again, we will look at the mystery of Holy Saturday. It is the day of the Paschal Mystery in which everything seems immobile and silent, while in reality an invisible action of salvation is being fulfilled: Christ descends into the realm of the dead to bring the news of the Resurrection to all those who were in the darkness and in the shadow of death.

This event, which the liturgy and tradition have handed down to us, represents the most profound and radical gesture of God's love for humanity. Indeed, it is not enough to say or to believe that Jesus died for us: it is necessary to recognize that the fidelity of his love sought us out where we ourselves were lost, where only the power of a light capable of penetrating the realm of darkness can reach.

The underworld, in the biblical conception, is not so much a place as an existential condition: that condition in which life is depleted, and pain, solitude, guilt and separation from God and others reign. Christ reaches us even in this abyss, passing through the gates of this realm of darkness. He enters, so to speak, in the very house of death, to empty it, to free its inhabitants, taking them by the hand one by one. It is the humility of a God who does not stop in front of our sin, who is not afraid when faced with the human being's extreme rejection.

The apostle Peter, in the brief passage from his first Letter that we have just heard, tells us that Jesus, made alive in the Holy Spirit, went to take the news of salvation even "to the spirits in prison" (1Pt 3:19). It is one of the most moving images, which is expressed not in the canonical Gospels, but in an apocryphal text entitled the Gospel of Nicodemus. According to this tradition, the Son of God entered the deepest darkness to reach even the last of his brothers and sisters, to bring his light down there too. In this gesture there is all the strength and tenderness of the Paschal message: death is never the last word.

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.

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.

MASSES FOR WEEK				
Sunday	SIXTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	9:30am	People of the Parish	SP
		11am	Thanksgiving	OL
Tea & Coffee are served after both Sunday Masses				
Monday	Ferial	9am	Helen Marsh (retirement)	OL
Tuesday	Ferial	9:30am	Maureen Lovatt (Birthday)	OL
Tea & Coffee are served in the Saint Joseph chapel after Mass on Tuesday morning. Everyone is welcome!				
Wednesday	SAINT MARY MAGDALENE	9am	Fr Dan Fitzpatrick & Fr Luis Ruiz SJ	OL
Thursday	SAINT BRIDGET OF SWEDEN			
Friday	Ferial	9:30am	Andrew & Clare (Just Married)	SP
Saturday	SAINT JAMES			
Sunday	SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	9:30am	People of the Parish	SP
		11am	Pauline Ryan	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, Moira McLaughlin,
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

SAINT JOSEPH LAMP

The lamp burns for the intentions of Fr Michael (Anniversary) at Our Lady's and Vocations at Saint Pauls. Envelopes for intentions are at the back of each church. A £5 donation is requested.

PARISH

VENEZUELA EARTHQUAKE APPEAL – as part of the UK Disasters Emergency Committee CAFOD is helping to raise vital funds for communities affected. You can donate by scanning the QR code on the poster at the back of each church or online at Cafod.org.uk/Venezuela.

SEA SUNDAY – total amount collected to follow next week for the collection held last Sunday to support Stella Maris. You can still donate by texting “SEA’ to 70460 to donate £5.

PARISH BBQ – thank you to everyone who attended the BBQ and has supported our fundraising efforts. The raffle over the past several weeks and the BBQ itself raised a total of £369.10 which will go parish funds & our youth projects.

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/>

WIRRAL FOODBANK FINANCE TRUSTEE VACANCY – Wirral Foodbank are seeking to appoint a Trustee with professional finance qualifications and/or experience to join our Board of Trustees and work alongside our current Finance Trustee. If you are interested in this opportunity, or know someone who may be a good fit, please visit our website for further information and details on how to apply <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.”

INTERESTED IN BECOMING A CATHOLIC OR NEVER BEEN CONFIRMED? – the programme will tomorrow next Monday 20th July at 7pm in Our Lady’s. Come along & find out more! We will meet every two weeks for an hour following the Sycamore programme a short video presentation with pauses for reflection, questions and discussion.

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.

WE BELIEVE FESTIVAL OF CATHOLIC LIFE will be held on Friday 24th – Monday 27th July 2026, at Saint Mary’s College, Oscott, Birmingham. WeBelieve Festival brings the Church together in England and Wales to discover the traditions and charisms that flow through the Church, to experience the joy of community, and to encounter personally the Lord Jesus, our salvation. Join us at the historic and beautiful setting of Saint Mary’s College, Oscott, for a feast of the True, the Good and the Beautiful. Book your tickets at www.webeliefefestival.com

19th JULY ANNIVERSARIES – Please pray today for Fr Michael, Fr Peter Sharrocks, Fr Bernard Forshaw & Fr Tony McGrath who were all ordained today in different years. We celebrate Fr Bernard especially as this is his ruby jubilee. We pray for him and his ministry with us each week.

JUBILEE YEAR PILGRIMAGE DAY AT SAINT FRANCIS CHURCH – As part of the Jubilee Year and in preparation for the 800th anniversary of the death of Saint Francis of Assisi, Franciscan churches have been designated as places of pilgrimage. We are therefore inviting parishioners from across the Diocese to join us for a special Pilgrimage Day at Saint Francis Church, Chester, on Thursday 17th September 2026, the Feast of the Stigmata of Saint Francis. Please see the posters at the back of church.

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.

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS – as in previous years we are once again taking part in the National Trust Heritage Open Days in September when we open our church to visitors over the weekends of 12th & 13th and 19th & 20th September. More details to follow in the coming weeks.

BONUS BALL SCHEME – The winning number on Saturday 11th July was 54 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 12th July 2026

Offertory £382.33 (Cash); £77.50 (Standing Orders)

£0 (Card/Contactless/Web); Zambia/Caritas £25.04

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.**