

NEWSLETTER



SAINT PHILIP NERI
CATHOLIC PARISH BIRKENHEAD

Sunday 14 December 2025

SERVING THE CHURCHES OF SAINT MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS AND SAINT JOSEPH

| Day | Date | Celebration | Psalter | Mass Time | Mass Intention | Church |
|---|-----------|--------------------------------|-----------------|--|---|--|
| Saturday | 13 | St Lucy | | 10.30am 11.00am 5.15pm 6.00pm | Mary Barton RIP Adoration & Confessions Confessions Patricia McNelis | Saint Joseph's Saint Joseph's Saint Michael's Saint Michael's |
| Sunday | 14 | Third Sunday of Advent | Week III | | | |
| During Advent and Christmastide we are asked to pray for these intentions: Migrants and Refugees, Expectant Mothers | | | | 9.30am 11.00am 5.00pm | Parishioners Cathy Tiago RIP Paula Rixon RIP | Saint Joseph's Saint Michael's Saint Joseph's |
| Monday | 15 | Ferial | | 11.00am | Funeral Mass for Catherine Tiago | Saint Michael's |
| Tuesday | 16 | Ferial | | 7.00pm | For a just end to Assisted Suicide Bill | Saint Joseph's |
| Wednesday | 17 | Ferial | | 9.15am | Donor's intention | Saint Joseph's |
| Thursday | 18 | Ferial | | 9.30am | Barbara Majumdar RIP | Saint Michael's |
| Friday | 19 | Ferial | | 10.30am | Funeral Mass for Mary Barton | Saint Joseph's |
| Saturday | 20 | Ferial | | 10.30am 11.00am 5.15pm 6.00pm | Alex Adoration & Confessions Confessions Patricia McNelis | Saint Joseph's Saint Joseph's Saint Michael's Saint Michael's |
| Sunday | 21 | Fourth Sunday of Advent | Week IV | | | |
| | | | | 9.30am 11.00am 5.00pm | Parishioners Baby who died before birth J G Farrell RIP 4 th Anniversary | Saint Joseph's Saint Michael's Saint Joseph's |

Canon Niall writes....

Welcome to this week's newsletter. This Third Sunday of Advent is traditionally called 'Gaudete' (pronounced 'Gow-day-tay') Sunday meaning 'Rejoice'. Sometimes a lighter shade of purple, rose vestments, are worn to signify the 'uplift' of today; hence the rose coloured candle for today in the Advent Wreath. For the message of this Sunday is 'Rejoice' the Lord is at Hand. The readings today all have that sense of 'imminence' of God's coming, and the signs of that coming are pointed out and revealed. Once again we are reminded that this message is not just about something 'back then' but about the here and now. With all the challenges and difficulties of recent times there have been many ways people have proclaimed 'Rejoice, the Lord is at Hand'. In the midst of terrible conflicts, and great risk to themselves, some have gone out of their way to bring relief and support to the vulnerable. Again, there are those who have put themselves on the line, both near and far, to help those outcast and maybe placed on the fringe of society; this they do often in the face of ridicule and derision. There are so many other examples. All these acts and many others say: 'Rejoice, the Lord is at Hand'. Today we are reminded that by our outlook and actions we can point out Christ's presence, and share the hope we receive

Prayer to the Holy Spirit – please pray this prayer every day

Come O Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth. O, God, who taught the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit, grant that by the gift of the same Spirit we may be always truly wise and ever rejoice in his consolation. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen

The Diocese of Shrewsbury is a Registered Charity. Number: 234025

Safeguarding Representatives Saint Michael's - Mairie Gelling & Saint Joseph's - Marie Fisher

Father Anthony Wild: For the last few weeks Father Anthony Wild, a Priest of our Diocese who is staying locally, has been presiding at the 9.15am Wednesday Morning Mass at St Joseph's. From this coming week he will also be presiding at a 9.30am Mass at St Michael's, initially at the Thursday 9.30am Mass at St Michael's this coming Thursday, 18th December and after Christmas on Monday mornings. Father Anthony will also preside at the St Joseph's 7.00pm Mass this Tuesday Evening, 16th December, whilst I am at the Holy Family Multi Academy Trust Carol Service at Liverpool Cathedral and Father Malachy assisting Father Mario with Confessions at St Anne's. We are very grateful to Father Anthony, and we are appreciative of his help and support at this time.

Confirmation: Any young person who is in Year 8 or above at school and wishes to enrol in this year's Confirmation programme please get an information flyer from the back of church.

Funeral Masses and changed Mass Times this coming week: Please note that due to the Funeral Mass for Catherine Tiago this Monday, 15th December, 11.00am at St Michael's, there will be no 9.30am Mass there that day. Please also note that due to the Funeral Mass for Mary Barton this Friday, 19th December, 10.30am at St Joseph's, there will be no 9.15am Mass there that day.

Change of time for Weekday Masses at St Michael's: Please note that the Monday and Thursday morning Masses at St Michael's have now changed from 9.15am to **9.30am**. This time change, among other things will ease parking difficulties with school traffic. The 9.15am Masses on Wednesday and Friday at St Joseph's will stay the same.

For anyone wishing to find out more about becoming a Catholic: We have now held our initial meetings, but if anyone is still interested please speak to Canon Niall or Deacon John.

DONA Contactless Payment Devices: We are having difficulty at the moment with both our DONA contactless payments stations in our Churches. We are sorry for any inconvenience and hopefully this will be resolved before too long.

First Holy Communion: For parents of children in year 3 and above who are not attending our Parish schools we will be offering preparation for First Forgiveness and First Holy Communion, beginning on Wednesday the 7th January 2026 at 4pm in the Hazelhurst Room of St Joseph's Presbytery, Willowbank Road. **There will be a short introductory meeting for Parents and Children in St Joseph's Presbytery on Wednesday 17th December at 6.00pm to outline the details.**

The Marian Lamp: burns each week in both our churches for particular prayer intentions. This week the Lamp in Saint Joseph's burns for **Charlie Eaton 3rd Anniversary**. The Lamp in Saint Michael's burns for **Edward Thomas Bevan**. Please write your intention out and place it with an offering (we suggest £5 to cover the cost of the candle) in an envelope marked "Marian Lamp". We ask Our Blessed Lady to carry these prayers to her Son and to intercede for us.

Parishioners who are Housebound: If you know of anyone who wishes to receive Holy Communion at home, can you ask them or help them to contact our Parish Secretary Jane on 0151 652 5767 or

admin@saint-philip-neri.co.uk

St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP) Our motto is Turning Concern into Action. Do you know someone who would benefit from a visit from St Joseph's SVP. We are members of the parish and it's good to talk. If you know of someone who needs a listening ear please contact St Joseph's SVP at the parish office on 652- 5767.

Parish Facebook page: Please keep an eye on our Facebook page (search Parish of Saint Philip Neri in Birkenhead) where details about our Parish events etc are regularly updated.

Fundraising Events Dates for your Diary

Sunday 4th January 2026 - 2pm

Christmas Afternoon and Social, St Joseph's Parish Centre

Friday 20th March 2026 - 7.30pm

Parish 125 Yrs Celebration, Fish Supper/Barn Dance

Saturday 11th April 2026 - 2pm

Grand National Race Parish Celebration

Friday 28th May 2026 SMAA – 7.30pm

Warrington Male Voice Choir Fundraising Concert

Churches Together: In Saint Joseph's church we are praying this week for those in the following roads: **St Stephen's Court, St Stephen's Rd, Storeton Rd, The Wiend, Thompson St, Tower Hill & Town Rd.**

St Michael's Church Cleaning: This Thursday 18th December after the 9.30am Mass. All help greatly appreciated, thank you.

75th Anniversary Lourdes Pilgrimage 2026: I am pleased to announce that plans for our 2026 Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes are nearing the final stage. 2026 will be our 75th anniversary pilgrimage, with the first Diocesan Pilgrimage taking place in 1951. Booking forms will be available in the new year. This week our Youth Pilgrimage will launch, with many returning pilgrims already showing interest in joining us in 2026. Our Junior Pilgrimage has already launched for its second year, with a good number of our schools expressing an interest. The Pilgrimage Management Team will be launching the 2026, 75th Anniversary, Pilgrimage on Saturday 29 November with Mass at 12 noon in Saint Hugh & Saint John parish in Timperley followed by refreshments and pilgrimage information in the Parish Hall. I'd be really grateful if you could extend an invitation to your parishioners to join us.

St Joseph's Charity Donations: The former Piety Stall has been set up as an area to receive charity donations. There is an ongoing need for: **Food items to support Wirral Foodbank. Nappies and toiletries to support Hearts4Refugees and SVP, Second hand spectacles for recycling, The sale of second hand books to provide money for church flowers.** Please be as generous as you can.

St Vincent de Paul Society: would be grateful for donations of sweets and chocolate (not big tins) for the hampers they provide for families in need this Christmas. We will leave a box out at the back of Church, thank you for your generosity.

*“Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have the good news preached to them”
(Matthew 11: 4-5)*



Parish Carol Service: Sunday 21st December 2.30 at St Joseph's Church: An opportunity for different groups in our parish community to come together in prayer, reflection and carols on the last Sunday of Advent

Why not join a magical evening of carol singing, warmth and community at Wirral University Teaching Hospital's Carol Service. **When:** Sunday 14 December
Where: Christ Church, Port Sunlight Village, CH62 5EF
Time: Doors open 5pm, service begins 5:30pm
Enjoy beautiful performances from Wirral 3Ls Choir and the Christ Church Port Sunlight Handbell Ringers, followed by seasonal refreshments. Donations are welcome and a collection will be held during the service in aid of WUTH Charity, helping us support patients, families, and staff across Arrowe Park and Clatterbridge hospitals. **Tickets:** Entry is Free, but please contact us to reserve your place via wuth.charity@nhs.net or by calling 0151 482 7788 so we can plan for numbers.



Dates for your diary

Sunday 21st December

2.30 pm Parish Carol Service at St Joseph's Church

Christmas Services:

Wednesday, 24th December – Christmas Eve

5.30pm Vigil Mass for Christmas at St Michael's

10.00pm Vigil Mass for Christmas at St Joseph's

Thursday, 25th December – Christmas Day

9.30am Mass at St Joseph's

11.00am Mass at St Michael's

Friday, 26th December – St Stephen's Day Mass

12.noon at St Joseph's

**Please Pray for the Repose of the Soul of
Catherine Tiago, Mary Barton, Anne Howard
and all those who have died recently.**

**May they rest in peace,
in the arms of the Good Shepherd**

Readings at Mass

| | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| Entrance Antiphon | Ph 4:4-5 | <i>Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Indeed, the Lord is near</i> |
| Reading 1 | Isa 35:1-6a, 10 | <i>God himself will come and save you.</i> |
| Psalm | Ps 145:6-7, 8-9a, 9b-10 | <i>Come, Lord, and save us</i> |
| Reading 2 | Jas 5:7-10 | <i>Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.</i> |
| Gospel Acclamation | Is 61:1 (Lk 4:18) | <i>The spirit of the Lord is upon me. He has sent me to proclaim good news to the poor.</i> |
| Gospel | Matt 11:2-11 | <i>Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?</i> |
| Communion Antiphon | Cf. Is 35:4 | <i>Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear. Behold, our God will come, and he will save us</i> |

Parish Team:
 Parish Priest: Canon Niall Mullaley
 Assistant Priest: Father Malachy Ogbede
 In Residence: Father Sijo Poulose (*Syro-Malabar Rite*)
 Deacons: Reverends Gerard Boyle, Patrick Regan, Les Arch, Paul D’Ambrogio & John Birch

Parish Office: *The Parish Office is usually open 10am to 1pm Monday – Friday*
 10 Willowbank Road Birkenhead Wirral CH42 7JY
 0151 652 5767
 admin@saint-philip-neri.co.uk
 www.saint-philip-neri.co.uk

 @stsjoeandmike
  StMaAAandStJosephs
  stphilipneribirkenhead

Live Stream: www.churchservices.tv/woodchurch
 Parish YouTube Channel: via www.saint-philip-neri.co.uk

Income: Thank you for your generosity.

Offertory Collection: 7th December £1100.80

Monthly Standing Orders: £1610

Development Society Winner No: 7th December £50 No. 179 Rachael Ashton

The parish of Saint Philip Neri sometimes collects personal information about parishioners. All personal information is collected, processed and stored in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations. This is retained only as necessary and used by the Parish/Diocese for the benefit of the Parish and for legitimate reasons such as administrative and religious purposes. You can read our full privacy notice at www.dioceseofshrewsbury.org/about-us/privacy-notice.

Saint Michael & All Angels Catholic Primary School
 New Hey Road, Woodchurch,
 CH49 5LE

Head Teacher: Mrs Susan Ralph
 0151 677 4088

schooloffice@stmichael-allangels.wirral.sch.uk

Saint Joseph’s Parish Centre

THE PARISH CENTRE IS NOW OPEN
 0151 652 8487
 0345 241 2485
bhj@ypcevents.com

Saint Joseph’s Catholic Primary School
 Woodchurch Road, Oxton CH43 5UT

Head Teacher: Mr Alex Turner
 0151 652 6781

schooloffice@stjosephs-birkenhead.wirral/sch.uk

[Saint Michael’s Church Tour Video](#) view on the website or the QR codes on the posters at Church