

Metropolitan Cathedral
of Christ the King Liverpool

SOLEMN MASS

**ON THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
21 DECEMBER 2025 AT 11.00AM**

WELCOME

Welcome to the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King, Liverpool, the mother Church of the Roman Catholic Community, and seat of the Archbishop of Liverpool. We hope you will fully participate in this celebration of the Mass, and that – along with so many others – you will experience the presence of God in this holy place.

THE MASS

At the Last Supper, on the night he was betrayed, Jesus instituted the Eucharist, or the Mass, to perpetuate the sacrifice of the Cross throughout the ages until he should come again.

The Mass is an act of thanksgiving to God for his saving work; it is a sacred meal which nourishes us spiritually and anticipates the heavenly banquet, and it is a holy sacrifice, making present the one true sacrifice of Christ our Saviour.

Roman Catholics believe that Jesus Christ is truly present at the Mass; in the assembly gathered as the Body of Christ, through his Word made present in scripture, but supremely under the appearance of bread and wine. In the Eucharist the body and blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ is wholly and entirely present.

Strengthened by this sacred food, we go forth to build up the Body of Christ in this world, and to bring his healing and salvation to all peoples.

The Solemn Mass each Sunday is offered for all Benefactors of the Cathedral.

PLEASE ENSURE THAT MOBILE TELEPHONES ARE SWITCHED OFF

The use of private cameras, video or sound equipment
is strictly prohibited in the Cathedral

The 11.00am Sunday Mass will be recorded and live-streamed. The recording will be shown live on YouTube, and a copy of the recording will be available on this platform. Should you wish not to be filmed, please speak to Cathedral Security or one of the Stewards, who will direct you to a seat in the West Gallery. For more details, please email dataprotection@rcaol.org.uk

INTRODUCTORY RITES

ENTRANCE HYMN *all stand and join in singing*



- 1 Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord!
Unnumbered blessings, give my spirit voice;
Tender to me the promise of his word;
In God my Saviour shall my heart rejoice.**
- 2 Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his name!
Make known his might, the deeds his arm has done;
His mercy sure, from age to age the same;
His holy name – the Lord, the Mighty One.**
- 3 Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his might!
Powers and dominions lay their glory by.
Proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight,
The hungry fed, the humble lifted high.**
- 4 Tell out, my soul, the glories of his word!
Firm is his promise, and his mercy sure.
Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord
To children's children and for evermore!**

INTROIT *the Choir sings*

**Rorate caeli desuper,
et nubes pluant iustum:
aperiatur terra,
et germinet Salvatorem.**

***Drop down, ye heavens, from above,
and let the clouds rain the just one:
let the earth be opened,
and bring forth a Saviour.***

Gregorian Chant

GREETING

In the name of the Father,
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
R. Amen.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.
R. And with your spirit.

INTRODUCTION *the Celebrant introduces the Mass and the fourth candle on the Advent Wreath is lit.*

KYRIE *Missa 'Rorate cæli' - Franz Josef Haydn (1732-1809)*

COLLECT

R. Amen.

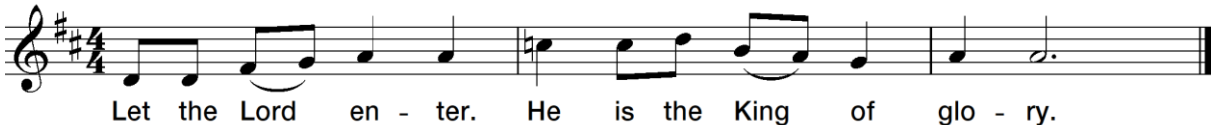
LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING *from the prophet Isaiah 7:10-14*

virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel.'

***R.* Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 23 *all sing the response R. after the Cantor and after each verse of the psalm*



on the waters he made it firm. *R.*

who desires not worthless things. *R.*

seek the face of the God of Jacob. *R.*

SECOND READING *from the letter of St Paul to the Romans 1:1-7*

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an Apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations, including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ.

To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Word of the Lord.

R. Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION *the Choir sings the Gospel Acclamation*

Alleluia.

O oriens,

splendour lucis aeternae,

et soli justitiae:

et illumine sedentes in tenebris

et umbra mortis.

Alleluia.

Alleluia.

O morning star,

splendour of the light eternal,

and bright sun of righteousness:

and bring light to those who dwell in

darkness and walk in the shadow of death.

Alleluia.

GOSPEL

The Lord be with you.

R. And with your spirit.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew 1:18-24

R. Glory to you, O Lord.

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to send her away quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, 'Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.'

All this took place to fulfil what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

'Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel' - which means, God with us.

When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife.

The Gospel of the Lord.

R. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

HOMILY

PROFESSION OF FAITH *all join in saying*

I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

OFFERTORY MOTET *a collection is taken for the upkeep of the Cathedral or please use the QR codes at the back of the booklet, meanwhile the Choir sings*

Ave virgo sanctissima
Dei mater piissima
Maris stella clarissima
Salve semper gloriosa
Margarita pretiosa
Sicut lilium formosa
Nitens olens velut rosa.

*Hail, Holy Virgin,
most blessed Mother of God,
bright star of the sea.
Hail, ever glorious,
precious pearl,
lovely as the lily,
beautiful and perfumed as the rose.*

Francisco Guerrero (1527-1609)

The Celebrant says

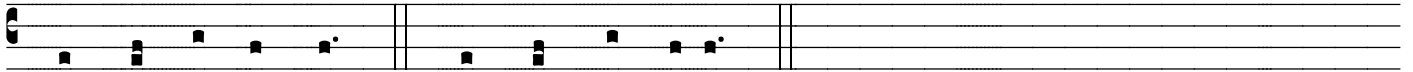
Pray, brethren (brothers and sisters),
that my sacrifice and yours
may be acceptable to God,
the almighty Father.

All stand and say

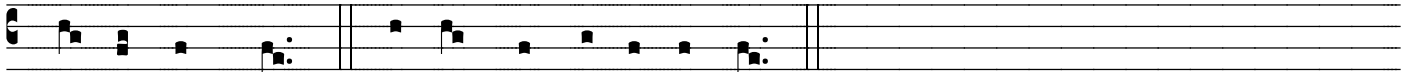
May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands
for the praise and glory of his name,
for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

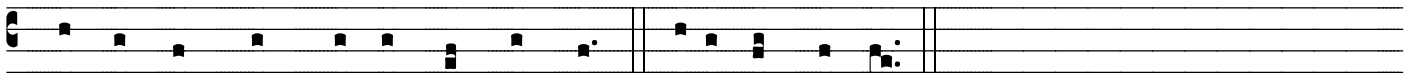
May the Holy Spirit, O Lord,
sanctify these gifts laid upon your altar,
just as he filled with his power
the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
Through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.



The Lord be with you. And with your spirit.



Lift up your hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.



Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right and just.

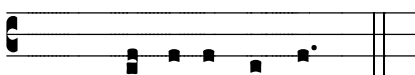
SANCTUS *the Choir sings*

Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus Dominus,
Deus Sabaoth.
Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua.
Hosanna in excelsis.

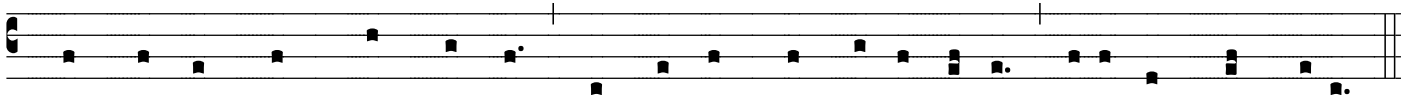
*Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of hosts,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.*

*Missa 'Rorate cæli'
Franz Josef Haydn*

MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION *all join in singing*



The mystery of faith.



We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection, until you come again.

GREAT AMEN *all join in singing*



A-men. A-men. A- men.

COMMUNION RITE

THE SIGN OF PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

R. And with your spirit.

AGNUS DEI *the Choir sings*

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi:
miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi:
dona nobis pacem.

*Lamb of God, you take away the sins
of the world. Have mercy on us.*

*Lamb of God, you take away the sins
of the world. Grant us peace.*

Missa 'Rorate cæli'

Franz Josef Haydn

Behold the Lamb of God,
behold him who takes away the sins of the world.
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

All join in saying

R. Lord, I am not worthy
that you should enter under my roof,
but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

*Those who are not Roman Catholic, or do not wish to receive communion, are welcome
to come forward in spiritual communion. Crossing your arms across your chest will
indicate to the priest or eucharistic minister that you would welcome his or her words of
spiritual communion.*

COMMUNION ANTIPHON *the Choir sings*

Ecce virgo concipiet, et pariet filium:
et vocabitur nomen eius Emmanuel.

*Behold, a virgin will conceive, and will
bear a Son, and his name shall be called
Emmanuel.*

Gregorian Chant

COMMUNION MOTET *the Choir sings*

O radiant dawn, splendour of eternal light, sun of justice: come, shine on those who dwell
in darkness and the shadow of death.

Isaiah had prophesied, 'The people who walked in darkness have seen the great light;
upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone.' Amen.

Sir James MacMillan (b1959)

HYMN AFTER COMMUNION *all stand and join in singing*



- 1 The angel Gabriel from heaven came,
His wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame.
'All hail,' said he, 'thou lowly maiden, Mary,
Most highly favoured lady.' Gloria!
- 2 'For know, a blessed Mother thou shalt be.
All generations laud and honour thee.
Thy Son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold,
Most highly favoured lady.' Gloria!
- 3 Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head.
'To me be, as it pleaseth God,' she said.
'My soul shall laud and magnify his holy name!'
Most highly favoured lady! Gloria!
- 4 Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ, was born
In Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn;
And Christian folk throughout the world will ever say:
'Most highly favoured lady!' Gloria!

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Having received this pledge of eternal redemption,
we pray, almighty God,
that, as the feast day of our salvation draws ever nearer,
so we may press forward all the more eagerly
to the worthy celebration of the mystery
of your Son's Nativity.
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.
R. Amen.

CONCLUDING RITE

BLESSING and DISMISSAL

The Lord be with you.
R. And with your spirit.

May almighty God bless you:
the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
R. Amen.

Go forth, the Mass is ended.
R. Thanks be to God.

ORGAN VOLUNTARY *Nun Komm, der Heiden Heiland (BWV 659) - Johann Sebastian Bach*
(1685-1750)

If you are concerned about the safety of a child or vulnerable adult and feel they are in immediate danger, please call the police. If you wish to report any non-urgent concerns, please contact your local social services or our safeguarding team direct at



or Mark Robson 0151 522 1013 / 07585761965 Claire Newton 0151 522 1043 /
07384643237 or safeguarding@rcaol.org.uk

Please be careful, and take your time, as you leave. Please use the handrails provided on either side of the steps, and avoid walking down the middle section.

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- *Donate £5, £10 or £20 through our 'tap and go' machines.*
- *Text the word METROCATHEDRAL to 70460 to donate £5, or simply scan the QR codes below to make a donation of £5 or £10.*



£5



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Texts will cost the donation amount plus one standard network rate message, and you'll be opting into hearing more from us. If you would like to donate but don't wish to hear more from us, please text METROCATHEDRALNOINFO instead.

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