

Masses for the Sick and their Families, NHS Front-Line workers and those working in Social Care

From the CBCEW website:

The Catholic Bishops of England and Wales recognise that this time of the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting every person in our countries. Those who are sick, and their families, are suffering many hardships of isolation from contact with those they love.

Our front-line workers in hospitals and in care homes all over our lands are giving exceptional service to those who are vulnerable at this time. In order to show a spiritual solidarity with all those who are involved in the ways described above, each week from next Thursday, a Catholic Bishop will celebrate Mass in their Cathedral which will be live-streamed for people to join.

30 April

Bishop Richard Moth

[Our Lady and St Philip Howard, Arundel](#)

[YouTube Channel](#)

7 May

Bishop Marcus Stock

[St Anne's Cathedral, Leeds](#)

[YouTube Channel](#)

14 May

Bishop Robert Byrne CO

[St Mary's Cathedral, Newcastle](#)

[YouTube Channel](#)

21 May

Bishop Mark Davies

[Our Lady Help of Christians and Saint Peter of Alcantara, Shrewsbury](#)

28 May

Bishop Terence Draine

[St Mary's Cathedral, Middlesbrough](#)

[YouTube Channel](#)

In the media – something of interest

A couple of recent documentaries recommended by colleagues.

Rebuilding Notre-Dame: Inside the Great Cathedral Rescue

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m000hbdq/rebuilding-notredame-inside-the-great-cathedral-rescue>

This is available for 19 more days.

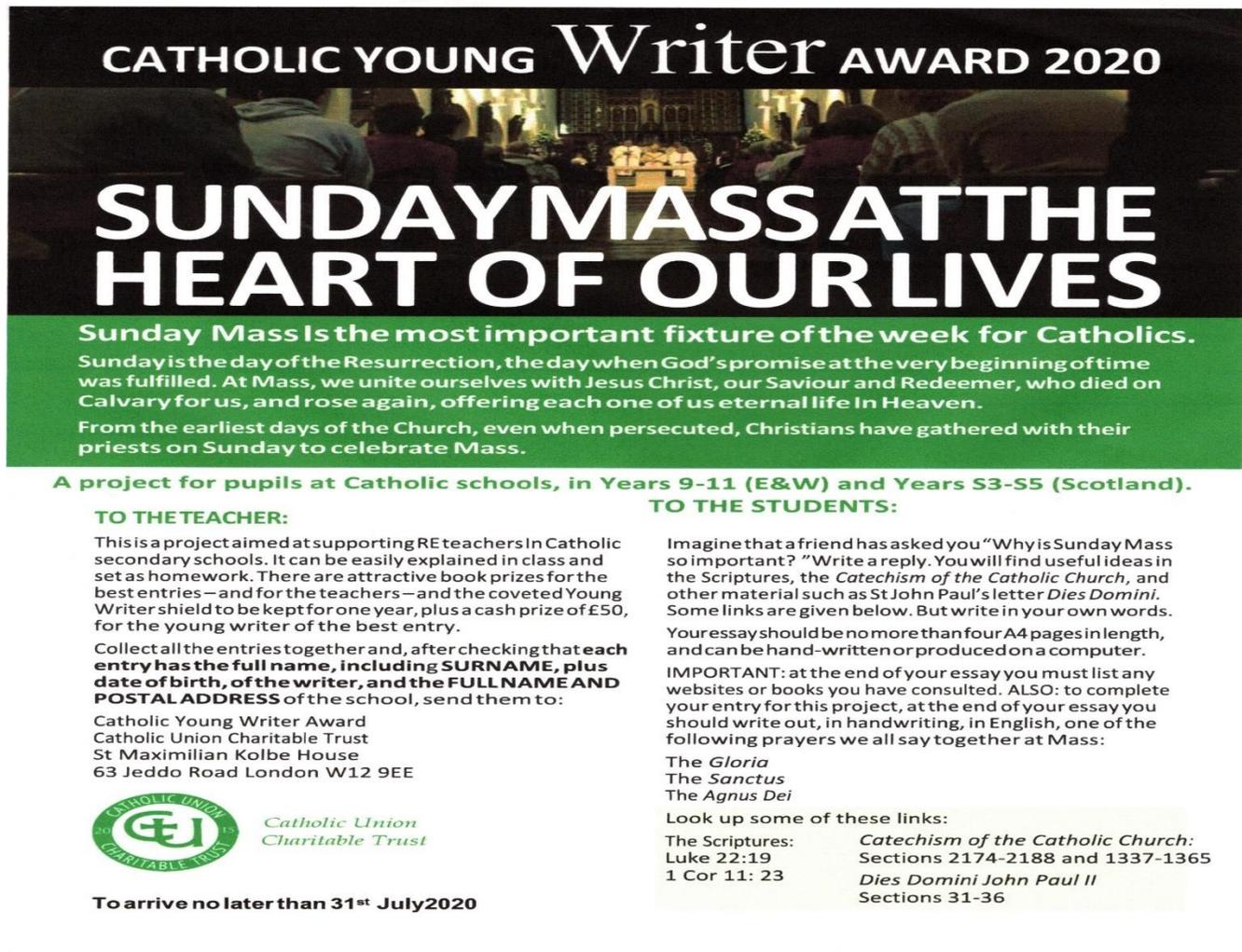
The Search for the Lost Manuscript: Julian of Norwich

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b07l6bd0/the-search-for-the-lost-manuscript-julian-of-norwich>

This is available for 24 more days.

Catholic Young Writers Competition

This competition is open to girls in Years 9 – 11. Last year Maansi Richard, now in Year 10, won the competition for her essay on pilgrimage. Below is the poster giving details. If any girl wishes to submit an entry, please contact her Religious studies Teacher. The closing date has been extended to 31st July 2020. See below



CATHOLIC YOUNG *Writer* AWARD 2020

SUNDAY MASS AT THE HEART OF OUR LIVES

Sunday Mass is the most important fixture of the week for Catholics.
Sunday is the day of the Resurrection, the day when God's promise at the very beginning of time was fulfilled. At Mass, we unite ourselves with Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Redeemer, who died on Calvary for us, and rose again, offering each one of us eternal life in Heaven.
From the earliest days of the Church, even when persecuted, Christians have gathered with their priests on Sunday to celebrate Mass.

A project for pupils at Catholic schools, in Years 9-11 (E&W) and Years S3-S5 (Scotland).

TO THE TEACHER:
This is a project aimed at supporting RE teachers in Catholic secondary schools. It can be easily explained in class and set as homework. There are attractive book prizes for the best entries – and for the teachers – and the coveted Young Writer shield to be kept for one year, plus a cash prize of £50, for the young writer of the best entry.
Collect all the entries together and, after checking that each entry has the full name, including SURNAME, plus date of birth, of the writer, and the FULL NAME AND POSTAL ADDRESS of the school, send them to:
Catholic Young Writer Award
Catholic Union Charitable Trust
St Maximilian Kolbe House
63 Jeddo Road London W12 9EE

 Catholic Union Charitable Trust

To arrive no later than 31st July 2020

TO THE STUDENTS:
Imagine that a friend has asked you "Why is Sunday Mass so important?" Write a reply. You will find useful ideas in the Scriptures, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, and other material such as St John Paul's letter *Dies Domini*. Some links are given below. But write in your own words.
Your essay should be no more than four A4 pages in length, and can be hand-written or produced on a computer.
IMPORTANT: at the end of your essay you must list any websites or books you have consulted. ALSO: to complete your entry for this project, at the end of your essay you should write out, in handwriting, in English, one of the following prayers we all say together at Mass:
The *Gloria*
The *Sanctus*
The *Agnus Dei*
Look up some of these links:
The Scriptures: Luke 22:19
1 Cor 11: 23
Catechism of the Catholic Church: Sections 2174-2188 and 1337-1365
Dies Domini John Paul II Sections 31-36

Religious Festivals This Week

The Holy Month of Ramadan, 24th April to 23rd May - Islam

Ramadan is the name of the 9th month of the Islamic Calendar. The Muslim year is a lunar year which is about 11 days shorter than the solar year on which the Gregorian (British) calendar is based, so in the Gregorian calendar Ramadan occurs ten or eleven days earlier each year.



During the month of Ramadan Muslims fast from dawn to sunset. Fasting (sawm) is the fourth of the five pillars of Islam, requiring self-discipline and giving everyone some experience of deprivation. Those who are not able to fast are expected to give charity to compensate for the 'lost' days. While children may be encouraged to fast, the full fast is not compulsory until puberty is reached, often by the age of 12, but many young people still attempt to keep some, or even all of it.

It is most important that Muslims show intent before they fast. It is a requirement that they recite a short prayer of intent either before they sleep or just before Suhoor, the pre-fast meal. No food or drink may be consumed during the hours of daylight during Ramadan, and those fasting must also abstain from smoking and from sexual relations. According to the Quran, one may eat and drink at any time during the night *'until you can plainly distinguish a white thread from a black thread by the daylight: then keep the fast until night'*.

Muslims who are travelling or sick and women who are pregnant or nursing a child are allowed to postpone their fast. These are all required to make up the days of missed fasting during the year ahead. After the custom of the Prophet, the fast is traditionally broken each evening by taking dates and water (*iftar*).

For Muslims Ramadan one of the holiest months of the year, and one they dedicate to spiritual renewal, prayer and intensive devotional reading of the *Qur'an*. It is the month in which, according to Islamic belief, the Prophet received the first revelation of verses of the *Qur'an*, though the actual night is unknown. This night is called *Lailat ul Qadr*. To stand in prayer throughout the night is said to be 'better than a thousand months of worship'. Ramadan is often called 'the month of the *Qur'an*', and many Muslims attempt to recite as much of the *Qur'an* as they can during the month. Most Sunni mosques arrange a recital of one thirtieth of the *Qur'an* each night during the *Taraweeh* prayers, which are longer than the usual evening prayers and are special ones for Ramadan.

Surah 2:183-188.

Saints of the Week

St Peter Chanel, Priest & Martyr – 28th April



Peter Chanel was born in 1803 at Clet in the diocese of Belley, France. His intelligence and simple piety brought him to the attention of the local priest, Father Trompier, who saw to his elementary education. Entering the diocesan Seminary, Peter won the affection and the esteem of both students and professors. After his ordination he found himself in a rundown country parish and completely revitalized it in the three year span that he remained there. However, his mind was set on missionary work; so, in 1831, he joined the newly formed Society of Mary (Marists) which concentrated on missionary work at home and abroad. To his dismay, he was appointed to teach at the seminary at Belley and remained there for the next five years, diligently performing his duties.

In 1836, the Society was given the New Hebrides in the Pacific as a field for evangelization, and the jubilant St. Peter was appointed Superior of a little band of missionaries sent to proclaim the Faith to its inhabitants. On reaching their destination after an arduous ten month journey, the band split up and St. Peter went to the Island of Futuna accompanied by a laybrother and an English layman, Thomas Boog. They were at first well received by the pagans and their king Niuliki who had only recently forbidden cannibalism. However, the king's jealousy and fear were aroused when the missionaries learned the language and gained the people's confidence; he realized the adoption of the Christian Faith would lead to the abolition of some of the prerogatives he enjoyed as both highpriest and sovereign.

Finally, when his own son expressed a desire to be baptized, the king's hatred erupted and he dispatched a group of his warriors to set upon the saintly head of the missionaries. Thus, on April 28, 1841, three years after his arrival, St. Peter was seized and clubbed to death by those he had come to save. And his death brought his work to completion - within five months the entire island was converted to Christianity.

St Catherine of Sienna, Virgin & Doctor - 29th April

St. Catherine of Siena was born during the outbreak of the plague in Siena, Italy on March 25, 1347. She was the 25th child born to her mother, although half of her brothers and sisters did not survive childhood. Catherine herself was a twin, but her sister did not survive infancy. Her mother was 40 when she was born. Her father was a cloth dyer.



At the age of 16, Catherine's sister, Bonaventura, died, leaving her husband as a widower. Catherine's parents proposed that he marry Catherine as a replacement, but Catherine opposed this. She began fasting and cut her hair short to mar her appearance.

Her parents attempted to resist this move, to avoid marriage, but they were unsuccessful. Her fasting and her devotion to her family, convinced them to relent and allow her to live as she pleased. Catherine once explained that she regarded her father as a representation of Jesus and her mother as Our Lady, and her brothers as the apostles, which helped her to serve them with humility.

Despite Catherine's religious nature, she did not choose to enter a convent and instead she joined the Third Order of St. Dominic, which allowed her to associate with a religious society while living at home. Fellow Dominican sisters taught St. Catherine how to read. Meanwhile, she lived quietly, isolated within her family home.

St. Catherine developed a habit of giving things away and she continually gave away her family's food and clothing to people in need. She never asked permission to give these things away, and she quietly put up with their criticisms. Something changed her when she was 21. She described an experience she referred to as her "mystical marriage to Christ." There are debates over whether or not St. Catherine was given a ring with some claiming she was given a bejeweled ring, and other claiming the ring was made of Jesus's skin. St. Catherine herself started the rumor of the latter in her writings, but she was known to often claim the ring itself was invisible.

Such mystical experiences change people, and St. Catherine was no exception. In her vision, she was told to reenter public life and to help the poor and sick. She immediately rejoined her family and went into public to help people in need. She often visited hospitals and homes where the poor and sick were found. Her activities quickly attracted followers who helped her in her mission to serve the poor and sick.

St. Catherine was drawn further into the world as she worked, and eventually she began to travel, calling for reform of the Church and for people to confess and to love God totally. She became involved in politics, and was key in working to keep city states loyal to the Pope. She was also credited with helping to start a crusade to the Holy Land. On one occasion, she visited a condemned political prisoner and was credited with saving his soul, which she saw being taken up to heaven at the moment of his death. St. Catherine allegedly was given the stigmata, but like her ring, it was visible only to herself. She took Bl. Raymond of Capua as her confessor and spiritual director.

From 1375 onwards, St. Catherine began dictating letters to scribes. She petitioned for peace and was instrumental in persuading the Pope in Avignon to return to Rome. She became involved in the fractured politics of her time, but was instrumental in restoring the Papacy to Rome and in brokering peace deals during a time of factional conflict and war between the Italian city states.

She also established a monastery for women in 1377 outside of Siena. She is credited with composing over 400 letters, her Dialogue, which is her definitive work, and her prayers. These works are so influential that St. Catherine would later be declared a Doctor of the Church.

She is one of the most influential and popular saints in the Church. By 1380, the 33-year-old mystic had become ill, possibly because of her habit of extreme fasting. Her confessor, Raymond, ordered her to eat, but she replied that she found it difficult to do so, and that possibly she was ill. In January of 1380, her illness accelerated her inability to eat and drink. Within weeks, she was unable to use her legs. She died on April 29, following a stroke just a week prior.

St. Catherine's feast day is April 29, she is the patroness against fire, illness, the United States, Italy, miscarriages, people ridiculed for their faith, sexual temptation, and nurses.

St Joseph the Worker – 1st May



Everything we know about the husband of Mary and the foster father of Jesus comes from Scripture and that has seemed too little for those who made up legends about him.

We know he was a carpenter, a working man, for the sceptical Nazarenes ask about Jesus, "Is this not the carpenter's son?" (Matthew 13:55). He wasn't rich for when he took Jesus to the Temple to be circumcised and Mary to be purified he offered the sacrifice of two turtledoves or a pair of pigeons, allowed only for those who could not afford a lamb (Luke 2:24). Despite his humble work and means, Joseph came from a royal lineage. Luke and Matthew disagree some about the details of Joseph's genealogy but they both mark his descent from

David, the greatest king of Israel (Matthew 1:1-16 and Luke 3:23-38). Indeed, the angel who first tells Joseph about Jesus greets him as "son of David," a royal title used also for Jesus.

We know Joseph was a compassionate, caring man. When he discovered Mary was pregnant after they had been betrothed, he knew the child was not his but was as yet unaware that she was carrying the Son of God. He knew women accused of adultery could be stoned to death, so he resolved to send her away quietly to not expose her to shame or cruelty. However, when an angel came to Joseph in a dream and told him, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins," he did as the angel told him and took Mary as his wife. (Matthew 1:19-25). When the angel came again to tell him that his family was in danger, he immediately left everything he owned, all his family and friends, and fled to a strange country with his young wife and the baby. He waited in Egypt without question until the angel told him it was safe to go back (Matthew 2:13-23).

We know Joseph loved Jesus. His one concern was for the safety of this child entrusted to him. Not only did he leave his home to protect Jesus, but upon his return settled in the obscure town of Nazareth out of fear for his life. When Jesus stayed in the Temple, we are told Joseph, along with Mary, searched with great anxiety for three days for him (Luke 2:48). We also know that Joseph treated Jesus as his own son for over and over the people of Nazareth say of Jesus, "Is this not the son of Joseph?" (Luke 4:22)

We know Joseph respected God. He followed God's commands in handling the situation with Mary and going to Jerusalem to have Jesus circumcised and Mary purified after Jesus' birth. We are told that he took his family to Jerusalem every year for Passover, something that could not have been easy for a working man.

Since Joseph does not appear in Jesus' public life, at his death, or resurrection, many historians believe Joseph probably had died before Jesus entered public ministry. Joseph is the patron saint of the dying; he is also patron saint of the Universal Church, families, fathers, expectant mothers (pregnant women), travellers, immigrants, house sellers and buyers, craftsmen, engineers, and working people in general.

We celebrate two feast days for Joseph: March 19, for Joseph the Husband of Mary and May 1 for Joseph the Worker. March 19 has been the most commonly celebrated feast day for Joseph, and it wasn't until 1955 that Pope Pius XII established the Feast of "St. Joseph the Worker" to be celebrated on May 1. This is also May Day (International Workers' Day) and believed to reflect Joseph's status as the patron of workers.

