

# Parish of St Margaret Clitherow

Easter Sunday (A)

5<sup>th</sup> April 2026



## St Margaret Clitherow

**Priest:** Fr. Francis Agada MSP **Tel:** 0161 790 2390 **Deacon:** Rev. Robert Hewertson  
**Email:** f.agada@rcaol.org.uk **Enquiries:** stmargaretclitherow@rcaol.org.uk

**St John Rigby**  
**Priest:** Fr. Carl Mugan  
**Tel:** 01942 392922  
**Emails:** c.mugan@rcaol.org.uk  
stjohnrigby@rcaol.org.uk

**St Edmund Arrowsmith**  
**Priest:** Fr. Kieran O'Grady  
**Tel:** 01942 673517 or 731280  
**Emails:** k.ogradey@rcaol.org.uk  
stedmund.leigh@rcaol.org.uk

**St Catherine & All Saints & St Lewis**  
**Priest:** Fr Gordon Abbs  
**Tel:** 01942 273851  
**Email:** lgcadmin@rcaol.org.uk  
**Deacon:** Rev. Derek Morris

## Part of Wigan and Leigh Deanery

websites: [www.leighcatholic.co.uk](http://www.leighcatholic.co.uk) & <https://stlewis.co.uk/deanery/>

### Easter: The Mystery That Re-Makes the World.

Easter morning always arrives with a kind of quiet astonishment for those who listen closely. Even if we know the story by heart, even if we have proclaimed "Christ is risen!" every year of our lives, something in the Easter mystery still catches us off guard. It is as though the world itself pauses to listen again for the sound of the stone rolling away. The Gospels do not describe the moment of resurrection itself; instead, they invite us into the aftermath—into the bewilderment, the joy, the tears, and the dawning recognition that God has done something utterly new.

At the heart of Easter is a truth that is both cosmic and deeply personal: God has entered the darkest places of human experience and transformed them from within. The resurrection is not simply a reversal of death; it is the beginning of a new creation. As Paul writes, "If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation; the old has passed away; behold, the new has come" (2 Corinthians 5:17). Easter is the unveiling of that newness.

### The Empty Tomb: A Revelation of God's Faithfulness

The Gospel of John tells us that Mary Magdalene came to the tomb "while it was still dark" (John 20:1). That detail is more than a time stamp. It speaks to the emotional and spiritual landscape of grief. Mary comes carrying the weight of loss, confusion, and shattered hope. She comes to tend to a body, not to witness a miracle.

But the stone is rolled away.

The empty tomb is not, in itself, proof of resurrection. It is an invitation. It draws Mary—and us—into a deeper encounter with God's faithfulness. The resurrection is God's definitive "yes" to Jesus' life and mission. It is the vindication of everything Jesus taught, embodied, and suffered. As Peter proclaims in Acts, "God raised him up, having freed him from death, because it was impossible for him to be held by it" (Acts 2:24).

Easter tells us that death does not have the final word—not over Jesus, and not over us.

### The Resurrection as God's New Creation

The New Testament writers reach for the language of creation to describe what God has done in Christ. In John's Gospel, the resurrection takes place in a garden, echoing the garden of Genesis. When Mary mistakes Jesus for the gardener (John 20:15), the symbolism is rich: the risen Christ is indeed the gardener of the new creation, tending to the soil of human hearts, cultivating hope where despair once grew.

Paul goes even further. In Romans 8, he describes the whole creation "groaning" for redemption, and in 1 Corinthians 15 he calls Christ the "first fruits" of those who have died. The resurrection is not an isolated miracle; it is the beginning of a harvest. What God has done for Jesus, God intends for all creation.

This is why Easter is not merely a commemoration of a past event. It is a proclamation of a present reality and a future hope. The risen Christ is not a memory; he is a living presence, drawing the world toward its fulfilment in God.

#### LOCAL PARISHES

Parish of St. Margaret Clitherow

St. Ambrose Barlow  
Astley

St. Gabriel's  
Higher Folds  
Holy Family  
Boothstown

Parish of St. John Rigby

Sacred Heart  
Hindley Green  
Sacred Heart  
Hindsford  
St. Richard's  
Atherton

Parish of St. Edmund Arrowsmith

Our Lady of the Rosary  
Sacred Heart  
St. Joseph's  
Twelve Apostles  
Leigh

Parish of St. Catherine of Siena and All Saints  
Golborne

Parish of St. Lewis  
Croft

#### Archdiocesan Mission Statement



Taking to heart the last words of the Lord Jesus, we will go into the world to proclaim the Good News to the whole of creation.

## **The Wounds That Remain: A God Who Redeems, Not Erases**

One of the most striking details in the resurrection narratives is that Jesus still bears his wounds. When he appears to the disciples, he shows them his hands and his side (John 20:20). The risen body of Christ is not unscarred. The marks of suffering are not erased but transformed. This is profoundly pastoral. It tells us that God does not bypass our pain. God does not pretend our wounds never happened. Instead, God takes them up into divine life and transfigures them. The resurrection does not deny the reality of Good Friday; it reveals that God's love is stronger than the forces that crucified Jesus. For those carrying grief, trauma, or the slow ache of unanswered questions, this is good news. Easter does not demand that we "move on" or "cheer up." It invites us to trust that our wounds, too, can become places of encounter with the risen Christ.

## **The Resurrection and the Transformation of Fear**

The disciples on Easter morning are not paragons of courage. They are hiding behind locked doors "for fear of the authorities" (John 20:19). Fear is a natural response to loss, uncertainty, and the collapse of what we thought we knew. Yet it is into this locked room that Jesus comes, speaking words of peace. The resurrection does not magically remove fear, but it reframes it. The disciples' fear is met not with rebuke but with presence. Jesus breathes the Holy Spirit upon them, commissioning them to continue his work of reconciliation.

This is the pastoral heart of Easter: God meets us where we are, not where we think we should be. The risen Christ steps into our locked rooms—our anxieties, our doubts, our guarded hearts—and speaks peace.

## **Easter as a Call to Hopeful Living**

The resurrection is not only a comfort; it is a calling. Paul writes, "Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God" (Colossians 3:2–3). This is not an invitation to escapism but to a new way of seeing the world. To live as **Easter people is to:**

- Refuse despair, even when the world feels bleak
- Practice forgiveness, because God has reconciled us in Christ
- Seek justice, because the resurrection reveals God's commitment to life
- Cultivate compassion, because Christ's risen life is marked by mercy
- Hold onto hope, not as naïve optimism but as a theological virtue rooted in God's promise

**Easter hope is not fragile. It is forged in the fire of Good Friday and confirmed in the dawn of resurrection.**

## **The Pastoral Relevance of the Easter Mystery**

For a church community, Easter is both a celebration and a reorientation. It reminds us that our faith is not built on moral advice or spiritual techniques but on the living Christ. The resurrection shapes how we accompany one another through grief, illness, conflict, and change.

1. **Easter gives us a language for grief.** We grieve honestly, but not as those without hope (1 Thessalonians 4:13). The resurrection does not trivialise loss; it places it within God's larger story.
2. **Easter strengthens our communal life.** The early Christians gathered around the conviction that Christ was alive among them. Our fellowship, too, is grounded not in shared interests but in shared resurrection hope.
3. **Easter empowers our mission.** We are sent, like the first disciples, to embody the reconciling love of God in a fractured world. The resurrection is the source of our courage.
4. **Easter invites personal renewal.** Each of us carries tombs within us—places of fear, shame, or resignation. The risen Christ calls us by name, as he called Mary, inviting us into newness of life.

**Recognising the Risen Christ Today** The resurrection narratives are full of moments of recognition: Mary hearing her name, the disciples on the road to Emmaus recognising Jesus in the breaking of bread, Thomas encountering the wounded yet risen Lord. These stories remind us that Christ often comes to us in unexpected ways.

We recognise him:

- In the compassion of those who sit with us in our sorrow ; - In the courage of those who work for justice
- In the quiet persistence of hope when circumstances seem unchanging ; - In the beauty of creation renewed each spring
- In the Eucharist, where Christ offers himself again as the bread of life ;

Easter trains our eyes to see the world differently—to look for signs of resurrection in the ordinary and the overlooked.

## **Conclusion: Living the Resurrection**

Easter is not a single day but a season, and more than a season, a way of life. It invites us to inhabit a world where death is not the end, where love is stronger than violence, where hope is not foolish but faithful. The resurrection is God's great "yes" to humanity, to creation, and to the future.

As we celebrate this Easter, may we allow the mystery to touch us anew. May the risen Christ call us by name, breathe peace into our fears, and open our eyes to the signs of new creation all around us. And may we, as a community, bear witness to the hope that has been entrusted to us—not with triumphalism, but with humility, courage, and joy.

**Christ is risen. He is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

## PARISH NEWS

Please make use of this address when contacting the Parish Office: [stmargaretclitherow@rcaol.org.uk](mailto:stmargaretclitherow@rcaol.org.uk)  
A reminder: Please could all items for the newsletter be sent to the office at Holy Family or the above email by Wednesday evening.

**Last Week's Parish Collections:** Offertory Collection : **£581.28** Lenten Alms **£318.66**

**Second Collections:** Today : **No 2<sup>nd</sup> Collection** Next Week: **SVP**

Parish Account Details for those who might want to make donations by bank transfer.

**Account name:** St Margaret Clitherow

**Account no:** 81555901

**Sort Code:** 40 29 12

**Divine Sunday Mercy :** The Sunday after Easter is when we celebrate the feast of the Divine Mercy. On this Divine Mercy Sunday, we shall have exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at 3pm. 1 hour adoration will follow. At 4 p.m., we shall have an evening of songs and praise. Please mark your diaries for this event. You will be spiritually uplifted. Happy Easter.



**First Holy Communion :** As we celebrate Easter 2026, we pray for and congratulate all our children from Holy Family, St Ambrose, and St Gabriel,s Catholic primary schools and those from non Catholic schools who have been preparing for their First Holy Communion. The dates for the Holy Communion Masses are: 25th April, 2nd May, 9th May, and 16th May, 2026. May God grant our children the grace to love and grow in His wisdom. Amen.



**MSP Corner :** Fr Francis belongs to the Missionary Society of St. Paul. This is an important message for support:

Would you consider sponsoring a Missionary Priest Today?

**“Some give to the mission by going, others go to the mission by giving.”**

You can commit to full sponsorship according to your means. It costs £2,200 annually to train a missionary priest for the period of nine years. You can plan and spread your payment monthly, quarterly, or annually. More information contact:

The Director, Mission Development Office, The Missionary Society of St. Paul Regional House 6 Knowle Close, London SW9 0TQ.

Email: [mission.office@mspfathers.co.uk](mailto:mission.office@mspfathers.co.uk) Phone: [+44\(0\)207 737 5669](tel:+44(0)2077375669) Website: [www.mspfathers.co.uk](http://www.mspfathers.co.uk)

**MSSP**  
MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF ST PAUL

**Guide update :** A big Thank you to everyone who brought in your clothing bags, we raised £168.90. This is a great amount and all for nothing and obviously helps you to have a good clear out too! On Thursday 26th February we held our Chocolate Bingo night. It was a great turn out with parishioners from St Ambrose and Holy Family and guide parents too. We had a fun night and we raised an incredible £353.72. A big Thank you to everyone for coming and your very generous donations of chocolate and your money too. We really do everyone support not only with these events but everything we do in the parish. Next fundraiser is on Easter Sunday for the Easter raffle, £1 a strip so please have your cash ready, Thank you Delia

**Ladies Group :** The next meeting will be held on Thursday the 9th April in St Ambrose Hall 12-2pm

**Parish Development Strategy :** It has been announced about the beginning of the Parish Development Strategy in our Deanery. This means that we will be taking a close look at all the parish communities in the deanery. In our parish I have asked a number of parishioners to help in the early stages by joining a 'Steering Group. Over the coming months we will prepare some ideas for the future . Changes are inevitable over the next couple of years , so let's pray that the Holy Spirit will give us all some guidance.

**Gift Aid :** Can all envelopes givers kindly pick up their envelopes for the new year. If anyone who is a tax payer and wants to join the Gift Aid Scheme please see Bernie or Des.

**For your Diary :** Family Quiz Night in Holy Family Hall 7.30pm on Friday 24th April. £5 per family. Bring your own refreshments/snacks.

**X11 Apostles Walsingham Pilgrimage :** will have Mass on Easter Monday at St Richards, Atherton, 9am.

**Holy Family Tea & Toast :** next Sunday 12th April. All Welcome

**Sick List :** If there are any names that you wish to be added to the new list please contact Liz in the office.

**Food Bank :** As many families are struggling in our midst please give generously if you are able. Food donated at church is taken to support our local food bank.

**St Vincent de Paul :** The SVP may be able to assist you or someone you know who needs help. We could help by providing people in our





# PARISH MASS TIMES & INTENTIONS

Please pray for those who are Sick

- All Cancer Patients
- Archbishop Kelly
- Carol Yates
- Brian Smith
- Chris Higgins
- Deborah Kane
- Eilish Glennon
- Frank Colgan
- Francis Lohan
- Guy Ryan
- Hannah Delargy
- Jack Travis
- John Wall
- John Walsh
- Joseph Gray
- Kevin Lawman
- Lynne Lewis
- Louisa Duffy
- Matthew Ndumbe
- Margaret Wall
- Michael Ruddy
- Sean Flemming
- Tony Kenny
- Teresa Yates
- Yvonne Glynn
- Young Dougie Ward
- Ward Family

All praise and glory is yours, Lord our God, for you have called us to serve you in love.

Bless the sick of our parish so that they may bear this illness in union with your Son's obedient suffering. Restore them to health, and lead them to glory.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.



## Deaths


Mary Tierney

Eternal rest grant unto them,

O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.

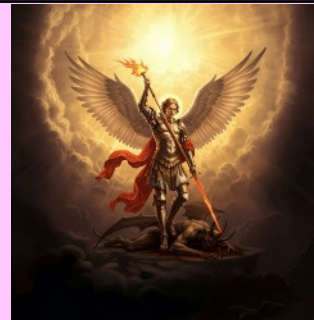
May their souls, and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.



Week Beginning 5 <sup>th</sup> April 2026	Holy Family	St Ambrose Barlow
<b>Psalter: Week 1</b> Readings- Sunday - Easter Sunday (A) Weekdays - Easter Octave 		
<b>Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> April</b> <b>Easter Sunday The Resurrection of the Lord</b>	8:00pm <b>Easter Vigil</b> Keith Lewis  9:30am Veronica Walsh	11.00am John Burke & Pepe Villar ert
<b>Monday 6<sup>th</sup> April</b>		
<b>Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> April</b>		9:15am Mary Tierney
<b>Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> April</b>	7.00pm Alison Millar	
<b>Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> April</b>	10:00am Marina Furey	
<b>Friday 10<sup>th</sup> April</b>	No Mass Today	
<b>Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> April</b>	10.00am Michael & Ann Donelan 10.30am Adoration & Confessions	6.00pm Wyn & Alf Brown & Clifford Grant
<b>Next Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> April</b> <b>Sunday of Divine Mercy</b>	9:30am Margaret Langan	11.00am Bernard Quinn

## St Michael Archangel Prayer

"Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray; and do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly Host, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen."



## Readings for next Sunday

### Easter Sunday

#### First Reading - Acts 2:42-47

"And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers."

#### Second Reading - 1 Peter 1:3-9

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!"

#### Gospel Reading - John 20:1-9

'Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."

## BAPTISMS : Ashuza Biganiro, Amara Biganiro, Asante Biganiro

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the gift of new life. As this child is reborn by water and the Holy Spirit, help us to be faithful to the promises we make this day. Teach us to guide our child by word and example in the way of faith, hope, and love. Through Christ our Lord. Amen"



To make an offering to the parish by text message

Text CLITHEROW to 70085 to donate £2. Texts cost £2 plus one standard rate message and you'll be opting in to hear more about our work and fundraising via telephone and SMS. If you'd like to give £2 but do not wish to receive marketing communications, Text CLITHEROWNOINFO to 70085, 70450 to donate £3, 70460 to donate £5, 70470 to donate £10.