

Houses of God



The architect who won the competition was called Frederick Gibberd. Construction began in 1962, the same year as the Second Vatican Council was opened. The altar faced the people, who were seated "in the round" – it was a break with the traditional Latin cross design in favour of a building in which the celebrant was in the midst of the congregation, rather than set apart. And wherever worshippers sit in the space, they have clear sight lines to the high altar. Consecrated in 1967, this was a new church for a new age; it was a suitable bookend for the Anglican cathedral that stood at the opposite end of Hope Street, and with its crowning centrepiece above the altar, which quickly became a Liverpool landmark, it was soon known as "Paddy's Wigwam".

The vast interior space sits 2,300 people, with walls decorated with embroidered hangings made in the cathedral's art studios. Among the greatest jewels are the side chapels, each with works of art and devotion by contemporary artists. John Piper designed the stained glass above the tower, and the sculptor Elizabeth Frink was responsible for the bronze crucifix on the altar. The Stations of the Cross are in manganese bronze by Liverpool artist Sean Rice.

HEART OF THE COMMUNITY

Pope St John Paul II said Mass at the cathedral on his UK visit in 1982, when more than a million people lined his route there from Speke Airport in the city. As well as visiting the Catholic cathedral, the Pope also attended a service at the Anglican cathedral. A few years earlier, in 1977, Queen Elizabeth II included a trip to the Metropolitan Cathedral in her Silver Jubilee tour of the country. On 16 April 1989, the day after the Hillsborough disaster, the cathedral was packed for a special Mass, with more than six thousand people also on the piazza outside.

Mass text

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

How worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and divinity, and wisdom and strength and honour. To him belong glory and power for ever and ever.

FIRST READING Daniel 7:13-14

PSALM Psalm 92

RESPONSE **The Lord is king, with majesty enrobed.**

- 1. The Lord is king, with majesty enrobed; the Lord has robed himself with might, he has girded himself with power. R.**
- 2. The world you made firm, not to be moved; your throne has stood firm from of old. From all eternity, O Lord, you are. R.**
- 3. Truly your decrees are to be trusted. Holiness is fitting to your house, O Lord, until the end of time. R.**

SECOND READING **Apocalypse 1:5-8**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia! Blessings on him who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessings on the coming kingdom of our father David! Alleluia!

GOSPEL John 18:33-37

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

The Lord sits as King for ever. The Lord will bless his people with peace.

Next Sunday's Readings:

Jeremiah 33:14-16
1 Thessalonians 3:12 – 4:2
Luke 21:25-28, 34-36

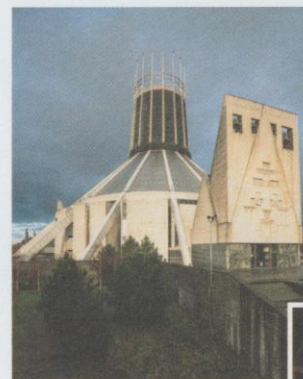


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PADDY'S WIGWAM – LIVERPOOL METROPOLITAN CATHEDRAL

It was first mooted in the 1850s; but it would be more than a century before Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral would eventually open its doors.

The soaring Catholic population of the city at the height of its shipbuilding success, when Irish labourers poured across in search of work, led the Catholic bishops to decide they needed a cathedral in Liverpool; and the first architect they commissioned was Edward Welby Pugin. His plans were eventually discarded, but in the 1930s the bishops embarked on an extraordinarily grand plan, for which they hired the most successful English architect of the time, Edwin Lutyens. He had made a name for himself designing grand country houses, but had by now moved on to being inspired by seventeenth- and eighteenth-century architecture – and a cathedral that would dwarf both St Peter's Basilica in Rome, and St Paul's in London, promised to be his crowning glory. The plan was for a vast, Italianate, pinky-brown edifice; Lutyens, who was an Anglican, took his drawings to Rome for a papal blessing.



Work began in 1933, but halted with the start of World War Two. By this stage only the elaborate crypt was complete. And when in the early 1950s the project was reignited, the costs had soared from £3 million to £27 million. The bishops pulled the plug and soon afterwards Adrian Gilbert Scott, ecclesiastical artist from a renowned architectural family, was asked to come up with new plans.

Gilbert Scott's plans were a great deal more modest – but, once again, the project floundered. So the then Archbishop – later Cardinal – Heenan decided to take the matter in hand once and for all. In 1959 he launched a competition to find the best architect for the new building – an affordable church that could rest on Lutyens' labyrinthine crypt.



Joanna Moorhead concludes this selection of British churches by looking at Liverpool's Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King.



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OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, KING OF THE UNIVERSE

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DIVINE OFFICE WEEK II