**St Columba’s Church, Selsdon**

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**5 SEPTEMBER 2021 – 23RD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (YEAR B)**

**COVID PRECAUTIONS: SEE OVERLEAF FOR WHAT HAS - AND HASN’T - CHANGED**

**THIS SUNDAY’S MASS READINGS**

**Entrance Antiphon:** You are just, O Lord, and your judgement is right; treat your servant in accord with your merciful love.

**A reading from the prophet Isaiah: 35:4-7**

**Responsorial Psalm PS 145:7-10. Rv1:** My soul, give praise to the Lord.

**2nd Reading: A reading from the letter of St James: 2:1-5**

**Gospel Acclamation:** Alleluia, Alleluia! Speak, Lord, your servant is listening: you have the message of eternal life. Alleluia!

**Gospel: Mark 7:31-37**

**Communion Antiphon:** Like the deer that yearns for running streams, so my soul is yearning for you, my God; my soul is thirsting for God, the living God.

**AUTUMN FAYRE: OCTOBER 3**

On Sunday October 3 there will be an Autumn Fayre at St Columba’s starting after 10am Mass and organised by the Union of Catholic Mothers (UCM).

Everyone is invited to help make it happen. Email UCM secretary Debbie Martin and let her know how you can help, whether as a stall holder or helper: stcolumbasseslsdon\_ucm@outlook.co.uk

We shall need lots of good things to go on the stalls – bottles, jewellery, plants, nearly-new bric-a-brac, handicrafts, homemade cakes, sweets, cosmetics. Leave them in the box at the back of the church. Setting up will be on Saturday the 3rd.

*Why we need to get away from the crowd to hear the word of God*

A reflection on Sunday’s Gospel by Fr Roy

In Sunday’s Gospel we hear how Jesus visits and spends time in a secular territory outside Israel. Decapolis is an area containing ten cities highly influenced by Graeco-Roman culture.

It lies east of the river Jordan which means it is part of Syria.

In the Gospel we heard how Jesus heals the sick there, something he often did.

However, on this occasion the writer wants us to see it from a different perspective.

This Gospel requires a symbolic reading of the culture in Decapolis, which was one strongly influenced by secularism.

Western culture today is like Decapolis. It is a culture devoid of the word of God; one shaped by secularist influences.

In other words, people are not attuned to the word of God.

That means the spiritual aspects of life are not part of the picture.

Decapolis is a place of spiritual deafness. The most popular voice in this culture is materialism.

Values are focused on subjectivism where the ego determines the value of everything.

Those values are reflected in films, pop music and all forms of entertainment.

The Decapolis of today is deaf to the voice of God.

Our ability to speak articulately is correlated to our ability to hear.

If all we listen to in life are voices that have nothing to do with God, it obvious that what we say will not have much connection with God.

We will be deaf to the moral demands of God because they are not in our consciousness.

Our capacity to speak in a way reflecting God’s word will be non existent because we cannot hear it.

This is the kind of deafness Jesus is looking to address.

“Returning from the district of Tyre, Jesus went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, right through the Decapolis region.

“And they brought him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they asked him to lay his hand on him.

“He took him aside in private, away from the crowd…”.

The role of the Church is to lead us away from the crowd so that another world might open up for us. The culture of the crowd is deafening: it stifles our sense of hearing by making us deaf to Jesus’s voice. We need to be led into a different arena where we can hear moral and spiritual truth.

A change of environment is needed to open our ears to Jesus.

Jesus “put his fingers into the man’s ears and touched his tongue with spittle.”

In this way, Jesus ‘wired’ himself directly to the blind man to help him recover his real sense of hearing.

Being evangelised is allowing Jesus to take us away from the crowd so that we can hear the good news. That deaf man in the Gospel represents all of us who cannot talk about Jesus because we cannot hear him.

“Then looking up to heaven he sighed; and he said to him, ‘Ephphatha’, that is, ‘Be opened.”

The moral is that we have to get away from the crowd and close to Jesus so that he can open not just our hearts but also our minds as well.

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| **LITURGICAL CALENDAR OF THE WEEK** |
| Sat 4th  | Weekday in Ordinary Time orSt Cuthbert, Bishop |
| Sun 5th  | 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time |
| Mon 6th  | Weekday in Ordinary Time |
| Tues 7th  | Weekday in Ordinary Time |
| Wed 8th  | The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary |
| Thurs 9th  | Weekday in Ordinary Time or St Peter Claver, Priest |
| Fri 10th  | Weekday in Ordinary Time |
| Sat 11th  | Weekday in Ordinary Time or St Deiniol, Bishop |
| Sun 12th  | 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time |

***COVID PRECAUTIONS: SEE WHAT HAS - AND HASN’T - CHANGED***

Despite the removal of legal restrictions in July, Archbishop John strongly urges us, in the interests of health and safety, to continue to take precautions when coming to Mass. So please continue to:

* Remember to bring and wear a face mask covering the nose as well as the mouth
* Meet Track-and-Trace requirements by providing a written note every time you come to church of your name and contact details plus the date and, if relevant, Mass time. To save queuing and filling out a form, send an email to selsdon@rcaos.org.uk
* Use hand sanitizer, provided, both when entering and leaving the church.
* Take a paper marker (during the week, not at the weekend) and leave it on your seat so that the stewards know where to sanitize.
* Bring your own Mass or prayer book – there are no shared items available in church.
* Ensure plenty of social distancing in the church and in the benches unless you are in a family group.

In addition, Holy Communion is once again being distributed (although still only under one kind) before the end of Mass rather than afterwards. We shall still refrain from exchanging the Sign of Peace and Stewards will continue to sanitize the seating after each Mass.

**REMEMBER THE SICK AND NEEDY**

Please pray for all those who are sick or in need at this time including: Nicola Gingell, Albert Mackay, Bridget Oxley, Judy Freegard, Dani Gonek, Christine Marchant, Anne McDonagh, Martin McDonagh, Martin Reilly, Lily Wei, Douglas & Yvonne Bruce, Thelma Benn, Cora Litchfield, Joan Cunningham, Solveya La Marina, Chris Jones, Maria Reece, Margaret Bolton, Eddie Aldridge, Ellis Warburton, Mary Marks, Jean-Claude Anthony, Ellen Everett, Maureen Coffey, Elizabeth Sensano, Patrick Acholonu, Kate Acholonu, Christopher Onyeachom and sick residents at the four residential homes usually, in better times, visited by the parish St Vincent de Paul group.

**CONFIRMATION CLASSES**

All candidates to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation need to attend weekly meetings starting Sunday September 19.

The meetings, in the church, will start at 5.30pm and last for around 45 minutes.

A date for Confirmations to be held at St Columba’s has yet to be confirmed.

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| **MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK** |
| Sat 4th  | 6.30pm | Holy Souls |
| Sun 5th  | 8.00am | Holy Souls |
| Sun 5th  | 10.00am | Pro Populo |
| Sun 5th  | 6.30am | Holy Souls |
| Mon 6th  | 10.00am | Holy Souls |
| Tues 7th  | 10.00am | Holy Souls |
| Wed 8th  | 10.00am | Holy Souls |
| Thurs 9th | 10.00am | Holy Souls |
| Fri 10th  | 10.00am | Holy Souls |
| Sat 11th  | 6.30pm | Philip & Mary Pond, 50th Wedding Anniversary |
| Sun 12th  | 8.00am | Holy Souls |
| Sun 12th  | 10.00am | Pro Populo |
| Sun 12th  | 6.30pm | Holy Souls |

***SHOP ONLINE AND HELP ST COLUMBA’S***

Thinking of buying something online? Anything? A new washing machine or any other white goods?

Or perhaps you need a new vacuum cleaner or intend ordering a book or dvd or other items.

If you do it online you can help St Columba’s finances, depleted by the lockdown, at the same time and at no cost to yourself.

More and more parishioners are signing up for this scheme. It means that you can turn your everyday online shopping into free donations to our parish.

It’s simple. It’s straightforward. And it will cost you nothing.

All you have to do is to logon to the following website [www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk), register (which is quick and easy) and then go shopping online at whichever retailer you choose. Then, in future, every time you buy something – anything – a small donation is made to St Columba’s.

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| There are more than 4,000 retailers to choose from including lots of big names such as Argos, John Lewis, Amazon, M&S and Sainsbury’s. Have a look at this link to find out more: [https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/stcolumbasldn/?invite=ZTUSO0%26referral-campaign=c2s%26utm\_campaign=admin-trigger%26utm\_content=nst](http://t.e.easyfundraising.org.uk/r/?id=h2ef6bab4,257a256b,25302fff&utm_source=adobecampaign&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=referral-2018&utm_content=trigger-supp-referee-raised-2018&origin=RTNS2&p1=stcolumbasldn&p2=ZTUSO0) ***GOING INTO HOSPITAL? TELL US*** If you or a member of your family go into hospital, ask the Ward Sister or Staff Nurse to notify the hospital’s Roman Catholic hospital chaplain direct. That will make it much more likely that you have the opportunity of receiving Holy Communion (or any other sacraments) while in hospital. Make sure also to let Fr Roy or Deacon Philip know beforehand if possible of your admission or that of a family member into hospital. We can then keep you in our prayers.***PRAYERS FOR THE SICK***We have a prayer list of names of those who are sick which appears in the newsletter every week and is included in the Bidding Prayers at all Sunday Masses.If you know of anyone, a parishioner or family member, you would like to be included, please let Fr Roy or Deacon Philip know.If you previously asked for someone to be included in the list but who is now recovered, do let us know.**PEACE AND QUIET**Do you fancy some? Peace and quiet, that is? Here’s your opportunity: a quiet morning. You are invited to spend the morning of Saturday September 18 reflecting on ‘Silence & Peace’.This mini spiritual retreat is being held at St Mary’s church, Addington, and starts at 10.30am – just turn up, no need to book. The leader will be Susan Oakes.The event is being organised by Churches Together in Selsdon & Addington, of which St Columba’s is an active member. |  |  |

**KNOW OF ANYONE IN NEED?**

Are you aware of any parishioners living alone or in need? If so, as well as phoning them yourself occasionally to see if they need anything, let Fr Roy or Deacon Philip know of their situation.

That way, we can work together to support and help them at this difficult time.

**HAVE YOU LOST A LOVED ONE?**

‘Grief and Loss, Hope in Christ’ is the title of a weekend for those who have lost a loved one through death. The weekend provides a time to mourn and share with others. The venue: Aylesford Priory. Date: October 8-10. For more information phone 01622 717272 or email enquery@thefriars.org.uk

**CAFÉ COLUMBA REOPENS**

After a gap of 18 months because of the lockdowns, Café Columba has reopened.

Make a note of the open times: the first Wednesday of every month, from 10am until 1:15pm.

We will be serving scones and cakes with coffees and teas first thing; also lunches, a main dish and dessert, from 11:45am.

Should you wish to visit, bring your friends – it’s a community cafe for the whole of Selsdon, remember. Everyone is more than welcome.

Our prices are low and all profits are given to charities, local and national.

If you would like to volunteer to help or bake a cake, please get in touch with Gill Tomei: email g.tomei@btopenworld.com

We look forward to seeing you.

**MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING**

Our annual Macmillan Coffee Morning will take place on Friday September 24 from 10-11.30am.

There will be a prize raffle and homemade-cakes stall plus of course teas, coffees, scones and biscuits.

Items for the raffle are needed: you can leave them in the hall kitchen over the weekend of September 18/19 or any time during the week commencing September 20. Cakes should be delivered before 9.30am on the 25th please.

Do come along and support this annual charitable event, which has been running for at least eight years. Thanks in advance for your support.

**CONGRATULATIONS**

A warm welcome to our parish family goes to Poppy May Wellbrook, born February 25, who was baptised at St Columba’s on August 29. Congratulations to Mum and Dad, Laura and Timothy.

Congratulations to Christine Francis and Kushal Virdi who will be getting married at St Columba’s on Friday (the 10th).

**A MESSAGE FROM BROWN OWL**

Do you like young people? Have you thought about volunteering to help at a Brownie unit?

You would be most welcome if you did: we need you.

We are a thriving Brownie unit in need of help. One of our leaders is retiring and we are looking for helpers and leaders to join our team so we can keep the unit open.

We have 19 girls in our unit, all very enthusiastic about guiding, who want you to come along and help. We have a great programme of activities ranging from learning camping skills to craft, baking to science and engineering activities.

The girls help in the community, learn skills for the future, have fun and play games.

There are all sorts of ways you might help: admin, accounts, keeping our database up to date, sending emails, helping to plan activities…

Please help us prevent the unit closing, for the sake of our girls. Email meg.passey@gmail.com to find out more. - *Brown Owl*

**LITTER PICK**

That’s what is happening on Saturday September 25: a litter pick.

Parishioners of St Columba’s are invited to join members of other churches in the area for a couple of hours cleaning up Selsdon. In other words, making this a pleasanter place to live.

If you are interested just turn up at St Mary’s, Addington, at 11am. Bring some disposable gloves – refuse bags and picking sticks will be provided.

A number of specific areas have been identified for litter picking – you will get the details when you arrive at St Mary’s.

The event is being organised by Churches Together in Selsdon & Addington, of which St Columba’s is an active member.

**SITUATION VACANT**

Good Shepherd Catholic Primary & Nursery School in New Addington is looking to appoint an Administration Assistant. The position, available immediately, is permanent.

For full details and an application form visit the school website [www.goodshepherdprimaryschool.co.uk](http://www.goodshepherdprimaryschool.co.uk)

**HELP AFGHAN REFUGREES**

Croydon Refugee Day Centre is making an appeal for new and good quality pre-worn clothing for refugees from Afghanistan. Here's the list of clothing needed:

* New men’s underwear - boxers please
* New women’s and children’s underwear
* New socks - all sizes
* Men’s hats - good condition
* Trainers for children and men and women
* Men’s jeans - all sizes
* Men’s and women’s t-shirts
* Small and medium size men’s jackets
* Small and medium size men’s jumpers
* Men’s hoodies and tracksuit bottoms

 They are also requesting the following for children:  pads of paper, crayons, pencils, sharpeners.

Ring Ivanka on 07802 631023 for more details.

**UNITED WE STAND**

The Christian Unity Commission (CUC) does what it says on the tin: it works for unity among Christians. How would you like to become involved?

You don’t need any previous experience or special qualifications, just a desire to help and serve the Church.

Contact Deacon Michael Baldry for more information by emailing michaelbaldry@rcaos.org.uk

**PRAYERS FOR THE SICK**

Give Fr Roy or Deacon Philip the name of anyone who is sick so that it can be included in the newsletter and in the Bidding Prayers at Sunday Mass.