**St Columba’s Church, Selsdon**

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**5 DECEMBER 2021**

**2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT (YEAR C)**

**THIS SUNDAY’S MASS READINGS**

**Entrance Antiphon:** O people of Sion, behold, the Lord will come to save the nations, and the Lord will make the glory of his voice heard in the joy of your heart.

**A reading from the prophet Baruch: 5:1-9**

**Responsorial Psalm PS 125. Rv.3:** What marvels the Lord worked for us! Indeed we were glad.

**2nd Reading: A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Philippians: 1:4-6. 8-11**

**Gospel Acclamation:** Alleluia, Alleluia! Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight, and all mankind shall see the salvation of God. Alleluia!

**Gospel: Luke: 3:1-6**

**Communion Antiphon:** Jerusalem, arise and stand upon the heights , and behold the joy which comes to you from God.

**COME TO THE CONCERT, SUNDAY…**

Two years ago, the South London Concert Band, under the direction of our music director, Tony Ryan, performed at St Columba's to great acclaim.

Well, they are coming back.

Make a note of the date: Sunday (the 5th) from 3-5pm. And admission is free.

There will be a variety of music, of various styles and genres.

You can be assured of a most enjoyable and entertaining experience with an interval part way through for refreshments.

A collection will be taken for Ahotokurtom, the leprosy village in Ghana which we support.

**… AND CHRISTMAS CRAFT SESSION**

A children’s Christmas craft session is being held after 10am Mass on Sunday (the 5th) in the hall, with teas & coffees provided. All are welcome.

**MORNING PRAYER EACH MORNING**

*Morning Mass is now preceded by Morning Prayer from the Liturgy of the Hours.*

*It starts at 9.40am every weekday.*

*No one requires a breviary because it is all projected on to the back wall of the sanctuary.*

Jesus is not a myth – and here’s the proof

*FR ROY REFLECTS ON SUNDAY’S GOSPEL*

The historical evidence of the birth of Jesus is proof of the humanity and divinity of Christ.

In this Sunday’s Gospel, St Luke provides us with that evidence.

I mention this because not long ago a survey was conducted here in the United Kingdom about the historicity of Jesus.

The survey concluded that Jesus was not a real historical figure but a myth.

Sunday’s Gospel shows us that Jesus was not a myth: he was indeed a historical fact.

The historicity of Jesus is of central importance to our faith.

The primary reason why the early Christians believed in the message of the Gospel was that fact: that Christ is a historical reality.

People witnessed him performing miracles and saw him crucified.

Most importantly, they witnessed the resurrection by having Jesus dine with them after He died and rose again from the dead.

The Gospel was written in order to tell us what actually happened.

The writers of the Gospel were totally convinced of what happened and wanted to share it with us.

Luke specifically mentions the central figures of the time in order to emphasise that eye witnesses were present to provide us with an orderly account of what happened.

Critics suggest that these events all took place too long time ago for there to be certainty.

Luke contradicts this by giving us independent historical proofs.

As a historian, Luke makes reference to various historical figures which puts the whole thing into an objective time frame.

“In the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar’s reign, when Pontius Pilate was the governor of Judaea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, during the pontificate Annas and Caiphas…”

While these people were in power, something extraordinary happened.

Luke is certainly not indulging in mythical language. Of course God’s focus was not on these powerful figures but such less well-known people as John the Baptist.

Historians normally focus their attention on the high and mighty.

When God breaks into time, space and history, his priorities are different; not what we would ever have expected.

God turns everything upside down.

This brings us to the cross of Jesus.

Where is God then? The answer is that Jesus, the Son of God, hangs on the cross.

That is how God realised His redemptive plan.

It is for all those reasons that this Sunday’s Gospel account by Luke matters so much to us: he demonstrates conclusively that these events happened.

They are part of history. Jesus is not a myth.

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| **LITURGICAL CALENDAR OF THE WEEK** | |
| Sat 4th | Weekday of Advent, St John Damascene, Priest, Doctor of the Church |
| Sun 5th | 2nd Sunday of Advent |
| Mon 6th | Weekday of Advent, St Nicholas, Bishop |
| Tues 7th | St Ambrose, Bishop, Doctor of the Church |
| Wed 8th | The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary |
| Thurs 9th | Weekday of Advent, St Juan Diego Cuahtlatoatzin |
| Fri 10th | Weekday of Advent, [Our Lady of Loreto](http://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Calendar/Sanctoral/December.shtml#Dec10), St John Roberts, Priest, Martyr (W) |
| Sat 11th | Weekday of Advent, St Damasus I, Pope |
| Sun 12th | 3rd Sunday of Advent |

**CHRISTMAS SPRING CLEAN**

We all want St Columba’s looking its very best for the Christmas services.

And it’s a long time since the church was thoroughly cleaned throughout.

So an extra-special church-cleaning session is being organised for Saturday December 18.

Whether you are on the church cleaning list or not, please come along, even if only for half an hour, to lend a hand.

Remember: the more the merrier (men and women!) – and the quicker the job will be done.

There is a rota on the noticeboard in the porch of tasks which need to be completed.

Please put your name down – you can come along at any time between 10.30am and 6pm.

Please bring along your own cleaning materials - a vacuum cleaner will be provided.

***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.

That is particularly so given the latest developments with the Omicron variety of the virus and the fact that it is something of an unknown quantity.

So, for the benefit of all parishioners please continue to:

* Remember to bring and wear a face mask covering the nose as well as the mouth. Remember this protects other people.
* 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.
* Ensure plenty of social distancing in the church and in the benches unless you are in a family group.
* Stewards will continue to sanitize the seating after each Mass.

***We can now offer each other the Sign of Peace but please do not shake hands. Instead just exchange a bow.***

**REMEMBER THE SICK AND NEEDY**

Please pray for all those who are sick or in need at this time.

In particular remember in your prayers: Teresa Madden, Jeffrey Wei, Nicola Gingell, Judy Freegard, Christine Marchant, Douglas & Yvonne Bruce, Margaret Bolton, Eddie Aldridge, Jean-Claude Anthony, Ellen Everett, Maureen Coffey, Patrick Acholonu, Christopher Onyeachom and sick residents at the four residential homes usually, in better times, visited by the parish St Vincent de Paul group.

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| **MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK** | | |
| Sat 4th | 6.30pm | Nina & Howard Freegard, RIP |
| Sun 5th | 8.00am | Holy Souls |
| Sun 5th | 10.00am | Pro Populo |
| Sun 5th | 6.30pm | Holy Souls |
| Mon 6th | 10.00am | Jeffrey Wei, wellbeing |
| Tues 7th | 10.00am | Teresa Loughnane, wellbeing |
| Wed 8th | 10.00am | Margaret Dunne, RIP |
| Thurs 9th | 10.00am | Laura Harstedt, RIP (1st death anniversary) |
| Fri 10th | 10.00am | Derry O’Sullivan, RIP |
| Sat 11th | 6.30pm | Colleen Hiett, RIP |
| Sun 12th | 8.00am | Holy Souls |
| Sun 12th | 10.00am | Pro Populo |
| Sun 12th | 6.30pm | Elizabeth, Celida & Franz Sensano, RIP |

**CHRISTMAS: BUY AT ST COLUMBA’S**

Christmas cards, children's books and calendars are all now available in the repository/church shop at the back of St Columba’s.

**HOW YOUR ONLINE SHOPPING CAN HELP ST COLUMBA’S**

Have you joined easyfundraising yet? So far 28 parishioners have signed up and, at no cost to them, St Columba’s has benefitted to the tune of £175. Not bad, eh?

How does it work? It’s simple.

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)  **SAFEGUARDING: BE RESPONSIBLE**  We as a parish have a duty and responsibility to keep children and vulnerable adults safe when they are in church or attending church events and services.  That’s what Safeguarding does.  It’s active right across the diocese (and in all other dioceses as well) including here at St Columba’s.  If you have any concerns or queries about possible abuse of children or vulnerable adults, contact Gill Tomei (g.tomei@btopenworld.com), Richard Mills or Claire Tucker in complete confidence.  All their contact details can be found on the noticeboard at the back of the church.  **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.  ***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. |  |  |

**HELP WITH YOUR SHOPPING?**

Do you find it difficult carrying your shopping home?

Would you like a helping hand? If so, why not take advantage of this service on offer from Contact? The Contact shopping bus runs on a fortnightly basis to Sainsbury’s at Warlingham.

Clients are collected from their homes and are fully supported by our drivers and escorts. One to one help is available if you use a wheelchair.

Each client is able to fill a maximum of three bags of shopping during the hour instore. Help with packing and carrying the bags is given.

The cost is £7 per trip, much cheaper than a taxi!

Telephone 020 8651 4944 for more details.

**NAMES ON OUR SICK LIST**

Every Sunday a list of names of those who are very sick is read out during the Bidding Prayers so that we can all pray for them.

That same list appears in the weekly-updated newsletter on the parish website.

Some of the names on that list are parishioners; some, family members or friends of parishioners; some have been there for a long time and some we don't recognise.

It could be that some are now fully recovered but no one has told us.

So unless we have heard from you to the contrary, we have removed the names of those we don't know currently to be seriously ill.

If you know of anyone who is seriously ill and in need of our prayers but not on our list, please tell Fr Roy or Deacon Philip and we shall add them on.

**WANTED: ALTAR SERVERS**

Ever since the pandemic began in early 2020, altar serving has been suspended.

But things are improving and it’s now time for our altar servers to return to the sanctuary.

If you were a server before the lockdowns, do come back: we would love to see you in the sanctuary.

Our MC, John Fennell, is drawing up a new rota so that we can, hopefully, return to having several servers at all four Sunday Masses.

Altar serving is an important and fulfilling role at Mass and we would welcome new servers, boys as well as girls.

Contact John on [thefennells60@gmail.com](mailto:thefennells60@gmail.com) if you are interested.

Applicants must have made their first Holy Communion, so anyone aged eight or upwards is eligible.

There is no upper age limit, which means that teenagers and adults too qualify.

**HEAR THE SOUL SYMPHONY CHOIR**

There is going to be a carol concert given by the Soul Symphony Choir in the church on Saturday December 11.

It will start at 5.45pm and finish before 6.30pm Mass.

Members of the choir include St Columba’s parishioners.

**SCHOOL GOVERNORS WANTED**

Do you have skills to offer as a governor or trustee in the Catholic schools in Southwark?

The Education Commission for the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark is looking to build up its list of people able to offer time, expertise and commitment to support primary, secondary schools and sixth form colleges in the area.

If you are interested visit the website:

<https://www.rcaoseducation.org.uk/could-you-become-a-governor/Education>

**CELEBRATE ST COLUMBA**

Colmcille 1500 has been set up to commemorate the 1500th anniversary of the birth of our very own St Columba.

﻿﻿Anyone with any relevant photos, artwork or written components is invited to share them on social media platforms to celebrate the reach this saint has in 2021, 1,500 years after his birth.

﻿For more information and to participate visit any of these three links:

[colmcille1500.com/english/](https://colmcille1500.com/english/)﻿

[www.facebook.com/Colmcille1500NW/](https://www.facebook.com/Colmcille1500NW/)﻿

[www.instagram.com/colmcille1500/](https://www.instagram.com/colmcille1500/)﻿

**CAROLS OUTSIDE SAINSBURY'S**

The annual Christmas carols concert organised by Churches Together in Selsdon & Addington will take place on Saturday December 18 from 11-12 noon.

As usual St Columba's will be represented among the singers. Why not come and join us?

All are welcome and you don't need to be an opera singer to take part; simply willing and able to sing carols.

We shall gather just outside Sainsbury's around 10.50am.

We hope to see you there.

**MARY OSAI-BOBI RIP**

We have just heard that a former parishioner, Mary Osai-Bobi, also known as Joy, died this week.

After a long spell in Selsdon, Mary moved to live with her family in Ghana several years ago and took on a new lease of life.

Her funeral will be held in Ghana.

May she rest in peace.

**A TALK FOR ADVENT**

Come along to St Columba's on Monday evening (the 6th) for a talk on Advent and what it means given by Fr Roy.

It starts at 7pm.

**CONFIRMATIONS DECEMBER 17**

Some 32 young people will receive the sacrament of Confirmation at a special 6pm Mass on December 17.

Bishop Paul Hendricks will officiate.

Please keep all of the candidates in your prayers.