**St Columba’s Church, Selsdon**

37 Queenhill Road, Selsdon, South Croydon, CR2 8DW

Parish telephone number: 020 8657 3747

Parish Priest: Father Roy Tablizo

E: selsdon@rcaos.org.uk

Deacon: Rev. Philip Pond E: philippond@rcaos.org.uk

T: 07764 845 890

Parish website: [www.stcolumbaschurchselsdon.uk](http://www.stcolumbaschurchselsdon.uk)

**2nd MAY 2021**

**5th SUNDAY OF EASTER (YEAR B)**

**THIS SUNDAY’S MASS READINGS**

**Entrance Antiphon:** O sing a new song to the Lord, for he has worked wonders; in the sight of his nations he has shown his deliverance, alleluia.

**A reading from the Acts of the Apostles: 9:26-31**

**Responsorial Psalm PS 21:26. 30-32. Rv.26:** You, Lord, are my praise in the great assembly.

**2nd Reading: A reading from the first letter of St John: 3:18-24**

**Gospel Acclamation:** Alleluia, Alleluia! Make your home in me, as I make mine in you. Whoever remains in me bears fruit in plenty. Alleluia!

**Gospel: John 15:1-8**

**Communion Antiphon:** I am the true vine and you are the branches, says the Lord. Whoever remains in me, and I in him, bears fruit in plenty, alleluia.

**WHAT’S GOING ON IN CHURCH…**

Keeping everyone safe when they come to Mass at St Columba’s is essential.

Using the defogger, a piece of machinery we now have for sanitizing the benches after Sunday Mass, is part of that.

It’s much easier and quicker for the stewards to use this electrically-operated spray than cleaning and drying by hand as they did before.

At Mass, remember to leave plenty of space between you in the bench.

There should be no more than three people – unless you are a family or in a bubble – ideally one person at each end, one in the middle.

During the week, take a marker paper when arriving and leave it on the seat so that it’s obvious which part of the bench needs manual cleaning.

Do please be prepared to lend a hand helping the stewards clean the benches after weekday Masses.

*Take away the Word of God and our life becomes meaningless*

A reflection on Sunday’s Gospel by Fr Roy

Jesus said: “I am the vine and you are the branches.”

Just consider those words…

He is not just a simple teacher to whom we listen. His words resonate.

Jesus’s reference to the vine is an example of that.

The vine was a beloved symbol of Israel. No wonder Jesus made use of its significance in our gospel this Sunday.

To the untrained eye a lifeless twig left on the vine would have nothing to contribute during harvest time.

However, the reality is that the sap continues to pulse through those apparently dead branches.

And that is a hugely powerful symbol.

It demonstrates that the vine continues to support the existence of what appears to be an insignificant branch. But that ‘insignificant branch’ has the potential to grow and produce fruit.

Likewise, so long as we are linked to Jesus, life continues to flow through our being.

Our spiritual journey progresses because of the spiritual sap coming from Jesus, the true vine. That connection to Jesus is vital for our survival as a follower of his.

It is our responsibility to preserve that relationship and sustain it. A personal relationship with Jesus is the primary reason for our existence. Our salvation hinges on that relationship. Its value is like the pearl of great price.

There is an organic relationship between Jesus and his followers.

He is like a hugely powerful field force, one from which we benefit.

Without a direct link to Jesus we are nothing.

That link is unique. Like the branches of the vine, we are intimately linked to Jesus, who brings life.

Without him, no one has life.

Jesus is the very embodiment by which God created the world. Everything exists because of him.

Just read the opening words of John’s gospel: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being.”

Just think about that.

We find our very being in Jesus. He is the foundation of our existence.

Our life is meant primarily to be grafted on to his.

The word of God is like the sun which illuminates the world.

If you took away the sun there would be no life in the world.

Take away the word of God and our life becomes meaningless.

Jesus makes clear in our gospel this Sunday that the quality of our personal relationship with him is integral to our salvation.

Remember, however, that that relationship is fragile and we must never take the risk of neglecting or damaging it.

We need constantly to nurture that relationship with prayer and reception of the sacraments. Never forget that Jesus is the vine and we are his branches.

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| **LITURGICAL CALENDAR OF THE WEEK** |
| Sat 1st  | Weekday of Easter or Saint Joseph the Worker |
| Sun 2nd  | 5th Sunday of Easter |
| Mon 3rd  | Ss Philip and James, Apostles  |
| Tues 4th  | The English Martyrs, Weekday of Easter  |
| Wed 5th  | Weekday of Easter or Saint Asaph, Bishop |
| Thurs 6th  | Weekday of Easter |
| Fri 7th  | Weekday of Easter  |
| Sat 8th  | Weekday of Easter  |
| Sun 9th  | 6th Sunday of Easter |

**REMEMBER THE SICK AND NEEDY**

Please pray for all those in need at this time including: Colin Furk, Vera De Souza, Mike Bond, Alice Barclay, Thelma Benn, Julie Ballesteros, Cora Litchfield, Sean Walsh, Judy Freegard, Imogen Fernando, Joan Charman, Joan Cunningham, Solveya La Marina, Chris Jones, Maria Reece, Margaret Bolton, Eddie Aldridge, Ellis Warburton, Mary Marks, Jean-Claude Anthony, Ellen Everett, Maureen Coffey, James Guckian, Elizabeth Sensano, Stephen Beck and sick residents at the four residential homes usually, in better times, visited by the parish St Vincent de Paul group.

***KEEPING YOU SAFE WHEN YOU COME TO MASS***

We know we must take precautions when coming to Mass. They are set by the Government – and the local council is checking that we comply.

So every time you come to church make sure to:

* Remember to bring and wear a face mask covering the nose as well as the mouth. There are some available in church if you forget.
* Enter the church via the side door leading into the Sacred Heart chapel/confessional, observe the one-way system and leave via the centre back door.
* 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 the bench so that cleaners know which part to clean.
* Leave where they are the chairs which have replaced some of our benches and are at 1m intervals to ensure the necessary social distancing.
* Bring your own Mass or prayer book – there are no shared itemsl.
* Keep silent when receiving Holy Communion.
* Leave the church straight after Holy Communion and don’t congregate outside to socialise.

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| **MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK** |
| Sat 1st  | 6.30pm | Mr Baladasan, RIP |
| Sun 2nd  | 8.00am | Pro Populo |
| Sun 2nd  | 10.00am | Giuseppe Sarracino, RIP |
| Sun 2nd  | 6.30am | Mrs Margaret Walsh, RIP |
| Mon 3rd  | 10.00am | Colm Staunton, RIP |
| Tues 4th  | 10.00am | Sharif El Saarany, wellbeing |
| Wed 5th  | 10.00am | Mary Teresa 'Tessie’ Reardon, RIP |
| Thurs 6th  | 10.00am | Mary Pond, Birthday |
| Fri 7th  | 10.00am | Patrick Carroll, RIP |
| Sat 8th  | 6.30pm | Magdeline & Anthony Wong, Golden Anniversary |
| Sun 9th  | 8.00am | Intention of the Alvarez Family |
| Sun 9th  | 10.00am | Joseph Dias, RIP |
| Sun 9th  | 6.30pm | Pro Populo |

**WANT TO GO TO CONFESSION?**

Well you can – and at the same time be confident that you are safe from Covid. Simply give Fr Roy a ring and make an appointment. He will hear your confession in private in the hall.

***IF YOU TEST POSITIVE FOR COVID…***

Should that happen and you have been to Mass at St Columba’s in the preceding week, let Fr Roy or Deacon Philip know.

For track’n’trace purposes, they may then need to contact anyone else who was at the same Mass. That’s when the track’n’trace forms which everyone attending Mass has to complete (unless they send an email) come into play

**CONFIRMATION & FIRST COMMUNION**

Now that things are beginning to get back to some sort of normality, plans are being made for young people to receive the sacraments of initiation.

So parents of children age 7-8 should contact Fr Roy about the preparation course for First Holy Communion.

Young people (age 13-14) wishing to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation are advised to write a short letter to Fr Roy asking to be confirmed.



***SHOP ONLINE AND HELP ST C’S TOO***

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) **WHAT DO YOU THINK OF IT SO FAR…?****Our newsletter, that is.** **Your comments, thoughts, suggestions, ideas and contributions would be most welcome.** **They will also enable us to know whether this newsletter is considered helpful and useful – or not. Email Deacon Philip – the deadline for each weekend’s newsletter is the Wednesday before.**  |  |  |

**GOT YOUR GIFT AID ENVELOPES?**

**All members of the Gift Aid scheme are invited this weekend to collect their boxes of envelopes for the coming year.**

**The boxes, with your names on, can be collected at the entrance to the sacristy in the Sacred Heart chapel after all Masses.**

**THINK YOU HAVE A VOCATION?**

The Beda College in Rome is running a discernment weekend for men between the ages of 30 and 55 from September 3-5. It takes place at St Beuno’s Spirituality Centre in North Wales.

The weekend is a first step for those who may be exploring the possibility of priestly vocation in later life.

Information and registration forms are at: <https://www.pathwaystogod.org/courses-events-retreats/discernment-weekend-older-men-1>

**HOW DID COVID AFFECT YOU?**

Our diocesanAgency for Evangelisation and Catechesis has partnered with other dioceses to produce and promote a survey which aims to find out about the experiences of Catholics over the period of the Coronavirus pandemic.

This research will help us to understand what has been happening during this time when churches have been closed and/or only opened for limited periods and Catholics have had to practice their faith ‘at a distance’. To complete the survey, select our Archdiocese from the drop-down menu so that we can hear about what God has been doing and what He wants to say to us about the future of the Church in this part of England and Wales.

This important survey should take about 10 minutes to complete and the deadline for submissions for Southwark is July 4. Click on this link:

<https://forms.rcaos.org.uk/covid-19-survey-form/>

**VICTIMS & SURVIVORS OF ABUSE**

**Make a note in your diary. Tuesday (May 4) has been nominated as a day of prayer for victims and survivors of abuse.**

**Details and resources can be found on the website:**

<https://www.cbcew.org.uk/day-of-prayer-abuse-survivors-2021/>

***MORE STEWARDS NEEDED TO KEEP ST COLUMBA’S OPEN***

**We have a number of parishioners who have been doing an invaluable job during the pandemic to ensure that St Columba’s can stay open for Mass, every Mass.**

**You may not have noticed them, quietly going about their job. But that job is essential.**

**Volunteers all, they are the stewards who check people into the church before Mass starts, ensure they provide a completed track’n’trace form, hand out face masks if needed and make sure everyone uses hand sanitizer. After Mass they clean the seating which has been used and sanitize door handles and the like.**

**These volunteers are essential if we are to keep St Columba’s open during the pandemic.**

**But there are not enough of them: we need more, especially now that the benches are back in use and numbers attending Mass startING to increase.**

**If you are willing to help - and do give it serious consideration - contact Fr Roy or Deacon Philip.**

**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 whereabouts.

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

**LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINARS**

**Make a note of the dates of Tuesdays between May 4 and June 1.**

The Agency for Evangelisation and Catechesis and the Southwark Archdiocese Catholic Charismatic Team will then be offering a wonderful opportunity for personal and diocesan renewal.

Through a series of the Life in the Spirit seminars you will be invited to grow in your love of the Lord, welcome the Spirit into your life afresh and pray for the renewal of our diocese.
Each Tuesday evening the seminars will feature a talk from a gifted speaker and small group sharing.
On Saturday 22 May, in addition to the Tuesday evenings, the series will feature a double-bill of seminars (a separate link will be emailed to all registrants for this special day).
If you would like to know more or to sign up please [Register here](https://rcsouthwark.us11.list-manage.com/track/click?u=a40ab1a35eac7236d856fe882&id=786fdce19c&e=7d4ac57aff)

**ST JOSEPH’S 150TH ANNIVERSARY**

In preparation for the 150th anniversary of the opening of St Joseph’s School, Upper Norwood, former pupils, parents, staff, governors and friends are invited to submit recollections, photos and memorabilia.

They will be displayed in anniversary publications and at events. Please include a description of any items sent, name people in photos and add a date or occasion when the photograph might have been taken.

During the celebratory year, beginning in September, there will be many opportunities to visit St Joseph’s and to meet with other Alumni to mark this special milestone. Please help spread the news to all those associated with St Joseph’s.

To share memories of your days at St Joseph’s, or to receive more information as the plans for the anniversary year unfold, please email your contact details to: alumni@st-josephs-jun.croydon.sch.uk

For more details visit the school’s website: <https://www.stjosephsfederation.co.uk/>

**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. And don’t forget to let Fr Roy or Deacon Philip know beforehand of your admission into hospital. We can then keep you in our prayers.

**CHURCHES TOGETHER & THE CLIMATE**

This is an important year for churches to act together to protect God's creation and for us, as Christians, to have a positive impact on the global emergency.

With the UK hosting both the G7 in June and the UN COP26 in November, this is an opportunity for our leaders to champion and exemplify key actions to achieve climate justice.

A webinar will take place at 7pm on May 6 to mark all of this.

Join speakers Luke Harman of Christian Aid, talking about the importance of climate finance, Beth Naylor-Smith of Young Christian Climate Network, reflecting on the the relay from the G7 in Cornwall to COP26 in Glasgow (which will pass through London between August 5-8)), and Rosh Lal of Faith, talking about the Climate about movement building and the COP Faith Task Group.

Tangible actions and usable resources will be shared to empower participants to make a difference in changing the climate trajectory and support our neighbours around the world.

Contact claire@ctslondon.org.uk and a Zoom link will be distributed nearer the date.
Please do invite guests who would be interested in joining this event, especially young people.

**LAUDATO SI’ WEEK**

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| Laudato Si’ Week is coming up shortly: between May 16-24. As part of it, the Global Catholic Climate Movement will be holding a series of special events to mark the Laudato Si’ anniversary year.  This will be a celebration of the progress the whole Church has made on its journey to ecological conversion. The week will include prayer gatherings, music, discussions about energy and fossil fuels, and a presentation on the Care of Creation.View the full programme and register interest here: [LaudatoSiWeek.org](https://rcsouthwark.us11.list-manage.com/track/click?u=a40ab1a35eac7236d856fe882&id=ab22cf3180&e=7d4ac57aff) |



**WATCH ‘BEYOND THE CROSS’**

'Beyond the Cross'is a five-part art and culture series produced by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.  It follows on from 'At the Foot of the Cross', which considered four famous paintings telling the story of Christ's Passion and Resurrection. 'Beyond the Cross' follows the Risen Christ through the artist's eye taking in some of the main encounters of the season of Easter.

In the video (see below) the viewer is asked to look at the empty tomb and take as inspiration the Swiss painter Eugene Burnand's 1898 work 'The Disciples Peter and John Running to the Sepulchre on the Morning of the Resurrection'.

**MARY’S MEALS: 1.8M BENEFIT**

Since its humble beginnings, Mary’s Meals, named after Mary the Mother of Jesus, has been built on a foundation of prayer and the many little acts of love from those who support it.

During May, the month traditionally dedicated to Our Lady, you are invited to join in prayer to celebrate the wonderful work of Mary’s Meals.

Give thanks that more than 1.8 million children in 19 countries are receiving a nutritious meal every school day as a result.

Inspirational resources for the Pray In May campaign, including a prayer card, can be found on [our website](https://marysmeals.us18.list-manage.com/track/click?u=71642ed3d70deb2b1c25da8f0&id=1c30715a38&e=ef965371e1).

**VACANCY AT ST PHILOMENA’S**

The governors of St Philomena’s Catholic high school for girls in Carshalton are seeking to appoint a clerk to the governing body.

This is a paid position, 310 hours a year, term time only.

You can find out more and obtain an application form by emailing recruitment@stphils.org.uk or phoning 020 8642 2025. Or visit the school’s website:

<http://www.stphils.org.uk/join-us/vacancies>

**ANY MORE QUESTIONS?**

Do you still have unanswered questions about the Covid pandemic, vaccination, the role being played by the Church or public health issues generally?

If so, logon to a webinar being held on May 15

from 10-11.30am.

It is being chaired by Bp Paul McAleenan, one of the auxiliary bishops in Westminster diocese.

Speakers include Professor Kevin Fenton, Dr Nicola Lang, Dr Donald Palmer and Dr Beata Szymczyk-Halas, all specialists in this field.

There will be an opportunity to ask questions anonymously. The link is:

<https://zoom.us/j/99627319556> Passcode: 546617