**St Columba’s Church, Selsdon**

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**24 JANUARY 2021**

**3RD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (YEAR B)**

**THIS SUNDAY’S MASS READINGS**

**Entrance Antiphon:** O sing a new song to the Lord; sing to the Lord, all the earth. In his presence are majesty and splendour, strength and honour in his holy place.

**1st Reading from the prophet Jonah: 3:1-5. 10**

**Responsorial Psalm Ps 24:4-9. R v4:** Lord, make me know your ways.

**2nd Reading: from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians: 7:29-31**

**Gospel Acclamation:** Alleluia, alleluia! The Kingdom of God is close at hand; believe the Good News. Alleluia!

**Gospel: Mark 1:14-20**

**Communion Antiphon:** Look toward the Lord and be radiant; let your faces not be abashed.

***ST COLUMBA’S IS STILL OPEN FOR DAILY MASS***

St Columba’s will continue to stay open for daily Mass during the latest lockdown.

Mass times are as they were prior to the lockdown (see ‘Mass Intentions for the Week’ below).

We shall continue to follow Government guidelines to ensure a safe environment at Mass. See ‘Precautions When Coming to Church’ below.

Please note, however, that there will be no exposition and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament on Tuesday mornings until further notice.

**LEARNING THE LESSON FROM THE STORY OF JONAH AND THE WHALE**

***A REFLECTION ON SUNDAY’S READINGS BY FR ROY***

As we heard in this Sunday’s first reading, Jonah was called by God to carry out a very important mission.

His task was to go to Nineveh which was the capital of Assyria, Israel’s No. 1 enemy. Jonah’s mission was to preach repentance to the people of Assyria. Jonah quickly recognised the magnitude of his task. Not only was Assyria a powerful and ancient enemy of Israel but to preach repentance to your enemy would certainly be considered treacherous.

Jonah decided that the task God had set him was impossible. So instead of heading east across country to Assyria he sailed off in the opposite direction, westwards.

Biblical scholars suggest that Jonah intended going to Spain so as to escape his God-given

mission.

Isn’t that something we have all done at some stage in our lives? We know what God wants – and we do the exact opposite.

But as Jonah also discovered, if we resist the divine will, there will definitely be trouble.

We call this principle the spiritual physics of God. Or to put it another way, as soon as a boat leaves the shelter of the shore it will encounter rough weather. If they met really bad conditions on a voyage, seafarers during Jonah’s time always assumed that someone on board must have upset the god of the seas. And as a result they didn’t waste any time before examining the spiritual situation of all on board.

Storms are a symbol of what happens when one resists God’s will. Ignoring it leads to trouble.

On Jonah’s voyage it wasn’t just him who suffered because of the bad weather: everyone else on board did as well.

As everyone is linked to everyone else, the social dimension of resistance to God’s will is equally important to all because the community also suffers.

Admitting his ‘crime’, Jonah was thrown overboard by his shipmates. Then God sent a great fish, a whale, which swallowed Jonah.

It was God’s way of restraining Jonah and it reminds us that God has his own way of aligning our will with his plan for us.

Jonah’s experience was not unusual for a prophet of his time: in fact something not dissimilar happened to all of the prophets. They all had to pass the litmus test of bending their will to the will of God. For us it is a reminder that the quality of our relationship with God needs to be renewed.

We are all familiar with Jonah’s prayer in his time of need: “from the depths I cry to you O Lord.”

Admit it: we have all at one time or another felt like Jonah. We have all felt that emptiness resulting from alienation from God.

That’s the feeling you get when you resist God’s will. Because we are nothing without God.

Being trapped metaphorically speaking inside the belly of the whale as Jonah was we come to recognise how dependent we are on God.

We realise that we need to surrender ourselves to Him. Then God can swallow up our errant ways, our errant wills, and take us where he wants us to go.

God reminds us to call to mind the low points in our lives and equate them to the experience Jonah went through. The challenge is not to resist the will of God but yield to it.

Jonah, unable any longer to resist God, finally accepted and undertook his divine mission. And once Jonah reached Assyria, everyone listened to him, from the king himself down to the lowliest member of his kingdom. He became the greatest penitential preacher in sacred scripture.

The lesson is: if we listen to God’s word and do His will, everything is possible. We can do anything.

**YES, LENT WILL SOON BE HERE – START PREPARING NOW**

The season of Lent will shortly be upon us – Ash Wednesday is less than four weeks away.

So now is the time to prepare and start thinking about what you will do to mark this special time of the year.

As in previous years, Churches Together in Selsdon and Addington (CTSA) will be organizing Lent groups, providing the opportunity for people from different CTSA congregations to meet and discuss a Christian book.

This year, because of Covid-19, the Lent groups will meet on Zoom which means, of course, that you won’t need to leave your home in order to participate.

The subject of this year’s Lent groups course will be the book 'Bridging the Gaps' by Trevor Neill. To find out more and to sign up please click on this link: <https://forms.gle/8j4ppBKCWnhueQoB8>

**WHAT’S HAPPENING SUNDAY AFTERNOON…**

On Sunday afternoon there is going to be a service on Zoom at 3pm. It will mark the annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

The theme of the service is “Abide in my love”.

Do come and join us.

The service will be delivered by people from Churches Together in Selsdon and Addington (that includes St Columba’s). Do join us if you are able.

It is so important to work together for the healing and the oneness of this beautiful world of which we are a part.

Thiis service will be a wonderful opportunity for prayer and reflection.

The Zoom link is below. <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83591741692?pwd=VzJBb20wbVRrQkpJMWxacTFiSUFlQT09>

Meeting ID: 835 9174 1692
Passcode: 151199

**A MESSAGE FROM OUR ARCHBISHOP**

*Abp John Wilson writes: ‘In this week of prayer for Christian unity, we unite with all our Christian brothers and sisters in Christ as we seek inspiration from the living Word of God to embrace more radically the mysteries of God’s Kingdom.’*

***PRECAUTIONS WHEN COMING TO CHURCH***

For safety’s sake, don’t forget when coming to Mass that there are certain precautions we must all follow:

* Remember to bring and wear a face mask – that should cover the nose as well as the mouth
* 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.
* To meet Track-and-Trace requirements, provide a written note – and this applies every time you come to church – of your name and contact details (phone number or email or postal address) plus the date and, if relevant, Mass time. To save queuing and filling out a form, why not send an email to selsdon@rcaos.org.uk?
* Use hand sanitizer, provided, both when entering and leaving the church.
* Do not move the chairs which have replaced our benches and are at 1m intervals to ensure the necessary social distancing.
* Don’t expect to find Mass or prayer books or any other shared items: bring your own. That applies to readers as well.
* Remember that singing is not allowed.
* Don’t forget that Holy Communion is silent.
* Before leaving the church (i.e. before you come up to receive Holy Communion), turn your chair back to front so that the stewards know which ones to clean afterwards.
* Leave the church straight after Holy Communion and don’t congregate outside to socialise.

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| **LITURGICAL CALENDAR OF THE WEEK** |
| Sat 23rd  | Weekday in Ordinary Time |
| Sun 24th  | 3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time |
| Mon 25th  | The Conversion of St Paul, Apostle |
| Tues 26th  | Ss Timothy and Titus, Bishops |
| Wed 27th  | Weekday in Ordinary Time or St Angela Merici, Virgin |
| Thurs 28th  | St Thomas Aquinas, Priest, Doctor of the Church |
| Fri 29th  | Weekday in Ordinary Time  |
| Sat 30th  | Weekday in Ordinary Time |
| Sun 31st  | 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time |

**REMEMBER THE SICK AND NEEDY**

Please pray for all those in great need at this time including: Claire Pereira, Yves Kpami, Robert McMunn, Thelma Benn, Alan Huzzey, Julie Ballesteros, Cora Litchfield, Sean Walsh, Lily Wei, Judy Freegard, Imogen Fernando, Joan Charman, Roger Fenton, 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 Patrick 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.

**DO YOU HAVE A RED MISSIO BOX?**

A good number of parishioners have these collecting boxes from the Mill Hill Missionaries (MHM).

Some will know them better as APF (Association for the Propagation of the Faith) boxes.

The money we put in them goes to help finance the invaluable work carried out in the missions by the MHM.

Normally these boxes would be emptied at least once during the year by our parish Missio coordinator, Edmund Tame, and the money sent to the MHM to help finance their work.

But that hasn’t proved possible this past year because of Covid.

And yet the work of the Mill Hill Missionaries goes on and, because of the coronavirus, is needed even more now than ever.

Boxes not being emptied has meant a dramatic fall in income for the MHM.

So why not empty your own box, count up the money and send a cheque, or do a bank transfer online, to the MHM?

They certainly need the money….

You can get their contact details on the website [www.missio.org.uk](http://www.missio.org.uk)

If you do send your box money direct, please let Edmund know because he needs to keep a record: email him on edmuta@googlemail.com

***GEOFFREY DODWELL RIP***

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Geoffrey Dodwell who died last week aged 87.

Remember also in your prayers his widow, Clare. May he rest in peace.

**JOHN DAVIS RIP**

John’s funeral will take place on Tuesday February 9 at 10am.

Please continue to keep him in your prayers, also his son Karl.

May John rest in peace.

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| **MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK** |
| Sat 23rd  | 6.30pm | Private Intention |
| Sun 24th  | 8.00am | George Stuart Barclay, RIP |
| Sun 24th  | 10.00am | Pro Populo |
| Sun 24th  | 6.30pm | Mrs Lana Manley, RIP |
| Mon 25th  | 10.00am | John Davis, RIP |
| Tues 26th  | 10.00am | Canon Frank O'Sullivan, RIP |
| Wed 27th  | 10.00am | Randall Spencer-Lowe (Brownsell), RIP |
| Thurs 28th  | 10.00am | Bill Hickey, RIP (1st Anniversary) |
| Fri 29th  | 10.00am | Intention of the Alvarez Family |
| Sat 30th  |  6.30pm | Mr Joseph, RIP |
| Sun 31st  |  8.00am | Angela’s Private Intention |
| Sun 31st  | 10.00am | John Davis, RIP |
| Sun 31st  | 6.30pm | Pro Populo |

***DEAR HUSBAND & WIFE…***

*Dear Husband and Wife, You are invited to give each other a gift by spending March 13 online between 10am and 1pm exploring and improving your relationship.*

*The event is entitled ‘Building A Better Marriage’. It will provide you with valuable insights into your communication skills and the call of the Church to the married.*

*Please note that there is no group sharing. This is not marriage counselling but a chance to make average-to-good marriages a bit better. That applies whether you have been married five years or 50.*

*Recent ‘Building a Better Marriage’ sessions attracted the following comments from married couples who logged on:*

*‘The topics were chosen well and we could really relate to them…’*

*‘The personal stories you shared were very insightful and helped us to reflect on our own relationships more deeply…’*

*‘It was relaxed and you put us at ease, being friendly and personable...’*

*‘We thoroughly enjoyed attending the course.’*

*Booking is essential: telephone 07983 524 727 or email* *mflkent@rcaos.org.uk*

**THE EUCHARIST: JUST WHAT EXACTLY DOES IT MEAN TO YOU?**

Here is an opportunity to gain greater insight into and understanding of the eucharist, that great wonder and mystery of our faith.

Fr Tomasz Margol from St Joseph’s & St Swithun’s parish, Bromley, has prepared a series of talks on the Eucharist.

You can access them, without charge, on YouTube. Here are the links for the four talks:

1 [https://youtu.be/HJH-rNoK-wM](https://youtu.be/HJH-rNoK-wM?fbclid=IwAR0MyIQEp64cAhJ9lycNSWu-4As5_IHzxfzkX3xdman67zgEGx32Jv_yQAI)
2 [https://youtu.be/dP\_JLVObDAI](https://youtu.be/dP_JLVObDAI?fbclid=IwAR06TlUwbyXx5mXSFhE3Lwvn7_yFol_pYcAI491klEgYQytfvqQGkf80yPs)
3 [https://youtu.be/6Vjz9-Od8Ss](https://youtu.be/6Vjz9-Od8Ss?fbclid=IwAR0PjS2ldLWls6ww9CDzfv4P0eCpqGtktkzmPHt9lBql-7Mev3NJl6SBpWY)
4  [https://youtu.be/UW5K6d1vPtk](https://youtu.be/UW5K6d1vPtk?fbclid=IwAR38L43sDABVYDcTc0eT4ZI86u6tkRXpkeXa-yBk9kDumZnleGR_iKZf8WA)

**GLUTEN-FREE HOSTS**

Do you, or any parishioners you know, suffer from coeliac disease and so are unable to receive Holy Communion?

If so, please let Fr Roy or Deacon Philip know because gluten-free hosts are now available at all Masses at St Columba’s.

**GOING INTO HOSPITAL? MAKE SURE TO LET US KNOW**

If you or a member of your family go into hospital, whether diagnosed with Covid or anything else, 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.

***HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT THIS?***

The dramatic fall in the numbers attending Mass during the pandemic has, not surprisingly, had a knock-on effect on parish finances.

The Offertory collection is much reduced.

But regular parish bills still have to be paid and the amount of money available from the Offertory collection to do so is now much less than it was a year ago, before the pandemic.

So, to ensure the future financial wellbeing of St Columba's, we are asking all parishioners to review their offerings to support the work and mission of the parish.

This, of course, is in the light of the fifth commandment of the Church which is 'To contribute to the support of our pastors.'

There are various ways of giving, whether you are coming to church or not.

As well as cash in the basket at Mass, they include payment by cheque and standing order.

For taxpayers, there is also the option of signing up for Gift Aid which boosts your offering by 25p for every £1 you pay - and at no extra cost to yourself.

Below is a form inviting you to make a pledge of support for St Columba's and which also sets out all the options. It includes a standing order form.

Do give some thought to this: we all need our church, we all need to support the work and mission of the parish - and we all need to take responsibility for supporting St Columba's financially.

 



***SHOPPING ONLINE? HELP ST C’S AT NO COST TO YOURSELF***

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, in fact, 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. Each 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) **THE LATEST LOCKDOWN: IT’S A CHALLENGE FOR MANY MARRIAGES**There is so much uncertainty around – about health, income, employment, vulnerable family members, children, housing... People have different ways of seeing things and coping with change… The result is that managing fears can be a source of conflict and stress. It can be a difficult to talk, to listen, to support and to comfort when there is so much uncertainty. Being together all the time brings even more challenges. You just can’t cope. Would we be better apart, you may wonder to yourself.Retrouvaille is a programme designed to support couples. It brings a positive focus and new hope and helps nourish and grow your marriage - and you don’t need to leave home to participate because it comes to you!For confidential information about Retrouvaille or to register for the next programme, a virtual weekend commencing on February 25-28, call or text 07887 296983. Alternatively email retrouvailleukinfo@gmail.com or visit [www.retrouvaille.org.uk](http://www.retrouvaille.org.uk)**THE NEWSLETTER: WHAT DO YOU THINK?**Comments, suggestions, contributions: all are welcome. Email them to kyrabarone@aol.com by Wednesday evening at the latest.  |  |  |