**St Columba’s Church**

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**26TH JULY 2020 - 17TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (YEAR A)**

**ALL MASSES FROM ST COLUMBA’S ONLINE**

You can follow Fr Roy celebrating Mass live on YouTube – <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYVyZ2Xpfs0NiuU3bxAjsCQ/live>

10am Mass is also live streamed daily (except Saturday) on Zoom:

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/73986660636?pwd=UkJMZHQ0S1ZYUDdOR21MVkpYZElBdz09>

**THIS SUNDAY’S MASS READINGS**

**Entrance Antiphon:** God is in his holy place, God who unites those who dwell in his house; he himself gives might and strength to his people.

**1st Reading: from the first book of the Kings 3:5,7-12**

**Responsorial Psalm Ps 118:57,72,76-77,127-130. R. v.97**

Lord how I love your law!

**2nd Reading: from the letter of St Paul to the Romans 8:28-30**

**Gospel Acclamation:** Alleluia, alleluia! I call you friends, says the Lord, because I have made known to you everything I have learnt from my Father. Alleluia!

**Gospel: Matthew 13:44-52**

**Communion Antiphon:** Bless the Lord, O my soul, and never forget all his benefits.

**IT’S ONLY COMMON SENSE…**

If possible, email us in advance if you intend coming to Mass or Adoration. It will save filling up a form with your name and contact details when you arrive and reduce queuing. That applies ***every time*** you come to church. And please, to avoid transmission of the virus, do not touch any chairs other than the one you use.

***WEEKLY ADORATON AT ST COLUMBA’S RESTARTS TUESDAY***

After a lockdown break of four months, weekly adoration in front of the exposed Blessed Sacrament will restart on Tuesday (July 28).

Exposition will follow 10am Mass, starting at 10.30am and continuing for an hour until 11.30am.

That will apply every Tuesday until further notice.

The same restrictions apply as for attending Mass:

* You must wear a face mask. Please bring your own.
* There is a one-way system – in at the side via the Sacred Heart chapel/confessional, out via the centre back door.
* You must provide a note of your name and contact details (phone number or email or postal address) – to save queuing, why not send an email to selsdon@rcaos.org.uk? That applies every time you come to the church.
* Hand sanitizer is provided for use both on entering and leaving the church.
* The chairs which have replaced the benches are at 1m intervals to ensure the necessary social distancing. Please do not move them.
* No prayer books or any other shared items are available. Bring your own.
* When leaving, turn your chair back to front so that the steward knows which ones to clean afterwards.
* ***The toilets cannot be used.***

**A REFLECTION FROM FR ROY ON THE READINGS FOR THE 17TH SUNDAY**

Solomon as a young king was well aware that he needed the wisdom of God to be able to deal with the demands of his role as leader of his country.

God was pleased that Solomon, given the choice, did not ask for anything except wisdom. He could have asked for wealth, for more power or for a larger kingdom.

But no. This young king was more concerned to have wisdom.

Solomon was right to ask for wisdom because wealth, honour and power are meaningless without the wisdom that comes from God.

So, for example, exercising power without wisdom will inevitably lead to tyranny. Wisdom is crucial for keeping things in line with God.

It is not difficult for us to see the relevance of this message to our present situation. There is huge wealth in our world but sadly it is concentrated in the hands of a very few people.

The balance of wealth in the world is worrying because so many people lack their basic needs.

We have a world today where a tiny minority enjoy vast wealth and luxury while huge numbers are starving. Those with God’s wisdom recognise that the wealthy have a responsibility to meet the needs of the poor. But unfortunately, too often greed rules. Too often those who are rich fail to recognise and accept and act upon the fact that the poor are not as lucky as them.

Wisdom would help the wealthy to be more sensitive to the needs of the poor.

Commercialism and consumerism have hardened the hearts of many; taking a toll on their souls and making them insensitive to the needs of the poor. Selfishness has become the norm for many in our society. As a result, the imbalance in wealth distribution becomes greater and greater.

The wisdom that comes from God would help us all become more sensitive to the needs of the poor.

The power to dominate others is the rule in our world. Misuse of power leads to oppression, with the greatest victims being the underprivileged.

All this explains why Solomon asked God for wisdom. He did not want to use his power as an instrument of oppression.

The real purpose of power is to administer worldly goods according to the mind of God. That may appear, in some ways, to be obvious. But knowing the mind of God and implementing it in every situation is not easy. More often than not it is the cause of separation between us and God.

The reason is that we often interpret things according to our personal understanding, not according to the mind of God.

That is why prayer and discernment are crucial: they help guide us towards the right course of action in every situation. That’s because wisdom is key to knowing the mind of God. Solomon’s example shows us the proper use of power.

Also highly evident in our age is a desire for honour. It is obvious that some people have made it a driving force in their lives.

But the road to achieving that goal is riddled with moral issues. The result is that people are often only too keen to sacrifice the well being of their souls rather than forfeit their worldly desires.

The wisdom that comes from God is the antidote to such an attitude. But too often the world completely ignores it. That is true even though such an attitude never produces the sense of satisfaction that people expect.

In the end, the absence of God’s wisdom just makes us more miserable.

Finally, Solomon was indeed right to ask God for wisdom because it is without doubt the key to a more meaningful life.

***ARE YOU WILLING TO HELP?***

***A parishioner has volunteered to do some book-keeping for St Columba’s but someone is still needed to help out with parish secretarial duties for a few hours each week. Contact Fr Roy for more details.***

**PRAY FOR THE RECENTLY DECEASED**

All victims of Covid-19 – may they rest in peace.

**PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK AND NEEDY**…

Baby Bishop, Joan Charman, Nina Wade, Roger Fenton, Deacon John Letley, Joan Cunningham, John Davis, Noreen Lawlor, Solveya La Marina, Chris Jones, Maria Reece, Margaret Bolton, Eddie Aldridge, Ellis Warburton, Mary Marks, Margaret Edwards, Jean-Claude Anthony, Ellen Everett, Maureen Coffey, Albert Khayyat, Grant Russell, James Patrick Guckian, Elizabeth Sensano and sick residents at the four residential homes usually, in better times, visited by the parish SVP group.

**LITURGICAL CALENDAR FOR THE WEEK**

Sun 26TH: 17th Sunday in ordinary time Year A

Mon 27th: Feria

Tues 28th: Feria

Wed 29th: St Martha

Thurs 30th: Feria or St Peter Chrysologus

Fri 31st: St Ignatius of Loyola

Sat 1st: St Alphonsus Liguori

Sun 2nd: 18th Sunday in ordinary time Year A

**KNOW OF SOMEONE IN NEED OF PRAYERS?**

*If you or people you know are in particular need of our prayers, let Deacon Philip know so that the name(s) can be included in the prayer list of people who are sick or needy.*

**GIFT AID ENVELOPES: ADD YOUR NAME**

We have not been able to distribute new Gift Aid envelopes because of the coronavirus.

There is a way round that, however, to ensure that St Columba’s continues to benefit from Gift Aid. All you need to do is to put your offering in any blank envelope on which you then write ‘Gift Aid’ plus your name. Then place that envelope in the Offertory collection box/basket at church.

Better still, set up a standing order.

Thank you for your much-needed support.

**ARRANGING TO HAVE A MASS SAID**

If you wish to have a Mass offered for a special intention, you can do so. Email the details to Fr Roy. Or write them out and post or deliver them to the presbytery. The information needed is the name of the person for whom the Mass is to be offered and whether they are deceased and if there is a specific anniversary or if it is some other special intention; also the date on or near which you would like the Mass to be celebrated; plus your own name and phone number/email address.

* It is customary to make an offering to the priest when asking for a Mass to be celebrated.

**NO MORE THAN 50 PEOPLE IN CHURCH**

A reminder. We must ensure social distancing in St Columba’s. That’s why chairs have replaced the benches. Chairs also make it easier to keep seating clean and clear of Covid-19.

As a result of that, we are now limited to a maximum of 50 people in church for any reason.

***If there are already that number inside when you arrive, the stewards will advise that you cannot come into the church.***

So far that situation has not arisen – 30 is the largest number we have had at St Columba’s and that was for 10am Sunday Mass.

**PLANNING A BAPTISM OR WEDDING?**

We can now go ahead with celebrating baptisms and weddings again at St Columba’s. We can also now start planning again for First Communions and Confirmations, although organising those is going to take some time.

**MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK**

Sat 25th: 6.30pm Beverly & Sidney Charman RIP

Sun 26th: 8am Holy Souls

Sun 26th: 10am Pro Populo

Sun 26th: 6.30pm Holy Souls

Mon 27th: 10am Holy Souls

Tues 28th: 10am Holy Souls

Wed 29th: 10am Holy Souls

Thurs 30th: Fr Patrick Murtagh RIP

Fri 31st: 10am Holy Souls

Sat 1st: 6.30pm Holy Souls

Sun 2nd: 8am Pamela Maguire RIP

Sun 2nd: 10am Giuseppe Sarracino RIP

Sun 2nd: 6.30pm Pro Populo

**DO YOU NEED ANY HELP?**

Are you in need? Struggling to cope? Worried out of your mind? Take comfort: help is at hand.

The parish St Vincent de Paul (SVP) conference is ready and willing and able to do whatever it can to help you. And in complete confidence.

Give Diane a ring on 01883 627 138.

**GO SHOPPING ONLINE AND HELP ST COLUMBA’S AT THE SAME TIME**

*Deacon Philip writes:* Several parishioners have now signed up for this scheme, me included. It means that you can turn your everyday 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 visit the

[www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk) website, register (which is quick and easy) and then go shopping online at whichever retailer you choose.

Each time you buy something a small donation is made to St Columba’s. 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)

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| **DISASTERS EMERGENCY COMMITTEE & CAFOD LAUNCH CORONAVIRUS APPEAL**  The Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC), of which CAFOD is an active member, have launched a nationwide Coronavirus appeal.  Thanks to generous support from the Catholic community, CAFOD are already working across 26 countries to limit food shortages the virus has caused in the poorest communities.  The needs are immense, long term, complex and evolving so the response needs to be large scale and multifaceted.  As the DEC raises awareness of the global situation, the Catholic community are asked to keep those worst affected in their thoughts, prayers and where possible, their alms giving.  To find out more or to donate, click on this link to see [the ways you can do so](https://cafod.org.uk/Volunteer/Volunteer-resources/Parish-volunteers) or phone 07775704546. |  |  |

**KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS…**

These are the intentions the Church asks us to pray for during this current period:

* A deeper understanding between Christians and Jews.
* Those who suffer persecution, oppression and denial of human rights.
* All human life
* Seafarers
* Europe.

**A BIG THANK-YOU…**

…to our stewards, who do an essential job and enable us to come to church – could you volunteer to help? We need more volunteers. Also a big thank you for the lovely flower arrangements in the sanctuary. Beautiful!