**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)

**28 FEBRUARY 2021**

**2ND SUNDAY OF LENT (YEAR B)**

**THIS SUNDAY’S MASS READINGS**

**Entrance Antiphon:** Of you my heart has spoken: Seek his face. It is your face, O Lord, that I seek; hide not your face from me..

**1st Reading from the book of Genesis: 22:1-2. 9-13. 15-18**

**Responsorial Psalm PS 115:10. 15-19. RPs 114:9:** I will walk in the presence of the Lord in the land of the living.

**2nd Reading: from the letter of St Paul to the Romans: 8:31-34**

**Gospel Acclamation:** Glory and praise to you, O Christ! From the bright cloud the Father’s voice was heard: ‘This is my Son, the Beloved. Listen to him!’ Glory and praise to you, O Christ!

**Gospel: Mark 9:2-10**

**Communion Antiphon:** This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.

***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.

**STATIONS OF THE CROSS**

Just to confirm, as already announced at Mass, there will be no Stations of the Cross during Lent, at least for the time being.

If the situation changes as regards precautions required to protect people from Covid-19 and we are able later to have Stations of the Cross, it will be announced at Mass and in the newsletter.

So watch this space…

**NOTHING CAN EVER BE MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE LOVE OF GOD**

*Reflections on Sunday’s readings by Fr Roy*

The story of Abraham and Isaac from the book of Genesis which features in the readings this Sunday is a challenge to love God wholeheartedly and unconditionally.

It appears through human eyes as intensely cruel. But the most sensible way to read this story is to see it through God’s eyes.

We need totally – and this is what God wants – to place ourselves in His loving hands.

That is the surest way to attain salvation.

God does not want us to be distracted by the cares of the world. In that sense, complacency and being passive are not acceptable to God.

He wants us actively to embrace a lifestyle that reflects total surrender to Him.

Complete surrender to the will of God as manifested by Abraham in Genesis is a visualisation of the genuine love for God.

Remember the basic rule of life – love God first and love everything and everybody else for the sake of God.

That is the right ordering of love.

God comes first. Then love your neighbour as yourself.

Put God second and you will fall into sin.

Putting the love of money, power, anything, everything – even family – will lead to disintegration.

This spiritual principle needs to be absorbed into our souls.

Going back to Genesis, Yahweh promised Abraham that he would have a son.

The fulfilment of that promise took a long time to be realised. God waited until Abraham and Sarah were in their nineties before his promise became a reality.

Needless to say, especially after such a long wait, Abraham’s love for his son was absolute.

As we read in Genesis, God’s test, which came suddenly, was for Abraham to offer his beloved son as a living sacrifice.

This defies human reasoning. But God’s ways are not our ways.

Nonetheless Abraham was firm in his faith and his commitment to God’s will was total.

Abraham understood that what God wanted was more important than his own personal satisfaction. Hence his faith in God took precedence over everything else.

That is the spiritual principle that sacred Scripture is promoting to us.

Note that there is no mention in Genesis of Abraham’s feelings about all this.

We cannot even begin to imagine how he must have felt.

We can, however, imagine the thoughts running through his head.

The beloved son for whom he had waited so long was going to be sacrificed to the God who had given Abraham his son.

In this sense, God appears completely unreasonable.

But Abraham’s commitment was total.

His love of God was so complete that he was even prepared to sacrifice his own son.

Only at the very last moment, the point of sacrifice, did the angel appear and stop him from harming Isaac.

To sum up, this story is not about a manipulative God.

It is meant clearly, even dramatically, to make the point that nothing we love here below can ever be more important than our love for God.

The highest good is God Himself. Everything else comes second.

***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, 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. That also includes any chair you may have used, for example the one in front as support when kneeling during Mass.
* Leave the church straight after Holy Communion and don’t congregate outside to socialise.

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| **LITURGICAL CALENDAR OF THE WEEK** |
| Sat 27th  | Weekday of Lent |
| Sun 28th  | 2nd Sunday of Lent |
| Mon 1st  | St David, Bishop, Patron of Wales  |
| Tues 2nd  | Weekday of Lent |
| Wed 3rd  | Weekday of Lent |
| Thurs 4th  | Weekday of Lent, St Casimir |
| Fri 5th  | Weekday of Lent |
| Sat 6th  | Weekday of Lent |
| Sun 7th  | 3rd Sunday of Lent |

**DON’T REFUSE A COVID JAB**

**A series of films has been produced by the NHS to encourage and promote the uptake of Covid-19 vaccination across Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities as well as different faith groups. Presenters include a permanent deacon from St Joseph’s, Bromley. You can watch by clicking any of the links here:**

* YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL1fo7mb0qmAvQANj-ByeV72ScnslGPk2M>
* Facebook: <https://fb.watch/3oZtBYzOUd/>
* Twitter: <https://twitter.com/NHSSELondonCCG/status/1356571921983426564>

**REMEMBER THE SICK AND NEEDY**

Please pray for all those in need at this time including: Alice Barclay, Rob Adams, Thelma Benn, Julie Ballesteros, Cora Litchfield, Sean Walsh, Lily Wei, 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 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.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR OFFERING**

The Offertory collections for January 31 and February 7 amounted to £680.26 in total, of which £160 was gift aided and £520.26 was not.

The Offertory collections for February 14 and 21 totalled £456.88, of which £296 was gift aided and £152.88 was not.

Thank you everyone for your much needed support.

**EMPTY THAT 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

***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*

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| **MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK** |
| Sat 27th  | 6.30pm | Stephen Oxley, RIP |
| Sun 28th  | 8.00am | Josephine Carpenter, RIP |
| Sun 28th  | 10.00am | John Moor, RIP |
| Sun 28th  | 6.30pm | Pro Populo |
| Mon 1st  | 10.00am | Sean O’Neill, RIP |
| Tues 2nd  | 10.00am | Angela’s Private Intention |
| Tues 2nd  | 12.00Noon | Funeral Mass of Elizabeth Frances Lawlor, RIP |
| Wed 3rd  | 10.00am | Private Intention |
| Thurs 4th  | 10.00am | Bina Bowen, RIP, Michael & Family |
| Fri 5th  | 10.00am | Margarette Smith, RIP |
| Sat 6th  |  6.30pm | Dorothy Fuller, RIP |
| Sun 7th  |  8.00am | Angela’s Private Intention |
| Sun 7th  | 10.00am | Pro Populo |
| Sun 7th  | 6.30pm | Intention of the Alvarez Family |

**GOING INTO HOSPITAL? TELL US**

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.

**WHAT DO YOU THINK OF IT SO FAR…?**

**Our newsletter, that is.**

**Your comments, thoughts, suggestions, ideas and contributions would be most welcome.**

**Email Deacon Philip – the deadline for each weekend’s newsletter is the Wednesday before.**



***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) **TIME TO DO AN ALPHA COURSE?**Have you done an Alpha Course? It has a massive track record of being an effective tool for bringing people’s faith alive. If you are not familiar with it have a look at <https://www.alpha.org/catholic-context/> St Elizabeth of Portugal parish in Richmond (Fr Stephen Langridge) is an Alpha hub parish and is hosting an online Alpha course starting February 23. You are invited to join in. The sign up link can be found here:<https://stelizabethofportugal.churchsuite.co.uk/events/drbvfnaq> **VOICES FROM THE HOLY LAND**During Lent last year, Fr Richard Nesbitt found inspiration to write a series of 15 poems on the themes of Our Lord’s passion, death and resurrection as he faced the challenge of a closed church at Easter,  Through the Friends of the Holy Land charity, a number of people in the Holy Land were then approached to offer their reflections on the Scriptures for Holy Week, the poems and their own personal experiences. The result is **Holy Week Voices from the Holy Land**, a prayerful and timely resource, which contains: * Forewords by Cardinal Vincent Nichols and Archbishop Justin Welby of Canterbury
* 15 chapters each featuring a poem, Scripture, a reflection from a Holy Land ‘Voice’, a prayer and questions for meditation.
* Stations of the Cross during a Time of Pandemic, first prayed at Our Lady of Fátima in Lent 2020.
* An invitation to share the reader’s own poem or reflection on Simon of Cyrene.

Holy Week Voices from the Holy Land can be used for individual meditation. Parishioners may wish to purchase a physical copy directly from Friends of the Holy Land or obtain an electronic/digital version (also priced £7.99): click on: [(](https://rcsouthwark.us11.list-manage.com/track/click?u=a40ab1a35eac7236d856fe882&id=206196bab0&e=7d4ac57aff)[www.friendsoftheholyland.org.uk](https://rcsouthwark.us11.list-manage.com/track/click?u=a40ab1a35eac7236d856fe882&id=6262e7e53a&e=7d4ac57aff)[)](https://rcsouthwark.us11.list-manage.com/track/click?u=a40ab1a35eac7236d856fe882&id=2cce6fb326&e=7d4ac57aff).  The proceeds will go towards their work in helping our Christian brothers and sisters in that area, who have suffered a dramatic loss of livelihood due to the significant decline in pilgrimages to Bethlehem and the surrounding areas.**THE MARRIAGE GAP****It wasn’t** so long ago that everybody got married if they had kids . Rich and poor alike. Today, marriage is still the norm among the better-off. But it's become the exception among the least well-off. A new report by the Marriage Foundation – already featured in the Sunday Express, Sun, Times, Mail, Star, BBC World Service, Radio 4 *You and Yours*, Church Times and the LadBible - explains what the ‘marriage gap’ is all about. Click on [Marriage Gap](https://marriagefoundation.us5.list-manage.com/track/click?u=7a9d31013953dc4d039e1d034&id=d8c9e4500c&e=e4670e1b0c) to find out why it matters. **PATHWAYS TO CHRIST'S PASSION****You are invited to three webinars exploring the accounts of the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus hosted by Holy Innocents Parish, Orpington**To prepare for Holy Week Fr Henry Wansbrough, a Benedictine monk based at Ampleforth Abbey, will lead participants through different narratives of the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus in order to gain a deeper understanding of these powerful events. The series offers an opportunity to increase personal insights into the historical context and profound theology expressed in these accounts, with a view to understanding what the Resurrection means for the mission of the Church and for our spirituality.The three webinars, all running from 7.45-9.15pm are as follows:**1. March 10: The Passion and Resurrection of Jesus according to the Synoptic Gospels** **2. March 17: The Passion and Resurrection of Jesus according to John** 1. **March 24 The Passion and Resurrection of Jesus according to the writings of Paul**

**KNOWING JESUS: AN ONLINE RETREAT** Walk with the Jesuits through Lent and Easter and really come to understand and love Jesus. This online retreat, pondering Gospel stories, will reflect on their meaning and see how startlingly relevant Jesus is to living a truly human life in the 21st Century.Sign up by clicking here:<https://www.onlineprayer.net/> You can also sign up to receive daily emails during Lent and additional resources: [http://eepurl.com/hnIXAn](https://rcsouthwark.us11.list-manage.com/track/click?u=a40ab1a35eac7236d856fe882&id=3bb43464bf&e=087693309e) |  |  |

**FAITH COMPANION: TASTE AND SEE**

The *Faith Companion* is an online magazine likely to be of interest to parishioners and recommended by Abp John.

Visit their website and you will also find details of Christian Gifts online including the *Faith Companion* candle, rosaries, journals and a skin care range made by Benedictine monks.

A free copy of the magazine is obtainable to “taste and see” by visiting the website at <http://www.thefaithcompanion.co.uk>. Please do consider supporting their work for the Church.

**A ONE-DAY ONLINE LENTEN RETREAT**

**There is a choice of dates for a one-day Lenten retreat entitled ‘From Praise to Lamentation: a Journey with the Psalms’.**

**It is described as ‘An opportunity to step aside and listen to God in scripture as we journey towards Easter.’**

**The dates from which to choose are February 24 and March 20, from 10.30am till 3.30pm.**

**Hosting the retreat is the Minsteracres Retreat Centre in Co. Durham.**

**A donation of £10 per person is suggested.**

**More details from** info@minsteracres.org **or telephone 01434 673 248.**

**IT’S MISSION POSSIBLE**

MISSION MADE POSSIBLE is a preparatory course in intentional discipleship and evangelisation.

If you would like to deepen your relationship with Jesus Christ and bring others into that relationship too, then this course is for you.

All you need to participate is a tablet, laptop or desktop PC and the ability to open a Zoom link. There will be a number of small groups – only six people – to keep it personal and manageable. The course duration seven weeks, one Zoom session per week.

Email Julia on julia.beacroft@prcdtr.org.uk if you would like to undertake this transformative course.

The Lord is waiting for YOU!