**St Columba’s Church, Selsdon**

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**28 NOVEMBER 2021**

**1ST SUNDAY OF ADVENT (YEAR C)**

**THIS SUNDAY’S MASS READINGS**

**Entrance Antiphon:** To you, I lift up my soul, O my God. In you, I have trusted; let me not be put to shame. Nor let my enemies exult over me; and let none who hope in you be put to shame.

**A reading from the prophet Jeremiah: 33:14-16**

**Responsorial Psalm PS 24:4-5. 8-9. 10. 14. Rv.1:** To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

**2nd Reading: A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians: 3:12-4:2**

**Gospel Acclamation:** Alleluia, Alleluia! Let us see, O Lord, your mercy and give us your saving help. Alleluia!

**Gospel: Luke: 21:25-28. 34-36**

**Communion Antiphon:** The Lord will bestow his bounty, and our earth shall yield its increase.

**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 5.30pm.

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

**MORNING PRAYER EACH MORNING**

*Starting Monday (the 25th), Mass will be preceded by Morning Prayer from the Liturgy of the Hours.*

*It will start at 9.40am every weekday.*

*No one will require a breviary because it will be projected on to the back wall of the sanctuary.*

Why we need to think about the end of the world

DEACON PHILIP REFLECTS ON SUNDAY’S READINGS

The end is nigh! Or is it…?

People have been predicting the end of the world for centuries.

The very earliest Christians thought it would happen during their lifetime.

So-called experts claimed that it would happen with the arrival of the millennium bug on January 1st, 2000.

According to the 16th century astrologer Nostradamus, 2023 will apparently be the year.

Certainly global warming threatens the viability of our planet in coming decades.

The truth is that nobody knows when the end will come.

Except God.

What we do know as Christians, as Catholics, is that one day the world as we know it *will* come to an end.

And then will take place Jesus’s second coming. An awesome thought.

All three of Sunday’s readings have that as their theme.

And that of itself is unusual because on most Sundays there are a variety of different themes in the readings.

Not today.

“A series of cataclysmic events…”

Jeremiah, Paul and Luke all focus on the second coming of Christ at the end of the world.

And as well as being unpredictable, it’s described in awesome terms.

A series of cataclysmic events which literally shake the very foundations of our planet and our solar system.

So what are we to make of these warnings?

The first thing to remember is that Sunday is, for the Church, New Year’s Day; the first Sunday of Advent, the first day of the Church’s liturgical year.

It’s a time to start preparing for Christmas.

But, more importantly, it’s a time to start preparing for the whole of the rest of your life – and what will happen at the end of it.

In painting this picture of the end times, Christ’s purpose was not to frighten us but to inspire us with the urgency of the Gospel message.

After all, a hard truth of life is that it often takes a disaster to wake us up.

Tragedies grab us by the shoulders because they force us to focus on what really matters in life.

So why, at the start of this new year, does the Church ask us, via these three readings, to focus on the end of our journey of faith; the end of time?

Isn’t that a bit strange? Not at all.

On the first Sunday of Advent, the Church urges us to embark on a great journey; to follow in the footsteps of Christ so that we live as he lived.

Now, if you want people to embark on a great journey, you must give them some idea of the goal of that journey.

And it must be a goal that is real, concrete and desirable.

Hence the Church directing our eyes towards the end of the world, towards the second coming of Christ at the end of time.

Today’s readings show us the coming of God’s kingdom in all its glory when he triumphs over all evil.

Things don’t get much more desirable and concrete than that.

“God has a goal for the world…”

Remember: God has a goal for the world. That goal will be attained.

Christ’s first coming, humble and weak, we shall celebrate at Christmas.

At His second coming, at the end of time, he will return in power and glory.

What should our attitude be to that second coming of Christ?

How should we prepare for it?

That is the 64,000-dollar question.

Paul’s second reading today gives us a life programme which provides us with the answer.

‘Live the life that God wants.’ Don’t be afraid.

So the message of today’s readings is clear.

Christ urges us not to be fearful but to look forward to His second coming.

‘Stand erect; hold up your heads,’ he says, because love and mercy are at the very heart of the Good News.

To conclude, we cannot live in the future – that is in God’s hands.

Our priority is to focus on the present, living our lives as best we can in the way Jesus taught us.

And always remembering, especially when things are difficult, that the risen Christ is at our side to encourage us and give us hope.

Have a happy Advent.

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| **LITURGICAL CALENDAR OF THE WEEK** |
| Sat 27th  | Weekday in Ordinary Time |
| Sun 28th  | 1st Sunday of Advent |
| Mon 29th  | Weekday of Advent |
| Tues 30th  | St Andrew, Apostle, patron of Scotland |
| Wed 1st  | Weekday of Advent |
| Thurs 2nd  | Weekday of Advent |
| Fri 3rd  | St Francis Xavier, Priest |
| Sat 4th  | Weekday of Advent, St John Damascene, Priest, Doctor of the Church |
| Sun 5th  | 2nd Sunday of Advent |

***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.

So please continue to:

* Remember to bring and wear a face mask covering the nose as well as the mouth
* 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, Albert Mackay, Judy Freegard, Christine Marchant, Anne McDonagh, Martin McDonagh, Martin Reilly, Douglas & Yvonne Bruce, Thelma Benn, Joan Cunningham, Solveya La Marina, Chris Jones, Maria Reece, Margaret Bolton, Eddie Aldridge, Mary Marks, Jean-Claude Anthony, Ellen Everett, Maureen Coffey, Elizabeth Sensano, 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 27th  | 6.30pm | Mr & Mrs Hendron, 60th Wedding Anniversary |
| Sun 28th  | 8.00am | Christopher Sampson, RIP |
| Sun 28th  | 10.00am | Mrs Rose Saminathar, RIP |
| Sun 28th  | 6.30pm | Pro Populo |
| Mon 29th  | 10.00am | Holy Souls |
| Tues 30th  | 10.00am | Holy Souls |
| Wed 1st  | 10.00am | Imogen Fernando, RIP |
| Thurs 2nd  | 10.00am | Holy Souls |
| Fri 3rd  | 10.00am | Holy Souls |
| 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 |

**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.

**CAFÉ COLUMBA EVERY MONTH**

Don’t forget: Café Columba is now open on the first Wednesday of every month, from 10am until 1:15pm.

We will be serving scones and cakes with coffees and teas first thing; also lunches, a main dish and dessert, from 11:45am.

Should you wish to visit, bring your friends – it’s a community cafe for the whole of Selsdon, remember. Everyone is more than welcome.

Our prices are low and all profits are given to charities, local and national.

If you would like to volunteer to help or bake a cake, please get in touch with Gill Tomei: email g.tomei@btopenworld.com

**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.***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. |  |  |

**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.

**KEEP FIT CLASSES**

Classes have reopened, on Monday from 11-12 noon. Everyone is welcome, whatever your fitness.

We use floor mats, weights and stretch bands - if you have these please bring them along as you are now expected to supply your own equipment at all fitness classes after COVID.

We are a safe environment in the church hall: we just ask you be sensible about your health.

We look forward to seeing you there - come and have a trial session. Contact Gill, the fitness tutor, on g.tomei@btopenworld.com for more details.

**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.

**CHURCH HALL CLEANING**

Does anyone feel able to volunteer their services for cleaning the church hall within a small team every now and then?

It includes cleaning the kitchen, the entrance hall, the two toilets, the small hall and large hall.

It would be managed on a rota with other parishioners’ help.

Please feel free to come forward and help with this task. Contact Gill Tomei on 0208 651 4076.

**BRASS CLEANING**

Would you be free to help clean the brass in the church? We would like to have a rota whereby it is cleaned once a month by a different group of parishioners. If you are interested please contact Gill Tomei on 0208 651 4076.

**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 hear from you to the contrary, in a few weeks' time we shall start removing the names of those we don't know currently to be seriously ill.

If you recognise any of the names on the sick list and would like them to continue to appear, make sure to let Fr Roy or Deacon Philip know.

In addition, 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.

**COME TO THE CONCERT**

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 December 5 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.

**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 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.

**DIAMONG WEDDING ANNIVERSARY**

Congratulations to parishioners Catherine and Michael Hendron who are celebrating 60 years of married life.

**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>

**CATHOLIC FAITH EXPLORATION**

CaFE (short for Catholic Faith Exploration), also known as Catholic Evangelisation Services, have produced a new course “Belong And Believe” in download and DVD form.

Available free of charge, this timely resource explores the immense wisdom and inspiration found in our nation's Celtic spiritual heritage.

It has been described by Bishop David Oakley as “CaFE's best yet, because it is the most prophetic. Just what our parishes need because it gives fresh vision at this difficult time.”

CaFE also suggest a course book *'Restoring the Woven Cord'* by Michael Mitton as recommended reading.

More details from <https://faithcafe.org>

**DOUBLE YOUR MONEY**

The Passage, a Catholic charity working with homeless people, is raising funds through the Big Give, a matched giving scheme.

Every £1 donated online between 12 noon on November 30 and 12 noon on December 7 produces £2 for the charity (or £2.25, if you are a taxpayer, through Gift Aid).

To give, use the link <https://bit.ly/PassageBG2021>

**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/)﻿