**St Columba’s Church, Selsdon**

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**31 JANUARY 2021**

**4TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (YEAR B)**

**THIS SUNDAY’S MASS READINGS**

**Entrance Antiphon:** Save us, O Lord our God! And gather us from the nations, to give thanks to your holy name, and make it our glory to praise you.

**1st Reading from the book of Deuteronomy: 18:15-20**

**Responsorial Psalm Ps 94:1-2. 6-9. R v.9:** O that today you would listen to his voice! Harden not your hearts.

**2nd Reading: from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians: 7:32-35**

**Gospel Acclamation:** Alleluia, alleluia! Blessed are you, Father, Lord of Heaven and earth, for revealing the mysteries of the kingdom to mere children. Alleluia!

**Gospel: Mark 1:21-28**

**Communion Antiphon:** Let your face shine on your servant. Save me in your merciful love. O Lord, let me never be put to shame, for I call on you.

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

St Columba’s is still 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.

**HOW MANY TIMES HAVE WE IGNORED THE CALL FROM JESUS…?**

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

A rabbi would normally speak to his people every sabbath day.

Jesus, just like any other rabbi, would also normally appear in the synagogue on the sabbath to preach.

The distinctive character of his preaching was quickly noticed by his fellow Jews.

Its power amplified his message and authority.

Because of that, the Jews assumed that there must be a power behind Jesus that was not evident with other rabbis.

They were unable to come up with new ideas. Jesus, in contrast, presented them with an exceptional message that attracted their attention and stimulated their curiosity.

So it’s not surprising that they were attracted to Jesus.

However, their speculation and envy led them to attribute Jesus’s power to the forces of darkness.

The end result, sadly, was that the Jews missed their opportunity to know the real Jesus.

***‘Why didn’t they recognise Jesus for who he was?’***

Just think about that for a moment. Why didn’t they recognise Jesus for who he was?

The most obvious answer is that their hearts and minds were closed to his message.

Their prejudice prevented them from recognising him as the son of God.

That was despite Jesus’s efforts to reveal his divinity to them.

Their stubbornness blinded them.

How many times have we squandered opportunities given us by Jesus?

Answer that question honestly and you are likely to feel very uncomfortable.

More often than not we find it difficult to face up to what our conscience is telling us because we are frightened of our real identity.

Yet we have to recognise and accept that this is the first step towards our complete reconciliation with God.

We need to start with the humble acceptance of our alienation from Him. We must humbly accept the truth that we are sinners, all of us.

Acceptance of our sinfulness is the first step on the road to Jesus. Remember his words to those who had been healed: “Go and sin no more...”

The forgiveness of sins is fundamental to reconciliation with God.

Sadly, acceptance of one’s sins is the greatest weakness of our current generation.

Given that truth, it’s not surprising that Jesus’s words make little impact in our society.

We find ourselves in the same shoes as the Jewish people who witnessed Jesus’s words and miracles.

In our case we can perhaps attribute this attitude to the unhealthy influence of secularism on our moral psyche. We are trapped in a cycle of sinfulness.

What we need is for God to exorcise the demons from our souls.

But do not despair. Our situation is not hopeless.

However, God does need our cooperation to receive his forgiveness.

For that to take place we must have the courage to accept that we are indeed sinners and that we do need God’s forgiveness.

So, to finish, ask yourself this question: am I ready to welcome Jesus into my life and allow him to guide me towards his kingdom?

***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 will then need to contact anyone else who was at the same Mass.

***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 30th | Weekday in Ordinary Time |
| Sun 31st | 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time |
| Mon 1st | Weekday in Ordinary Time |
| Tues 2nd | The Presentation of the Lord |
| Wed 3rd | Weekday in Ordinary Time or St Blaise, Bishop, Martyr; St Ansgar, Bishop |
| Thurs 4th | Weekday in Ordinary Time |
| Fri 5th | St Agatha, Virgin, Martyr |
| Sat 6th | St Paul Miki and Companions, Martyrs |
| Sun 7th | 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time |

**REMEMBER THE SICK AND NEEDY**

Please pray for all those in great need at this time including: Robert McMunn, Thelma Benn, 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.

**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>

**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](mailto: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*](mailto:mflkent@rcaos.org.uk)

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| **MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK** | | |
| 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 |
| Mon 1st | 10.00am | Angela’s Private Intention |
| Tues 2nd | 10.00am | Czeslaw Lawicki, RIP |
| Wed 3rd | 10.00am | Private Intention |
| Thurs 4th | 10.00am | Terri Bridge, RIP |
| Fri 5th | 10.00am | Eugene Clerkin, RIP |
| Sat 6th | 6.30pm | Colin & Virginia Bruce, RIP |
| Sun 7th | 8.00am | Sonny De Souza, RIP |
| Sun 7th | 10.00am | Pro Populo |
| Sun 7th | 6.30pm | Don Son Sing, RIP & Lorena & Family |

**YES, BLACK LIVES MATTER – WHAT NEXT?**

This Sunday has been designated Racial Justice Sunday.

Last February marked the 25th anniversary of Racial Justice Sunday.  Only a few months later, in May 2020, the world witnessed as the tragic death of George Floyd in America, which sparked a wave of protest and the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement.

In the meantime, COVID-19 has ravaged the globe, highlighting significant inequalities in our society, with the poor and marginalised suffering most.   
In the Holy Father's most recent Encyclical, [Fratelli Tutti](https://rcsouthwark.us11.list-manage.com/track/click?u=a40ab1a35eac7236d856fe882&id=9bb252811c&e=7d4ac57aff) he speaks of the need actively to oppose racism and pursue racial justice with renewed vigour.

Recently Bishop Paul McAleenan, the lead bishop for racial justice at the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, highlighted the fact that racism is 'a sin and violation of human dignity'.

In a [recent letter](https://rcsouthwark.us11.list-manage.com/track/click?u=a40ab1a35eac7236d856fe882&id=6dd5388a2b&e=7d4ac57aff) he went on to highlight how we might recognise the dignity of each brother and sister by valuing diversity and looking for new ways to support different sections of the community.   
The Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales has prepared number of resources to help parishes highlight Racial Justice Sunday, including a reflection based on the Gospel for the Day and dedicated prayers.

Visit:[https://www.cbcew.org.uk/home/events/racial-justice-sunday-2021/](https://rcsouthwark.us11.list-manage.com/track/click?u=a40ab1a35eac7236d856fe882&id=b4fd732b83&e=7d4ac57aff) to find out more.

**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.



***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 OFFERTORY COLLECTION**  The Offertory collections for the four Sundays of January amounted to £960.43 in total. Of this, £367 was gift aided and £593.43 not.  Grateful thanks to everyone concerned.  **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](mailto:retrouvailleukinfo@gmail.com) or visit [www.retrouvaille.org.uk](http://www.retrouvaille.org.uk)  **YOUR CHANCE TO JOIN A LENTEN RETREAT LED BY ABP JOHN**  The Archdiocese of Southwark is offering a retreat experience for people and parishes during Lent, beginning on the first Sunday of Lent and ending in Holy Week.  For each week of Lent, the Southwark Spirituality Commission will provide a video exploring themes connected with the Sunday Gospel. The input will be available in advance rather than live-streamed, so that it can be viewed at any time. The video will be accompanied by suggestions for prayer and reflection through the week.  The retreat is open to individuals, who can make use of the weekly video and material for prayer and reflection. For more details and to register: <http://www.southwarkdsc.org.uk/followme>  **HOLY WEEK VOICES FROM THE HOLY LAND**  During Lent last year, Fr Richard Nesbitt, parish priest of Our Lady of Fátima, White City, 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 (Founder Patron of Friends of the Holy Land) 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 group reflection or individual meditation as well as a biography of the contributor. * 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), both of which are available from the Friends of the Holy Land website [(](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.  **REMEMBER: THEY ARE STRUGGLING TOO**  We are all understandably preoccupied with Covid-19, vaccines, shutdown and social distancing.  But let us remember that other Faith communities are struggling with the same issues.  Our shared difficulties might even be an opportunity to reach across.  This can be in practical ways of volunteering together, foodbanks, shopping for neighbours etc. and also of acknowledging that they too are curtailing public prayer, liturgies, and access to buildings.  Muslims especially miss their side-by-side praying postures.  It helps when others notice and connect, and offer words of solidarity. – Fr David Standley  **AN APPEAL FROM SPUC**  The Department of Health is holding a public consultation on whether to continue the practice of allowing abortion providers to send abortion pills to women so that they can perform their own abortion at home.  As many pro-life people as possible need to complete the Department of Health’s questionnaire in order to help stop dangerous DIY abortions becoming permanent. The Society for the Protection of Unborn Children (SPUC) has prepared a briefing which gives a step by step guide to completing the consultation questionnaire. Please go to  <https://www.spuc.org.uk/Get-Involved/Campaigns/England-DIY-Abortion-Consultation> The consultation ends on 26 February 2021.  **THE NEWSLETTER: WHAT DO YOU THINK?**  Comments, suggestions, contributions: all are welcome. Email them to kyrabarone@aol.com by Wednesday evening at the latest. |  |  |
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