

# NEWSLETTER

## St Aidan's Catholic Church - Coulsdon



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Year A

Ordinary Time - 26th Sunday

1st October 2023

All Masses are streamed for housebound on the parish YouTube channel: **St Aidans Coulsdon**

Saturday Vigil 6pm Penelope Giorgio RIP

Sunday 9am Kathleen Gaffney RIP

Sunday 11am Kate Twomey RIP

Monday **No Mass**

Tuesday **No Mass**

Wednesday **No Mass**

Thursday 10am Francis Dias RIP

Friday 10am **Exposition 10 - 10.30am**

Saturday Vigil 6pm

Sunday 9am Jean Kelly RIP

Sunday 11am Celebrant's intention.

Life breakfast after 9am Mass.

Bar open after 11am Mass.

*The Holy Guardian Angels*

*St Francis of Assisi*

**Weekday Masses for the coming week.**

**Please note that there is a Mass on Thursday.** No Mass Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. On Friday there is no Mass but there will be Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, 10am - 10.30am.

**October is the month of the Holy Rosary.**

See P4 for Archbishop John's reflection.  
There will be Rosary, Exposition and Benediction led by Deacon Tony on Sundays 8th, 15th, 22nd October at 4pm.

**We would like to return the remaining Baptism certificates to the parents of the July 2023 Confirmation group.**

Anthony Smith has them. He will be around after 11am Mass today and next Sunday. Please ask him for the certificate if it applies to you. Or text him on 07782 328441.

**Please pray for the sick and housebound.**

Fr Peter, Anne Walker, Eileen & Jack Darville, Caroline Garvey, Pat Kelly, Truda Hobbs, Rhona Devine, Marion McCluskey, Jean Hunt, Mary Crehan, Winn Jordan, Charlie Hooke, Allen Reilly, David Gibson, Sarah Bell, Veronica Lydon-McCluskey, Juliette Hinds, Sammy McCarroll, Rosie Longworth, Anthony Grimshaw, Eileen Brockhurst, Czeslaw Sajadak, Trudy Kiely, John Cooksey, Geoff Wood, Joseph Darville, Bernard Leonard, Margaret Long, Norma Cordell, Christopher Thomas, Coral Hind, Jean Turner, Freda Blade, David Morling. And all who are sick.

**Taskforce.** This is taking place next Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> October.  
Please come to do some jobs around the church and grounds. Many thanks.

**We remember Elianne Andam.**

Our thoughts and prayers are with the family and friends of Elianne Andam who was knifed to death in Croydon in the past week. We join with our fellow Christians, people of Faith and all people of good will in asking God to be present to all who are grieving.

Knife crime, so often rooted in drugs and crime, has sadly become part of our society in the UK. It is easy to become desensitised to the evil of it. But when a killing of a young person happens in a place we frequent, do our shopping and get off the bus, we feel the chill of it in our hearts.

May Elianne know peace with God in heaven and may her family and friends find that peace on earth as they try to come to terms with their loss.

*Fr Peter*

**A reminder that there are some things that will be different while Fr Peter is recovering.**

- Weekday Masses will be said when Fr Gus is available. He usually can offer one or two per week as he is also supporting another parish. We will publish days of Mass in the newsletter each week. Weekend Masses will continue at the usual times. I am grateful to Fr Kevan Hayden for helping with Saturday evening Masses and Fr Gus Kinnane for Sunday Masses.
- For the time being there will be only one streamed Mass per week and that is 11am Sundays.
- Confirmation enrolment forms for Yr 9 pupils and older are on hold for now.
- Secondary school priest's reference forms can be processed as follows:

For St Aidan's School parents, Mrs Izabela Evans can be handed the forms at school, she will bring them to me for signing and return them at a later date before half-term.

Those who do not attend St Aidan's school should email the parish office during October to make arrangements for signing, [couldson@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:couldson@rcaos.org.uk)

- Primary school references will be dealt with in November.
- Some Mass intentions scheduled for weekdays will need to be rescheduled at a later date. Apologies for any inconvenience.

**Dear sisters and brothers,**

**Our prayers and good wishes go to Peter McFall and his wife Brenda who are moving to Liverpool, Peter's native city, in few weeks time.**

They have been part of this parish for almost fifty years. During that time Peter has been involved in almost every aspect of parish life. More recently he served as parish treasurer, ran the 200 Club, was a welcomer, reader, minister of Holy Communion, supported the altar servers and sat on the PPC. We will miss his immense contribution to parish life but most of all we will miss seeing him and Brenda in our midst.

We say thank you to Peter for all he has done at St Aidan's with Brenda's support and we wish them every happiness and God's blessing as they move closer to some of their family.

**Please come to the hall after the 11am Mass today for a special social time with buffet and music to say farewell to Peter & Brenda.**

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**Thank you to the people who have taken up new roles in serving the parish.**

With effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2023, Martin Puckett is taking over as Parish Treasurer. Erica Thurbon will be in charge the running of the 200 Club.

Erika Thurbon has also been appointed as Chair of the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC). She succeeds Gerry O'Donnell who has served as Chair since 2016. A big thank you to Gerry for all that he has done in that time especially for his leadership and hard work over the Covid years. He will be staying on as a member of the PPC.

Thank you to Colin Wilding for taking on the role of secretary to the PPC. A big thank you to Bernadette Hallett who has done a wonderful job in that role and has given many years of service.

Emma Sinclair is stepping down as the parish Gift Aid coordinator. Thank you to her for doing that work over the past five years. Our thanks to Clive Fernandes who has agreed to take on that role.

Our parish is blessed to have many people offering their time and skills in the service of the Lord and his people.

*Fr Peter*

**SVP MEETING.** The next meeting of the parish SVP group will take place on the evening of Monday 2nd October at 8:15pm in the Marian Room.

## **SYNOD 21 - 24.**

**In 2021 The synod process throughout the world began at parish level. We had meetings where we discussed Church life under three headings: COMMUNITY - PARTICIPATION - MISSION. Since then the process moved through national and continental phases of discussion and discernment. On 4th October the Synod moves to Rome. Part 1 in 2023 and part 2 in 2024.**



**Below is part of a reflection by Cardinal Vincent which helps to focus our minds on this coming phase.**

In the last two years, Pope Francis has been calling us to be renewed in this mission. He wants us to rediscover our life in the Church as a communion of life with God and with one another, opened up for us through the Sacraments, those outward signs of inward grace.

Over the last two years, there have been various concerted expressions of this Synodal journey, in our parishes, in the Diocese as a whole, and at the level of the Church in every continent. Now all this comes together, in October, in a Synod of Bishops, in Rome, to assess the journey thus far and to fashion clearly the next steps to be taken. These findings can then be reviewed by us all, before a further Synod of Bishops that takes place in October 2024.

We can be clear, then, that this Synod meeting is not an ecclesiastical UN Assembly, nor a Church parliament or convention, nor a referendum on the teaching of the Church. In the words of Pope Francis, it is to be 'a grace-filled event, a process of healing guided by the Holy Spirit', a setting out on a journey 'with the Lord always coming to meet us' (Pope Francis, 10<sup>th</sup> October 2021).

*Continued next week.*

## **NEWS FROM THE FLOATING SHELTER:**

For many years St Aidan's participated in the Croydon Churches' Floating Shelter (CCFS) which provided welcome and accommodation for homeless people in church halls during the winter months. The Covid restrictions of 2020 brought a halt to this work and government health objectives continued to make that work impossible over the subsequent two years. Now that we have returned to a more normal way of living, CCFS has been working to try to find a way of re-opening the shelter following the Covid disruption. Sadly, it has had to conclude that it is not possible to re-open and so we, at St Aidan's, will not be hosting our regular Thursday nights in November and December.

There are a number of reasons for this. Many of the churches around the borough which formerly hosted a night in their hall have had to drop out, either because of lack of volunteers or because their premises are no longer available. We explored the idea of running a shorter shelter from January to Easter and we in St Aidan's could have participated but even this was proving unlikely. Furthermore, The support of Croydon Council has always been necessary for the safe and successful running of the

shelter and the council has decided that it cannot now provide that support. The council has always in the past been closely involved in working with our guests, introducing those to us who could benefit from our welcome and helping to move them on into employment and secure accommodation. Its approach to supporting the homeless is guided now by central government strategy which is to put rough sleepers into single-room accommodation, rather than into a floating shelter, until they can be permanently housed.

Many of our volunteers will be disappointed to hear this. The support from parishioners from all the churches in Coulsdon has been generous and enthusiastic throughout the ten years of our involvement and has sparked the interest of all age groups from children and young people right through to the elderly. The CCFS will be holding its AGM shortly and discussing other ways in which we may support those on the streets in Croydon. One of these ways may well be the continuation of our support to Nightwatch through provision of sandwiches. Watch this space....

## Reflection by Archbishop John on Our Lady for October the month of the rosary.

At the root of our faith is a divine promise. It comes to us through the Mother of Jesus. She cooperated uniquely with God to bring this promise to fulfilment. 'Mary,' the Angel Gabriel said to her, 'do not be afraid.' 'You have won God's favour...you are to conceive and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus.' Sometimes our faith is strong like Mary's. But it can also be hard to believe God's promise in Jesus. We can doubt our faith, listening more to the world than to the Lord. And yet, whatever the challenges to our faith and in our life, we place ourselves in God's presence, and ask Our Lady's prayers. No matter how spiritually firm or flimsy we might feel, we continue, with Mary, as the pilgrim people of God's promise. God's promise is a person. Love, forgiveness, salvation, come in flesh and blood. Born in poverty, crucified on Calvary, raised from death on the third day to open the way to heaven. The Lord Jesus is God's promise of hope to the world. The Lord Jesus is God's promise of merciful love to you and me. Perhaps especially during this month of October, keep a rosary close at hand, in your pocket, by your bed. As we pray often through these truths of our faith, we embrace them for yourself and for those in need.

## Today's readings.

### First Reading                      Ezekiel 18:25-28

The word of the Lord was addressed to me as follows: 'You object, "What the Lord does is unjust." Listen, you House of Israel: is what I do unjust? Is it not what you do that is unjust? When the upright man renounces his integrity to commit sin and dies because of this, he dies because of the evil that he himself has committed. When the sinner renounces sin to become law-abiding and honest, he deserves to live. He has chosen to renounce all his previous sins; he shall certainly live; he shall not die.'

### Psalm 24(25):4-9

*Remember your mercy, Lord.*

Lord, make me know your ways.  
Lord, teach me your paths.  
Make me walk in your truth, and teach me:  
for you are God my saviour.

Remember your mercy, Lord,  
and the love you have shown from of old.  
Do not remember the sins of my youth.  
In your love remember me,  
because of your goodness, O Lord.

The Lord is good and upright.  
He shows the path to those who stray,  
He guides the humble in the right path,  
He teaches his way to the poor.

### Second Reading                      Philippians 2:1-11

If our life in Christ means anything to you, if love can persuade at all, or the Spirit that we have in

common, or any tenderness and sympathy, then be united in your convictions and united in your love, with a common purpose and a common mind. That is the one thing which would make me completely happy. There must be no competition among you, no conceit; but everybody is to be self-effacing. Always consider the other person to be better than yourself, so that nobody thinks of his own interests first but everybody thinks of other people's interests instead. In your minds you must be the same as Christ Jesus: His state was divine, yet he did not cling to his equality with God but emptied himself to assume the condition of a slave, and became as men are; and being as all men are, he was humbler yet, even to accepting death, death on a cross. But God raised him high and gave him the name which is above all other names so that all beings in the heavens, on earth and in the underworld, should bend the knee at the name of Jesus and that every tongue should acclaim Jesus Christ as Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

### Gospel                                      Matthew 21:28-32

Jesus said to the chief priests and elders of the people, 'What is your opinion? A man had two sons. He went and said to the first, "My boy, you go and work in the vineyard today." He answered, "I will not go," but afterwards thought better of it and went. The man then went and said the same thing to the second who answered, "Certainly, sir," but did not go. Which of the two did the father's will?' 'The first' they said. Jesus said to them, 'I tell you solemnly, tax collectors and prostitutes are making their way into the kingdom of God before you. For John came to you, a pattern of true righteousness, but you did not believe him, and yet the tax collectors and prostitutes did. Even after seeing that, you refused to think better of it and believe in him.'

## **Priest's reference for Catholic schools.    Information for parents.**

When parents request a school reference from a priest they are asking the priest to verify their typical Mass attendance. For secondary schools this is normally for over a three year period; for primary schools usually a one year period.

As I priest I am uncomfortable with the expectation that I should be observing when parishioner are or are not at Mass. It is central to my ministry to call people to the Eucharist but not to monitor their response. In any case it is not practically possible for a priest to know people's Mass attendance record every Sunday over years.

This raises the question as to how a priest can give the information that parents expect of him in a way that is accurate and fair to everyone. Also, how can he support the Catholic schools in their duty to be just and fair to all families who apply for admission.

### **HERE IS AN EXPLANATION OF WHAT HAPPENS HERE AT ST AIDAN'S.**

We have a sign in system each weekend for a set period of time. This means that IT IS THE PARENT who creates their own attendance record NOT the priest.

*Some questions and answers may help:*

#### **How do parents know when the signing in period begins and ends at church ?**

There are clear announcements made at Masses and notices placed in the newsletter over several weeks. It is not possible to be at church and miss the announcements and publicity.

#### **What if parents are away on holiday or absent due to illness and miss the announcement ?**

The announcements at Mass and in newsletters are made loud and clear over several weeks to ensure no one who is regularly attending Mass can miss the information even if they are absent for a good reason. Publicity also continues on other weekends throughout the period.

#### **If the 'sign in' period is only for about six months, how can that cover the three year or one year period required by schools ?**

It is just an indication of a pattern of attendance. E.g. if someone says they were there every week for the past year but only signed in for 10 out of 20 'sign-in weeks', clearly they have disqualified themselves from getting the rank of 'weekly'.

#### **What if parents feel that their indicated Mass attendance does not to justice to their particular situation ?**

They can enclose a letter to the school giving the information that they want to communicate.

#### **Why explain to the school and not the priest ?**

Because it is the schools that need to know in order to make decisions about admissions. The priest plays no part in that stage of the process. It is the schools' way of dealing with the situation if they are oversubscribed. This is necessary from their perspective in order to be fair to everyone and make sure that regular church going Catholics are not excluded.

#### **Are all Catholic schools oversubscribed with churchgoing Catholics ?**

No. You can get advice about which ones are not oversubscribed from your primary school or from your priest.

*Continued on next page /*

**INFORMATION CONCERNING ADMISSIONS OF SIBLING INTO ST AIDAN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL.**

In recent years our primary school has become oversubscribed with regular churchgoing Catholics. This has created great pressure for places.

Please note that the admissions policy at St Aidan's School does not give preference to siblings over Mass attendance. Mass attendance comes first. It is only within each Mass attendance band that a siblings have priority. It is incumbent on parents not to allow their church attendance to falter once they get the first child into the school. No one likes to see a situation where a family ends up having to use two primary schools. Parents who take responsibility have no cause for concern.

FR Pelas

**WEST CROYDON REFUGEE CENTRE.**

Croydon Refugee Centre are always grateful for our donations. Current needs: New underwear and socks for men, women and children particularly girls' socks. Size 1 nappies and baby clothes. Trainers. There is also a great need for toothpaste, toothbrushes, shampoo, washing up liquid, pasta and rice.

**The Purley Food Hub  
purleyfoodhub@gmail.com**

The Purley Food Hub are grateful for all your generous donations over many months. The current needs are: Cartons of long-life whole milk. Individual sachets of soup. Tinned meals e.g. Irish stew or chicken in white sauce.

**NEW BEGINNINGS**

For those who have suffered a divorce or separation or the death of their spouse, this Beginning Experience residential weekend will help provide healing. It's on October 13-15 at the Sion Community, Brentwood, Essex. For details ring Maura on 07795 498445 or email besouthofengland@gmail.com.

**Annual Butterfly Service Invitation** to the Annual Butterfly Service being held at St Barnabas Worship Centre at Croydon University 8<sup>th</sup> October 2023 at 3pm (Sunday) and is for any families that have lost a baby / child / or had a miscarriage.

**OUR OFFERTORY INCOME**

Cash £544 Standing Orders £540,  
Card reader: £120  
**Total income: £1,204**  
of which £642 was gift-aided.

**THANK YOU.**