

NEWSLETTER

St Aidan's Catholic Church - Coulsdon



Parish Priest: Fr Peter Mansfield,

Deacon: Rev. Tony Flavin

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Acc no.: 01751182

Name of acc: RCAS Coulsdon.

Sort: 60-06-14

Year A

GAUDETE - THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

14th December 2025

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

Saturday Vigil 6pm Intentions of the Newman family **Confessions after Mass.**

Sunday 9am Guile Pereira RIP

Sunday 11am Ann Lakes RIP

Monday 10am Maria Mafalda Cotta RIP

Tuesday No Mass here.

Wednesday 6.30pm BC RIP

Thursday 10am Drs John and Nalini Almeida - 60th Wedding Anniversary

Friday 10am Graham Thumwood RIP **Exposition until 11am**

Saturday Vigil 6pm Mario Almeida RIP **Confessions after Mass.**

Sunday 9am Dennis Kelleher **Sunday 11am** Deceased family and friends of Arangorin and Ridulfa family

Life breakfast today.
Bar open after 11am Mass.

Please take a parish
Christmas card from the
welcome desk if you have
not been given one.

Please pray for the sick and housebound.

Atticus Fletcher-Smith (baby), Claire Longworth,
Elizabeth Hubbard-Brown, Brigid O'Donnell,
Eileen Mallows, Marina Dormer, Jean Bleach,
Truda Hobbs, Terry Doman, Eileen Darville, Pat Kelly,
Marion McCluskey, Charlie Hooke, Allen Reilly,
David Gibson, Sarah Bell, Juliette Hinds,
Veronica Lydon, Sammy McCarroll, Rosie Longworth,
Michael Ogonovsky, Trudy Kiely, John Cooksey,
Geoff Wood, Margaret Long, Freda Blade, Christi Cox,
David Morling and all who are sick.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

~ Confession ~

Wednesday 17 Dec 7pm (after evening Mass)

Saturday 20 Dec 12 - 12.30pm & 7pm
(after evening Mass)

Monday 22 Dec 10.30am (after Mass)

Wednesday 24 Dec ... 12 - 12.30pm

Confession can also be by appointment with
Fr Peter. coulsdon@rcaos.org.uk

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES AT ST AIDAN'S

Christmas Eve 6pm Vigil Mass;
Christmas morning: 10am Mass.

11pm Carols and readings followed by 11.30pm Night Mass ;

Is anyone going to Croydon this week near the Town Hall ? Please let Fr Peter know.

Children's party. Free. Today.

The social committee will be hosting the annual Children's Party at **12pm on December 14th**. It's free to attend however we do ask that you book your place(s) with me to ensure we can cater for all. You can message Jenny Lehané at jennylehane@aol.com

or sign up on a sheet in the church porch - first name x number of children (eg Jenny x2 will be fine).

Music** Games** Lunch for kids** Special Guest..... who may have gifts

Adults bring some money as we have some wonderful prizes to raffle off in aid The Manna Centre for the homeless.

Christmas gift bags for wine bottles and other sizes are available on a table at the back of the church.

200 Club

The 200 Club winning number for December is number 181.

The winner will receive a cheque for £200. If you are interested in joining the 200 club, please contact Sarah Martin-Loat by email at staidans200club@gmail.com.

**HELP FOR THE HOMELESS:
Winter Homeless Shelter**

The Croydon Churches' Floating Shelter has now been formally dissolved following many unsuccessful attempts over recent years to restart it after Covid forced its closure in 2020. Croydon Council could no longer support the initiative. However, work is under way to open a different sort of shelter, a static shelter running from a single site in central Croydon. This is to be led by Croydon Voluntary Action with the strong support of Housing Justice. It will be open from late January until Easter and is to be held each night at West Croydon Baptist Church initially and then later at Croydon Minster.

The organisers are calling for volunteers from across the borough to support this work in a variety of ways: cooking and serving meals, welcoming and chatting with guests, setting up the space and clearing up. Training will be necessary. If anyone is interested in helping with this work or wishes to know more please contact Fr Michael Nayagam at the following email address: curate@southlondonbenefice.org.uk

**We pray for those who died recently.
Chris Atkins RIP. and Terence McCall RIP.
May they know God's merciful embrace.**

The collection at the Christmas and Easter Masses is the main source of personal income for priests. This is the system adopted in Catholic parishes throughout England. Catholic priests do not receive a salary in the way that ministers of other denominations do. They are therefore dependent on the Christmas & Easter offerings for personal income.

On Christmas Eve and Christmas Day the offertory basket collection, the card reader and BACS are designated as 'Christmas offerings'. The donate button on our website homepage (scroll down on the right) and the QR code on the newsletter can also be used for Christmas offerings. The diocese has sanctioned one quarter of the December standing orders to be taken as Christmas offerings.

Parishioners' main responsibility is to the priest of their own parish, not the parish they may be visiting at Christmas. If you are going away you may wish to put your contribution in an envelope and post it through the Parish House letterbox or leave it in the sacristy marked 'Christmas offering'. Any cheques should be made payable to the parish bank account 'RCAS Coulsdon' for banking purposes. If you are in the Gift Aid scheme, please use the relevant GA envelope. The parish benefits from the GA not the priest.

OUR OFFERTORY INCOME.

Cash £463, Standing Orders £591, Card reader £262 Total income: £1,316 of which £779 was gift-aided.

2nd Collection: Manna Centre Homeless
£826 doubled to £1,652

Thank you.

Please consider making a standing order for your offertory contributions. Contact the GA coordinator Clive Fernandes to get the details. coulsdongac@rcaos.org.uk

You can pay offertory or make a donation to the parish using this QR code or by using the link on the homepage of the parish website. The first time you use it you will be asked if you wish to Gift-Aid.



Please note that church shop payments can now be made with a credit card using the card reader in the church porch.

Payment can also be made with a mobile phone using the QR code above or by using the same QR code displayed in the shop.



**Congratulations and every blessing to our parishioners who married
in the past week.**

Jacqueline Nanozi and Henry Sutver
who were married in Uganda on 12th December
Rebekah Driver and James Howell Rees
who were married here at St Aidan's on 13th December.
May the Lord bless them and keep them in his love.



**Commentary on today's readings at Mass.
OSB.**

1st & 2nd readings by Dom Henry Wansbrough

Gospel reflection from Loyola Press.

The third Sunday of Advent is traditionally called *Gaudete Sunday*. *Gaudete* is the Latin word meaning "rejoice." This Sunday is so named because "Rejoice" is the first word in the entrance antiphon for today's Mass taken from Philippians 4:4,5: "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice! The Lord is near." This Sunday is a joyful reminder that our salvation is near.

First reading Isaiah 35:1-6a, 10

Like all the first readings in Advent, this passage is from Isaiah, rejoicing in the coming deliverance. Most of the Book of Isaiah was written in a dark period of Israel's history, under the threat or the reality of defeat, devastation and deportation. The promises of a Deliverer became all the more important and life-sustaining. The prophet (or prophets, for the Book of Isaiah can hardly be the work of a single person) never wavered in his confidence that deliverance was sure. The prophecies prepare for the coming of the LORD, but it is the coming of the Lord GOD. On the one hand, there is not the clarity which would appear once Jesus had actually come: the prophecies do not make clear in what way or what form God would come to the rescue of his people. Would the promised Redeemer be God himself or a messenger or a herald of the end? At all events God would be at work. On the other hand, when Jesus came it was not immediately clear whether he was God, or whether God was at work in Jesus or whether Jesus was the final prophet. This only became clear on reflection in the light of the Spirit: 'the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.'

Second reading James 5:7-10

The Letter of James is full of comforting, homely images, like the farmer waiting patiently for the autumn and spring rains, or – less comforting – the Judge waiting at the gates. Whether it was written by James who was the leader of the Christian community at Jerusalem is harder to determine. It may be an assemblage of the oral Wisdom teaching of this important Christian leader, written up by a disciple. In any case, the Letter was written at a time when the eschatological fever of expectation had begun to wane, when Christians no longer felt that they were in the final generation of world history, and were prepared to settle down and wait for the coming of the Lord. Indeed, in contrast to the Paul's stress on the imminence of the Second Coming, for James the delay of the Second Coming is an incitement to patience. It will certainly happen, but there is plenty of opportunity beforehand for tolerance, both towards the annoying and tiresome people within the community and towards those persecuting the community from outside.

Gospel Matthew 11:2-11

The Gospel of Matthew tells the story of John's arrest in chapter 14:3-12. In today's Gospel, John sends word to Jesus from prison, asking if Jesus is the Messiah for whom he has been waiting. Jesus responds by pointing to the miracles that he has worked and invites John and the other hearers to make their own determination. In his next breath, however, Jesus praises John for his role in preparing the way for Jesus. Then Jesus says that all of those who work for the Kingdom of God will be as great as John and even greater.

Jesus' message to John about the signs of the kingdom being performed recalls the salvation described by the prophet Isaiah. This passage is a reminder that the beginning of salvation is already mysteriously present to us, but also yet to be fulfilled. Salvation is already in our midst as manifest in the miraculous deeds of Jesus and in the Church. But salvation is also to be fulfilled in the coming reign of God. Even as we observe our world today, we can find glimpses of God's work among us. Even more, we help to prepare the way for God's kingdom by our words and our deeds. This message is indeed a cause for rejoicing.

Christmas cards in packs of 10 are now on sale in the church shop.

Catholic 2026 diaries - £3; Catholic art calendars - £1

Sending a Christian Christmas card is a simple and prayerful way of witnessing to our faith in the God who become human for our salvation.

WEST CROYDON REFUGEE CENTRE.

Croydon Refugee Centre are always grateful for our donations. Current needs: warm clothing, hats/gloves/scarves, especially winter coats and waterproof shoes/trainers & umbrellas, good quality shoes/trainers especially teenager's size, soap, shampoo, conditioner, women's deodorant, razors, washing up liquid, washing capsules, j-cloths, small (500ml or less) used bottles which can be filled with shampoo, bowls and spoons.

PURLEY FOOD HUB are always very grateful for our donations. Please leave food items in church porch.

Priority Christmas food list: tins of plain meat - chicken, ham, packet & tinned potatoes, tinned peas & carrots, cartons of long life whole milk, tinned dessert fruit, puddings / jellies / packet custard, small bottles of squash, small packets of Christmas biscuits, children's chocolate / sweet treats, small bottles of washing up liquid

Today's Mass readings:

First reading Isaiah 35:1-6a, 10

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus; it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who have an anxious heart, 'Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you.' Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy. And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Sion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 146(145):6c-7. 8-9a. 9b-10.

*Blessed are the poor in spirit;
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

It is the LORD who preserves fidelity for ever,
who does justice to those who are oppressed.
It is he who gives bread to the hungry,
the LORD who sets prisoners free.

The LORD who opens the eyes of the blind,
the LORD who raises up those who are bowed down.
It is the LORD who loves the just,
the LORD who protects the stranger.

The LORD upholds the orphan and the widow,
but thwarts the path of the wicked.

The LORD will reign for ever,
your God, O Sion, from age to age.

Second reading James 5:7-10

Be patient, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. Do not grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door. As an example of suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

Gospel Matthew 11:2-11

At that time: When John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?' And Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.' As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. 'What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written, "Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you." 'Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.'