

NEWSLETTER

St Aidan's Catholic Church - Coulsdon



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Year A

25th Sunday of Ordinary time

20th September 2026

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

Saturday 6pm Welfare of Tony and Eileen Fleming **Confessions after Mass.**

Sunday 9am People of the parish

Sunday 11am Thanksgiving of Neil Tharakan and family

Monday 10am George and Margaret Goodwin *St Matthew*

Tuesday NO MASS

Wednesday 6.30pm Margaret Almeida RIP

St Padre Pio

Thursday 10am Thanksgiving Dennis D'Souza **OUR LADY OF WALSINGHAM**

Friday 10am Abe Almeida RIP **ST AIDAN'S SCHOOL 50TH ANNIV MASS** (No Exposition).

Saturday 6pm Yolanda Sapsford RIP **Confessions after Mass.**

Sunday 9am People of the parish **11am** Daria Mascarenhas RIP

Life breakfast after 9am Mass.
Bar open after 11am Mass.

Second collection today.

Home Mission Sunday - Evangelli Gaudium.

This collection provides the Bishops of England and Wales with resources to support 'Home Mission', the spread of the Gospel in our own country. The money collected enables a breadth of work to be done in support of parish evangelisation.

Please pray for the sick and housebound.

Bridgit Haran, Trevor Lewis, Kit Gralton, Jim Mons, Norah Johnson, Brian Fernandes, Ed Mulhearn, Claire Longworth, Eileen Mallows, Truda Hobbs, Elizabeth Hubbard-Brown, Gill Lands, Terry Doman, Pat Kelly, Marion McCluskey, Charlie Hooke, Allen Reilly, Sarah Bell, Juliette Hinds, Veronica Lydon, Sammy McCarroll, Trudy Kiely, John Cooksey, Geoff Wood, Margaret Long, Freda Blade, Christi Cox, David Morling and all who are sick.

Autumn BBQ. ~~~~~ This Sunday.

Let's all come together and say goodbye to summer together from midday this Sunday 20th September from 12pm. Tickets are £5 for adults / £2.50 for kids. Tickets on sale.



Sacrament of Confirmation at St Aidan's 2027.

Year 9 pupils or older are now being invited to enrol for the preparation for Confirmation. Bishop Gerard Bradley will be coming to our parish on Friday 5th February 2027 to administer the sacrament of Confirmation at 7.30pm Mass.

We would like to invite our young people who are currently in year 9 or older to apply.

The Confirmation preparation programme will begin in the church hall on Sunday evenings in term time beginning on Sunday 11th October at 6pm. The application forms will be available from Fr Peter after Masses today and for the next two weeks.

Mass attendance is an essential requirement for any prospective applicant.

The young person applying needs to request the form personally, **NOT A PARENT**. The St Aidan's programme is not open to people from other parishes. On the application form the applicants are asked to write a short letter in their own words saying why they wish to be confirmed.

There new members are required for the Parish Pastoral Council - PPC. Please see the notice board in church to write nominations. Closing date is Sunday 21st Sept.

Four parishioners have to nominate a suitable person. Those nominating have to be at least 16 years old. Those being nominated have to be over 18 years old. You can approach someone you think suitable and ask their permission for you to nominate them. Or if you think you would like to serve on the PPC for a term of four years you could ask four people to nominate you.

The PPC meets about six times a year usually on Wednesday evenings. The following extract from our PPC constitution will help to give a flavour of what the PPC is about.

The Parish Pastoral Council, comprises a group of members who act in partnership with the parish priest in his leadership of the parish. The PPC is a consultative body.

"In this council, which is presided over by the parish priest, ... those who ... are engaged in pastoral care in the parish, give their help in fostering pastoral action." [Code of Canon Law 536.1]

Aims of the PPC as stated in our constitution.

Within the context of increasing the involvement of the laity in pastoral affairs the aims of the PPC are: to work with the parish priest in all matters relating to the administration, general welfare and development of the parish; to facilitate, through the representative role of the members, the rights of the members of the parish as expressly stated in the law of the Church – the Code of Canon Law – namely - "... to make known their needs, especially their spiritual needs, and their wishes to the Pastors of the Church" [Can. 212.2] and "... to make their views known to others of Christ's faithful..." [Canon 212.3]

Date for diaries ... Mon 19th October.

Mass for stillborn babies, miscarried and any loss of a baby before, during or after birth prior to baptism.

More information next week.

If you can help with teas /coffees afterwards please let Fr Peter know.

Afternoon Tea Friday 2nd October at 4pm in the church hall for a donation of £5.00

To book a place, please speak to Brenda Eydman after 9am Mass or ring 01737 552610

Journey-in–Faith (RCIA) is an adult preparation programme for sacraments of initiation.

- Perhaps you have not received the sacrament of Confirmation.
- Maybe you would like to explore becoming a Catholic.
- Or you have received all the sacraments of initiation but want to renew your faith.

Please see Fr Peter today if you want to join the group starting Monday 21 September 7.30pm. Or email him: couldson@rcaos.org.uk

VISIT OF THE RELICS OF ST GERARD MAJELLA

Saturday 3 October Our Lady Of Reparation, West Croydon (CR0 2AR). Celebrate St Gerard's 300th anniversary. St Gerard is the Patron Saint of mothers, couples trying to conceive, those looking for work, and making a good confession. Relics available for prayer for an hour beforehand. Programme starts at 9:30 comprising Prayers, Veneration of the Relics, Holy Mass, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Confession. Mass at 10am with Sermon. Programme will end with Benediction at 12noon. Blessings with the relics after Mass.

Catholic secondary school references.

Certificate of Catholic Practice. The priest's reference form has been replaced with the Certificate of Catholic Practice. The certificate is signed by the priest only if the applicant comes to Mass weekly. Previously the priest was required to indicate Mass attendance ranked as weekly, fortnightly, monthly, etc. Now all Catholic schools have adopted the new Certificate as proposed by the Archbishop. It means that where Mass attendance is less than weekly the priest is not permitted to sign the Certificate. **There is no need to come to the appointment with the priest if you have not signed in weekly at church.** Parents who attend Mass less than weekly can still apply to the Catholic schools and prove their Catholicity with the Baptism certificate.

For more information parents should pick up the cream information sheet from the tables at the back of the church.

Fr Peter will be available to sign secondary school certificates on the following dates and times:
Wed 23 Sept. 7.30 - 8pm;
Friday 9 Oct. 3 - 3.45pm
Thursday 15 Oct. 7 - 7.30pm;
Thursday 22 Oct. 7 - 7.30pm

Primary schools certificates will be signed in November.

St Aidan's School - 50th anniversary of opening this month. Special Mass 10am in Church on Friday 25th September. All welcome.

This is a wonderful opportunity for our whole community to come together, reconnect, and celebrate five decades of our history. We look forward to welcoming parishioners to the Mass.

School celebration 3.30pm.

All warmly welcome you to St Aidan's School on Friday 25th September 3:30 - 7pm to for our 50th Anniversary family Celebration day. We have lots of fun in store for all the family including- Inflatables, face painting with Ellie, food on sale from Chef's Van, licensed bar, DJ, games, tombolas and much more. We look forward to welcoming you.

Open days coming up at St Aidan's Primary School, for September 2027 intake.

- Tuesday 29th September 9.30am
- Wednesday 7th October 9.30am
- Wednesday 4th November 9.30am
- Friday 4th December 9.30am

St Philomena's Catholic High School for Girls.

September 2026 parents of Year 6 Students.
Open Mornings by appointment only.
Thursday 17th September, Tuesday 22nd September, Tuesday 29th September, Wednesday 30th September and Thursday 8th October.
St Philomena's is a hugely successful, Catholic, non-selective, comprehensive girls' school for students aged 11-18 years.
Email: enquiries@stphils.org.uk Website: www.stphils.org.uk
Telephone: 020 8642 2025

Love Makes the World Go Round Sunday 11th October 4pm at St Andrew's Church, Coulsdon.

A light-hearted concert of secular music by St Andrew's Choir including music by Bernstein, Bizet, Elton John, Offenbach, Rodgers, Saint-Saëns, Schwartz and Sullivan.
Tickets £10 (under 16s £5). Tickets from St Andrew's Office 020 86762966 or email standrewsoffice@yahoo.com. All proceeds to the West Window Fund

OUR OFFERTORY INCOME. Cash £452,
Standing Orders £810, Card reader £228
Total income: £1,490
of which c £750 was gift-aided.

2nd Collection: Catholic Education Service £489
Thank you.

St Martin's Mission appeal £957

To Gif Aid your offertory contact Jed Murphy the GA coordinator to make arrangements.
coulsdongac@rcaos.org.uk

PURLEY FOOD HUB are always very grateful for our donations. Please leave food items in church porch. Preferences for this month: Long life whole milk, tinned plain meat: corned beef / chicken / ham, pasta sauce in cartons please, tinned carrots, jars of jam, concentrated fruit

WEST CROYDON REFUGEE CENTRE.
Croydon Refugee Centre are always grateful for our donations. Leave in church porch.
Current needs: good quality shoes/trainers especially teenager's size, soap, shampoo, conditioner, women's deodorant, razors, washing

Last Sunday Archbishop John presented the diocesan medal of **Faithful Service** to Liz Moore, Rosa Shea and Phil Hobbs. This was given for decades of service to this parish and the wider Church.

Congratulations and thank you go to Liz, Rosa and Phil.



Thank you to everyone who helped make Archbishop John's visit such a memorable occasion for the parish including all those involved in the liturgy and all who worked with the preparation behind the scenes. The variety of food was wonderful and it was great to see the hall full of people getting together. Thanks to the parish social Committee and the bar staff.

Below is a copy of the Archbishop's homily. It is the prepared text, he adlibbed quite a lot which is not included.

Homily by Archbishop John given at St Aidan's Coulsdon on 13th September 2026.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

It is a great joy to be with you at St Aidan's. Thank you, Fr Peter, for your welcome and for your generous service as parish priest. Please convey my gratitude also to Deacon Tony, who cannot be with us today and whom we remember with affection in our prayers at this time. I am also grateful to Simon, Chair of the Parish Pastoral Council, for his kind words of welcome at the beginning of Mass; and thank you to every one of you here today. It is your quiet generosity which sustains the worship and life of this parish.

I am so delighted to be with you today; this is a lovely moment to visit. This month marks fifty years since the opening of St Aidan's Primary School. I offer my warm congratulations to the children, to Mrs Caterina Hughes, Mr Henry Stanley, and all the staff, governors, and families. Across half a century, so many young lives have been helped to discover that they are known and loved by God, and called to be his disciples in a world hungering for the Good News that God is with us.

There is another anniversary too. Sixty years ago, in May 1966, my predecessor, Archbishop Cyril Cowderoy, opened this present church. Your history reaches further back: to the Coulsdon Mission founded in 1909, and the little corrugated-iron church erected in 1916. From those modest beginnings, generations have worked and sacrificed to make a home for Catholic faith here. We remember them with profound gratitude, especially those who have gone before us into eternity.

They have handed something precious to us. Our responsibility is to help the next generation know the Lord who has sustained this community.

Today's Gospel takes us straight into the demands of that relationship. Peter asks the Lord Jesus how often he must forgive. Seven times seems generous enough. But Jesus takes him beyond counting, into the boundless mercy of God.

The servant in the parable owes a sum he could never repay. His master cancels the debt. Yet almost immediately, that same servant seizes a fellow servant by the throat over a much smaller debt. He has received mercy, but refuses to let it change him.

There is a searching question here for each of us: what happens to the mercy I receive from God? Does it reach the people who live with me? Does it affect the way I speak about someone who has disappointed me? We can keep a remarkably accurate account of other people's faults. Something said years ago can remain as fresh as yesterday. We rehearse the conversation; we prepare the reply we wish we had given. Meanwhile, resentment occupies more and more room in the heart.



The first reading, from Ecclesiasticus, asks how we can cling to anger whilst seeking healing from God; a lesson perfected in our psalm, which turns our eyes towards his compassion. We need that change of direction: away from endlessly measuring another person's failure, towards remembering how patiently God has dealt with us.

Forgiveness can be difficult. It does not mean pretending that wrongdoing did not matter, or allowing someone to continue causing harm. Truth and justice remain necessary. Trust may take time to rebuild. But we can ask for the grace to surrender revenge, and to desire another person's conversion and good. Sometimes our first honest prayer is simply: 'Lord, I want to forgive. Help me to begin.'

And where do we bring that prayer? Here, into the presence of the Lord Jesus.

The tabernacle in the centre of the sanctuary gives visible expression to a profound truth: Christ belongs at the centre of this parish. Everything we undertake finds its purpose in him. When we come into church, our eyes are drawn towards the one who has called us here.

The word 'tabernacle' means a tent. It recalls the tent of meeting in the wilderness, where the LORD God made his presence known to his people as they journeyed. Within that sanctuary, the Holy of Holies sheltered the Ark of the Covenant. Later, the Temple in Jerusalem would have its Holy of Holies too. Through these sacred places, Israel learned the wonder of God dwelling amongst his people.

That promise finds its fulfilment in that same LORD, the Lord Jesus Christ. The eternal Word takes flesh and dwells amongst us; he pitches his tent in our humanity; directly into the messiness of our lives. Through his death and resurrection, he opens the way for us to draw near to the Father.

Here, in the Blessed Sacrament, this same Lord Jesus remains truly present: his Body and Blood, soul and divinity. The tabernacle holds the Eucharistic Lord, given to us in the sacrifice of the Mass, reserved for Holy Communion, especially for the sick, and adored with love. In the sanctuary of a Catholic church, the ancient language of God dwelling with his people takes on this wonderful Eucharistic depth.

Pope Benedict XVI taught that the position of the tabernacle should help us recognise Christ's real presence. Here, its central place can teach us, even before a word is spoken, to turn towards him. Our genuflection, our silence, and the care we give to this sacred place express our faith in the Lord who welcomes us.

St John Paul II put it beautifully: 'It is pleasant to spend time with him.' We do not need impressive words. We can bring our weariness, our gratitude, the person we are worried about, the hurt we cannot yet put down. We can sit quietly and allow ourselves to be loved.

But the Lord who receives us also changes us. We cannot ask him to occupy the centre of the sanctuary whilst keeping him at the edge of our decisions.

St Paul tells us today that our lives and our deaths belong to the Lord. That belonging reaches into ordinary things: our family conversations, our use of money, our willingness to apologise. Christ's place at the centre becomes visible in the way we live.

St Augustine said to those receiving the Eucharist: 'Be what you see; receive what you are.' He was speaking to Christians who, through baptism, had become members of Christ's Body. Receiving the Lord calls us to live in the unity and charity of that Body. We cannot cherish communion with Christ and be indifferent to communion with one another.

This is why the children's reflection later, just before the final blessing of this Mass, belongs so naturally within our celebration. Dear children, when you notice someone left out, when you share, when you stand beside someone treated unfairly, you show something of the love of the Lord Jesus. Your school helps you discover that every person has a dignity given by God, and that this asks something of us, as his disciples. Pope Benedict XVI, drawing on St Gregory the Great, recalled Moses entering the sacred tent to speak with God, then coming out to serve his people. That is a beautiful pattern for parish life: prayer deepening our love, and love finding practical expression in service.

So, dear friends, as we give thanks for your church and school, let us each bring one person before the Lord: perhaps someone we struggle to forgive, perhaps someone from whom we need to seek forgiveness. Let us ask the Lord Jesus for one small, real step towards peace.

May St Aidan pray for this parish. May our Blessed Lady, herself the Ark and Tabernacle of the Lord, lead us closer to her Son. And may the crucified and risen Jesus, present at the centre of this sanctuary, find a home at the centre of our hearts. Amen.

Background on today's Gospel Reading © Loyolapress.com

In today's Gospel, Jesus moves from Galilee to teach in Judea where he is sought out by great crowds and tested by the Pharisees on issues such as marriage and divorce. Jesus also encounters a rich young man who is unable to accept Jesus' demand that he leave his possessions to follow him. Jesus' response to the rich young man sounds very much like the conclusion we will find in today's Gospel: the first will be last and the last will be first.

On the surface, the parable of the workers in the vineyard appears to be an offense to common sense. Those who work a longer day ought to be paid more than those who work just an hour or two. When viewed in this way, the landowner seems unfair. That is because we are reading into the parable our own preconceived notions of how fairness and equality should be quantified.

A close read shows us that the landowner paid on the terms that were negotiated. The landowner, it seems, has acted completely justly. The parable goes beyond that, however,

and we come to see that the landowner is not simply just, he is exceptionally just. He is radically just. He has given those who laboured in the field for a full day their due pay. But he has also given a full-day's wage to those who worked only a single hour. No one is cheated, but a few receive abundantly from the landowner just as we receive from God more than what is merely justifiable or due. God, like the landowner, is radically just and abundantly generous. The workers who complain are made to look foolish as they lament the fact that landowner has made all workers equal. Indeed, what more could one ask for than to be treated as an equal at work or anywhere else?

The parable reminds us that although God owes us nothing, he offers abundantly and equally. We are occasionally tempted to think that our own actions deserve more reward, more of God's abundant mercy, than the actions of others. But God's generosity cannot be quantified or partitioned into different amounts for different people. When we think that way, we are trying to relate to God on our terms rather than to accept God's radically different ways.

Today's readings.

First reading Isaiah 55:6-9

Seek the LORD while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 145(144):2-3. 8-9. 17-18. R18a

The LORD is close to all who call him.

I will bless you day after day,
and praise your name for ever and ever.
The LORD is great and highly to be praised;
his greatness cannot be measured.

The LORD is kind and full of compassion,
slow to anger, abounding in mercy.
How good is the LORD to all,
compassionate to all his creatures.

The LORD is just in all his ways,
and holy in all his deeds.
The LORD is close to all who call him,
who call on him in truth.

Second reading Philippians 1:20c-24, 27a

Brothers and Sisters: Christ will be honoured in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labour for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ,

for that is far better. But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. Let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ.

Gospel Matthew 20:1-16

At that time: Jesus told his disciples this parable, 'The kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house who went out early in the morning to hire labourers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the labourers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And going out about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the market-place, and to them he said, "You go into the vineyard too, and whatever is right I will give you." So they went. Going out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour, he did the same. And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing. And he said to them, "Why do you stand here idle all day?" They said to him, "Because no one has hired us." He said to them, "You go into the vineyard too."

'And when evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, "Call the labourers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last, up to the first." And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius. Now when those hired first came, they thought they would receive more, but each of them also received a denarius. And on receiving it they grumbled at the master of the house, saying, "These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat." But he replied to one of them, "Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? Take what belongs to you and go. I choose to give to this last worker as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?" So the last will be first, and the first last.'