

PARISH DIARY

Monday 3.30pm: First Holy Communion Children – Monday Group  
Monday 7.15pm: Preparation for the Confirmation Mass  
Tuesday 8.00pm: Parish Prayer Group  
Saturday 10.00am: First Holy Communion Children – Saturday Group

FEASTS FOR THE WEEK

There are no feasts this week.

OFFERINGS

First collection Gift Aid £429.91 Loose £273.66  
Retiring collection (CAFOD) Gift Aid £106.90 Loose £106.00  
The retiring collection this weekend is for CAFOD.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK AND HOUSEBOUND

Grace Gibbs, Simon Leo, Paul & June McMahon, Michael Boyle, Maureen Allen, Eileen Hurley, Elizabeth O’Daley, Ellen Basci, Joan Gallagher, Kay Kennedy, Stephane Patten, John Sewter, Ryan Morison, Kay Williams, Keith Fraser, Ronnie Xavier, Marie Elsey, Christopher Browne, Mary Wallace & Rosa Vitolo.

ANNIVERSARIES

James Baker, John Christopher Letchworth, Margaret Laverty, George Davis, Kathleen Needham, Sarah Fox, John Fox, Martin Moone, Father Casper Lutz, Cynthia Cantoni, James Crowley, Phyllis Glenn, Louisa Margareta Marks, Patrick Bowen, Margaret Quaid, Daisy Cook, Christina Ross, John Dorsett, Dorothy Searle, Alice Leslie, Robert Thomas Kotei, Josie Alexander, Eileen Lumley, Margaret O’Sullivan, Mary Garrow-Fisher, Thomas Gerard Leslie Luson, John Conway, Cecil Cox, Christine Andrews, Elizabeth Clarke, J. P. MCGOWAN, Renee Fox, Mr. H. Cockerhill, Mabel Rooke-Ley, Marie Monaghan, Arthur Tunesi, John Dignum, Helen Halden, Edna Morgan, Daniel Cremin, Richard de Kerckhove, Josephine May, Edith Anne Connellan.

+++ May they rest in peace +++

The Folk Choir—Sunday evening

If you come to Mass at 6.30pm on Sundays, have you ever thought about singing with the Folk Choir? You might enjoy helping to lead the congregation during the service, learn some of the hymns we sing at Communion, maybe add a harmony? You will probably already know a lot of the hymns that we sing and you don't have to be able to read music. If you can't come every week, that's fine too. If you would like to know more, speak to Ossie or Chris (the two guys with guitars) after the Mass and they will be able to tell you all about it, or let Fr Gerry know and he'll pass it on.



*Christ Yesterday, Today & Forever*

Parish Priest: Rev. Gerard O’Brien

Deacon: Rev. Robert Beresford

*St. Agatha’s Catholic Church*

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*Please visit our website regularly to keep abreast of important current issues.*

MASS TIMES AND INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK		
Sunday 6th March 2016		
Fourth Sunday of Lent (C) – Mothering Sunday		
Saturday	9.30am	Holy Souls
	6.30pm	Fr Thomas McElhone
Sunday	9.00am	Thomas Kerrigan
	10.30am	People of the Parish
	6.30pm	Ann Carbery
Monday	9.30am	Zen Fernando
Tuesday	9.30am	Gerry White
Wednesday	9.30am	Patrick O’Reilly
Thursday	9.30am	Kenneth Francis
Friday	9.30am	Margaret Cole
Saturday	9.30am	Dante Alcantarini
	6.30pm	Kevin Maher
Confessions:	Saturday 10.00–11.00am, 18.00–18.15pm and at call	
Baptisms:	By previous arrangement	

The parable of the prodigal son is so familiar to us, and when stories are familiar they can lose their meaning. But let us look a little closer at the context of the story. Jesus told this parable in response to some comments and complaints by the Pharisees and the scribes: ‘This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.’ What would these detractors have made of the story, flying as it did in the face of their traditional morality?

What about the so-called sinners? The ‘tax collectors and sinners’ were already at ease in the company of Jesus; they were seeking him out to hear what he had to say, and he in turn was welcoming them. How this parable must have spoken to them! It wouldn’t have been much of a stretch for them to compare the generous welcome and forgiveness of the father in the story to the treatment they were already receiving from Jesus.

## PARISH NOTICES

### Clergy Support Fund Campaign

Archbishop Peter Smith would like every Catholic in the Diocese to have an opportunity to hear about the needs of sick and retired priests and how you can lend your support to this fundraising campaign to raise £4.5million over the next four years.

Contact Cards were distributed last weekend and more are available at Masses this weekend so that everyone who would like to know more about the needs of our sick and retired priests will have an opportunity to do so. If you would like to hear more, please fill in a card and post it in the collection box at the back of the church today.

You will receive a personal invitation to a presentation, including times and dates, which will take place in the weekend beginning 23/24 April. Only one card need be completed per family, as provision will be made for other family members to attend. Thank you.

### Confirmation

The preparation for the Confirmation Mass will take place on **Monday 7th March at 7.15pm**. Parents should attend at **8.15pm**. The Mass with Bishop Paul Hendricks will take place on **Sunday 13th March at 12.30pm**.

### First Holy Communion

Group 1 will meet at **3.30pm** on **Monday 7th March**. Group 2 will meet at **10am** on **Saturday 12th March**.

### St Patrick's Night Dinner

This event will be held on **Friday 18th March at 7.30pm** in the cloister. Tickets cost £10 each. Please sign up on the notice in the church porch.

### St Agatha's Church Easter Spring Clean

Fr Gerry invites Parish volunteers to help prepare our beautiful church for Holy Week and Easter. If you can spare a couple of hours after the morning mass on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> March to help polish brass/iron altar cloths, etc. please add your name to the noticeboard list by the front door. Teens are especially welcome (those aged 11 - 13 accompanied by an adult please - no smaller children). A volunteers' gardening Saturday morning will be scheduled once the grounds have fully 'woken up'. Watch this space for further information.

### Good Friday Walk of Witness

The annual Churches Together in Kingston Good Friday Walk of Witness will start at **11am** from the United Reform Church in Eden Street. Coffee and hot cross buns will be served in the church hall from **10am**. This is a great opportunity to witness to our faith to the people of Kingston.

## REFLECTION

## Loved in our sins

The prodigal son came home empty-handed.  
He had no trophies to show his father,  
no achievements with which to earn his praise, his welcome and his love.  
He was a failure. Worse – he was a sinner.  
He deserved to be punished – and he knew it.  
Yet punishment was the last thing he needed.  
To punish him would be like pouring water on a dying fire.  
What happened? When the father saw his lost son coming towards him,  
his heart went out to him, and the next minute they were in each other's arms.  
It is an extraordinary experience to be loved in one's sinfulness.  
Such love is like a breeze to a dying fire, or rain falling on parched ground.  
Those who have experienced this kind of love,  
know something about the heart of Jesus.

Fr F McCarthy S.D.B.

### First Reading: Joshua 5: 9-12

Joshua 'rolls away' the reproach of Egypt from his suffering people. The 'Passover' of the threat of annihilation is celebrated. The bread of life; the manna in the desert gives way to the possibility of a new dispensation; a new form of bread for the journey and a new Passover.

### Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 5: 17-21

Saint Paul indulges in one or more of his favourite themes and sayings. We who believe are 'in Christ' and have been recreated. We are already a 'new creation'. Our work is that of ambassadors. We are to be reconcilers because we have been reconciled.

### Gospel Reading: Luke 15: 1-3, 11-32

Home is where we behave worst and are treated the best. The story of the Prodigal Son is Jesus' response to the self-righteous, to the snobbery of the Scribes and Pharisees. In order to justify his dealings with sinners Jesus tells the story of the Prodigal Son. The story has as much to do with the Father and the generous forgiveness of the Father or with the indignant, sulking elder brother and his sense of injustice. The son is merely the prop to show up the opposing attitudes to forgiveness and repentance in the story. Forget the prodigal for a moment and see the others.

### Parish Men's Group

The next meeting of the Parish Men's Group will be on **Wednesday 16th March** at the Wych Elm from **8.00pm**. All men of the parish are invited to join us for a friendly and relaxed evening lubricated by a pint or two.