



Christ Yesterday, Today & Forever

The parish office should be your first port of call for any enquiries including appointments and arrangements for all sacraments (e.g. baptisms, weddings, funerals). Please email Karin Rattray, the Parish Secretary, at [kingston@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:kingston@rcaos.org.uk) or call on 020 8546 4633. The office is open from 9.30am to 2.00pm Monday to Friday. Could you please limit telephone calls outside these hours to emergencies only

#### CLERGY

Fr. Anthony Oleh, MSP — Parish Priest  
Fr. Pius Duke, MSP — Assistant Priest  
Rev. Robert Beresford — Deacon

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### FEAST DAYS, MEMORIALS AND MASSES

#### SUNDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2019

#### 2<sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT (A)

<b>Saturday 7<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>St Ambrose, Bishop, Memorial</b>
9.30am	John & Rose Pereira RIP
6.30pm	Intentions of Mrs. Anne Davis
<b>Sunday 8<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Second Sunday of Advent</b>
9.00am	Arthur & Robin O'Connor RIP
10.30am	People of the Parish
6.30pm	Joseph Jaroon RIP
<b>Monday 9<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Solemnity</b>
9.30am	Barbara Walsh RIP
<b>Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup></b>	
9.30am	Peter Mojzisz RIP
<b>Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup></b>	
9.30am	Dunne Family
<b>Thursday 12<sup>th</sup></b>	
9.30am	James & Kathleen Boyle RIP
<b>Friday 13<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>St Lucy, Virgin, Martyr, Memorial</b>
9.30am	Thanksgiving to the Triune God
<b>Saturday 14<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>St John of the Cross, Priest, Memorial</b>
	<b>120 Years of St Agatha's Church</b>
9.30am	Rosa Beresford RIP
6.30pm	José Camara

Exposition:	Monday to Saturday 8.30 – 9.20am.
Morning Prayer:	Monday to Saturday 9am.
Confessions:	Saturday 10-10.30am, 6-6.15pm & at call.
Baptisms:	By previous arrangement – Sunday at 12.30pm.
Marriages:	Six months' notice required – Diocesan rule.

ON THE FIRST SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH (4<sup>th</sup> January 2020) WE WILL HAVE ONE HOUR OF EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT. BETWEEN 10AM AND 11AM.

#### PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK AND HOUSEBOUND

Please pray for the sick and housebound of our Parish: Pat Appleby, John Sewter, Christina Ward, Tess Bird, Clare Horgan, Keith Fraser, Trish Taylor and Ryan Morrison. *Please let the Parish Office know in writing if either you or your relatives and friends want to be mentioned in our sick list.*

#### ANNIVERSARIES

Mary Cockerell, Frederick Seymour, Hermine Gollob, Michael Murphy, Pauline Dubri, Darren Hickey, Ernest Joseph Mead, Frank Sewell-Knight, Nora Duffield, Hilda Duckett, John Smith, Vivien Braby, John Boyden, Arthur McLeod, James Wilson, Arthur O'Connor, Elisabeth Hall, Natalie Marie Williams, Margaret Dignum, Norah Owens, Hannah Walsh, Katherine Trigg, Teresa Short, Bernadette Morrissey, Elisabeth Mahoney, Mary Anne Clarke, Edith Kate Letchworth, Dominic Fuouco, John Henry Isaac, Adelaide Clement, Julia Walsh. ++ **May they rest in Peace** ++

#### LET US REMEMBER ALL WHO HAVE DIED RECENTLY

Let us remember those who have died and their families with love and affection during this time of grief.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent Cycle A

Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2019

#### Gospel Reading

*Matthew 3:1-12 John the Baptist appears in Judea preaching a message of repentance.*

#### Reflection

In this week's Gospel Reading and next week's, our Advent preparation for Christmas invites us to consider John the Baptist and his relationship to Jesus. In this week's Gospel, Matthew describes the work and preaching of John the Baptist.

John the Baptist appears in the tradition of the great prophets of Israel, preaching repentance and reform to the people of Israel. In fact, the description of John found in this reading is reminiscent of the description of the prophet Elijah (2 Kings 1:8). In this reading, John directs a particularly pointed call to repentance to the Pharisees and Sadducees, parties within the Jewish community of the first century.

John marks the conversion of those who seek him out with a baptism of repentance. Other groups in this period are thought to have practiced ritual washings for similar purposes, and John's baptism may have been related to the practices of the Essenes, a Jewish sect of the first century. John's baptism can be understood as an anticipation of Christian baptism. In this passage, John himself alludes to the difference between his baptism and the one yet to come: "I am baptizing you with water, for repentance . . . He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire." (Matthew 3:11).

In this reading, John makes very clear that his relationship to the Messiah yet to come (Jesus) is one of service and subservience: ". . . the one who is coming after me is mightier than I. I am not worthy to carry his sandals" (Matthew 3:11). In the context of Matthew's Gospel, today's passage is followed by Jesus' baptism by John, an event that is attested to in all four of the Gospels and appears to have been the start of Jesus' public ministry.

John's preaching of the coming of the Lord is a key theme of the Advent season. As John's message prepared the way for Jesus in the first century, we, too, are called to prepare ourselves for Jesus' coming. We respond to John's message by our repentance and reform of our lives. We are also called to be prophets of Christ, who announce by our lives, as John did, the coming of the Lord.

Sunday Connection, Loyola Press

#### Christmas Raffle and Christmas Cards

Raffle tickets for the Christmas hampers, will be on sale after all Masses, alternatively, please call in to the parish office, between 10am-2pm Mon-Fri. An assortment of Christmas Cards and 2020 calendars will also be available to purchase in the Cloister. Our very own resident artist, Bob Meecham, has also produced a Christmas Card, a pack of 5 is £2.50 with 10p from each card going to the R.N.L.I.

#### HAVE A BLESSED AND PEACEFUL WEEK!

ROMAN CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF SOUTHWARK

A Charitable Incorporated Organisation – Registered Incorporated Charity Number 1173050

### Gospel Reading

*Matthew 3:1-12 John the Baptist appears in Judea preaching a message of repentance.*

### Family Reflection

We do many things to get ourselves ready for our celebration of Christmas: purchase gifts, prepare Christmas cards, decorate our homes. John's call of repentance in preparation for Jesus reminds us that our repentance is another way in which we can prepare for the Lord's coming and our celebration of Christmas. Parish communities often offer a communal celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation during the Advent season. Your family might choose to participate in the communal celebration of the sacrament, or you might seek out the sacrament on an individual basis.

Read together today's Gospel. Talk about how John reminds the people that they prepare for the reign of God by reforming their lives. As a family, prepare a simple reconciliation service in preparation for Christmas such as the following: Gather in a prayerful space, perhaps around your family Advent wreath. Read again today's Gospel: Matthew 3:1-3. Invite each family member to pray silently, asking God to forgive their sins. Pray together an Act of Contrition. Then celebrate God's forgiveness by sharing a Sign of Peace with each other.

Sunday Connection, Loyola Press

### Advent Study and Reflection

During Advent we shall study and reflect upon the four beautiful passages from the Prophet Isaiah that form the first reading at our Advent Sunday masses. The passages are:

Isaiah 11: 1-10 – Peace and Repentance  
Isaiah 40: 1-11 – Good News  
Isaiah 35: 1-10 – Joyful Hope  
Isaiah 9: 2-7 – Saviour



The group will meet at the church on **Thursday evenings at 8pm on 12th and 19th December.** Reading the passages before the meetings would also be a good idea

### St Agatha's Confirmation 2020

If you wish to enrol for next year's Confirmation programme please complete an application form, available from the back of the church, and return it to the parish office no later than Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2020. There will be an enrolment meeting for Candidates and their families on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2020 at 7.45pm. The first candidate session will be Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2020 at 7.15pm. The Inscription Mass will be on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2020 at 6.30pm. A full programme of the sessions is available with the application form.



Grace is not part of consciousness; it is the amount of light in our souls, not knowledge nor reason.

~ Pope Francis

### Important Upcoming Dates:

Mon 9 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Closing date for CCF Competition
Wed 11 <sup>th</sup> Dec	St Agatha's Sch Junior Carol Service
Thurs 12 <sup>th</sup> Dec	General Election
Thurs 12 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Advent Study and Reflection Group
Fri 13 <sup>th</sup> Dec	St Agatha's Church Youth Group
Sat 14 <sup>th</sup> Dec	120 years of St Agatha's Church
Sat 14 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Pre-Christmas Spruce up!

### Offerings

<b>First collection</b>	Gift Aid	£495.50	Loose	£481.83
<b>Retiring Collection</b>	Gift Aid	£141.30	Loose	£90.66

**TOTAL £1209.29**

Thank you for your generosity to your parish.

The retiring collection last weekend was for the Catholic Youth Services to support Youth Work in the Diocese and beyond, especially the Southwark Catholic Youth Service (SCYS).

### Church Banners

A longstanding parishioner of St Agatha's has kindly sponsored the purchase of the new Advent Banners in the church; our thanks to him, we truly appreciate the donation. If anyone would be interested in sponsoring the purchase of further banners for instance for Christmas, Lent or Seasonal Banners, please contact the Parish Office to discuss further.

### Parish Office

Karin, our Parish Secretary, will be on annual leave from Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> December 2019 until Monday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2020, therefore the parish office will be closed. Fr Anthony and Fr Pius will be available in case of an emergency or for a pressing enquiry only. For non-urgent enquiries please email [kingston@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:kingston@rcaos.org.uk)

### Tea, Coffee and Cake

Tea, coffee and cake will be served in the Cloister after the Sunday 9am Mass on the **last Sunday of each month: 29<sup>th</sup> December 2019.** Do come and join us to meet and greet others, and our clergy, especially if you are new to the parish. If you attend this Mass and would like to help once a month, please email the parish office.

### Duke of Edinburgh (DofE)

#### Bronze Volunteering opportunities.

For our young parishioners undertaking the Duke of Edinburgh Bronze award, we have a volunteering opportunity for 2 students doing their DofE to assist our First Holy Communion team with sessions in 2020. You will need to be available on selected Sunday afternoons 3.30pm-5.30pm from January to May (term-time only). Please email the Parish Secretary at:

[kingston@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:kingston@rcaos.org.uk) with your details including name, address, age, school or place you are completing DofE and we will put you in touch with the FHC team.

## II. The Stages of Revelation

In the beginning God makes himself known

"God, who creates and conserves all things by his Word, provides men with constant evidence of himself in created realities. and furthermore, wishing to open up the way to heavenly salvation - he manifested himself to our first parents from the very beginning." He invited them to intimate communion with himself and clothed them with resplendent grace and justice.

This revelation was not broken off by our first parents' sin. "After the fall, (God) buoyed them up with the hope of salvation, by promising redemption; and he has never ceased to show his solicitude for the human race. For he wishes to give eternal life to all those who seek salvation by patience in well-doing."

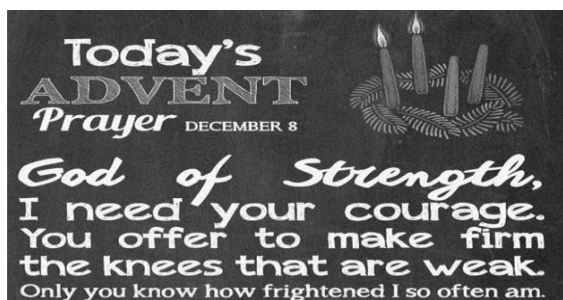
Even when he disobeyed you and lost your friendship you did not abandon him to the power of death. Again, and again you offered a covenant to man.

The covenant with Noah

After the unity of the human race was shattered by sin God at once sought to save humanity part by part. the covenant with Noah after the flood gives expression to the principle of the divine economy toward the "nations", in other words, towards men grouped "in their lands, each with (its) own language, by their families, in their nations".

This state of division into many nations, each entrusted by divine providence to the guardianship of angels, is at once cosmic, social and religious. It is intended to limit the pride of fallen humanity<sup>10</sup> united only in its perverse ambition to forge its own unity as at Babel. But, because of sin, both polytheism and the idolatry of the nation and of its rulers constantly threaten this provisional economy with the perversion of paganism.

The covenant with Noah remains in force during the times of the Gentiles, until the universal proclamation of the Gospel.<sup>13</sup> The Bible venerates several great figures among the Gentiles: Abel the just, the king-priest Melchisedek – a figure of Christ - and the upright "Noah, Daniel, and Job".



### CAFOD World Gifts

The virtual gift for that person that has everything, to benefit those that are less fortunate.... Would the mother-in-law appreciate a 'Marvellous Moo Cow' in her name or perhaps 'The Goat that Gives'. Why would Grandad want yet another pair of socks, when you could nominate him for a 'Vegetable Garden' or 'Wonderful Worms' or even push the boat out on 'Build a Greenhouse'. Who wants a ribby jumper when they can 'Help a Llama Farmer'. For these and many other potentially life changing options, simply pick up a catalogue from the back of the church. Collect yours early to avoid disappointment. CAFOD thank you for your continued support.

Scripture thus expresses the heights of sanctity that can be reached by those who live according to the covenant of Noah, waiting for Christ to "gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad".

God chooses Abraham

In order to gather together scattered humanity God calls Abram from his country, his kindred and his father's house,<sup>16</sup> and makes him Abraham, that is, "the father of a multitude of nations". "In you all the nations of the earth shall be blessed."

The people descended from Abraham would be the trustee of the promise made to the patriarchs, the chosen people, called to prepare for that day when God would gather all his children into the unity of the Church.<sup>18</sup> They would be the root on to which the Gentiles would be grafted, once they came to believe.

The patriarchs, prophets and certain other Old Testament figures have been and always will be honoured as saints in all the Church's liturgical traditions.

God forms his people Israel

After the patriarchs, God formed Israel as his people by freeing them from slavery in Egypt. He established with them the covenant of Mount Sinai and, through Moses, gave them his law so that they would recognize him and serve him as the one living and true God, the provident Father and just judge, and so that they would look for the promised Saviour.

Israel is the priestly people of God, "called by the name of the LORD", and "the first to hear the word of God", The people of "elder brethren" in the faith of Abraham.

Through the prophets, God forms his people in the hope of salvation, in the expectation of a new and everlasting Covenant intended for all, to be written on their hearts. The prophets proclaim a radical redemption of the People of God, purification from all their infidelities, a salvation which will include all the nations. Above all, the poor and humble of the Lord will bear this hope. Such holy women as Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, Miriam, Deborah, Hannah, Judith and Esther kept alive the hope of Israel's salvation. the purest figure among them is Mary.

Libreria Editrice Vaticana

### Primary School 2020 Application Forms

A priest will be available to sign Primary school application forms from **4-6pm on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2020**. No appointment is necessary, please call at the Presbytery. Regular Mass attendance is a requirement for a reference to be completed. If you have recently moved to the area you should seek a priest reference from your previous parish which we will then countersign. Please ensure that you complete as much of the forms as possible and if you have any reference letters, please also bring these along with you. Please bring all relating documents with you at this time, **especially Baptism Certificates**. The closing date for the application is 15th January 2020.

**Please see the Parish noticeboard for more details of the following:**

- **URGENT Volunteering appeal for KCAH**
- **Catholic History Walks for Advent & Christmas**
- **Conquest Art Group at St Pius**
- **London SW Catholic Social Group**
- **A Day with Mary**

### Christmas Raffle

Each year, a small but dedicated team of volunteers run the senior's lunch, and a raffle which plays a big part in helping raise funds. This year we would like to expand the raffle and therefore any donations, big or small, would be very much appreciated and will help make a big difference to the funds raised. Thank you to those who have already given, please do keep the donations coming! Suggestions include: Bottles of wine/spirits, chocolates, biscuits, vouchers, toys/children's gifts. A basket is available in the church porch for your donations, alternatively please contact the Parish Office to discuss further.

### Seniors Christmas Lunch

Our Seniors Christmas lunch will be held on **Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December at 12.30pm** in the Cloister. If you plan to attend, please sign up on the list in the church porch.

### Christmas Eve Christingle Service

Christmas is coming.... which means that we are getting closer to our Christingle Service. This is a very special way of celebrating the real meaning of Christmas with all our friends, family and the whole St Agatha's community.

EVERYONE is welcome! CHRISTMAS EVE in the Church at 4 p.m. Actors – Years 3-6 only Readers – Year 6 and secondary school children. All the younger children are invited to dress up as a shepherd, king, angel, donkey etc..

IF YOUR CHILD WANTS TO TAKE PART AND ACT, OR DO A READING PLEASE SIGN THE POSTER AT THE BACK OF THE CHURCH. The deadline is Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> December, so please sign up asap. (NB Please leave a mobile number and email address and we will notify you of your child's part the following week). Please make sure you are available on the rehearsal dates below before you sign up.

**Parent volunteers** – If there are any parents who would like to help with dressing the children, make-up, lighting or rehearsing with the actors or readers we are very keen to hear from you too.

Please sign up at the church or email:  
Helen Mennis [helenmennis@gmail.com](mailto:helenmennis@gmail.com) or  
Louisa Collyer-Hamlin [louisacollyerhamlin@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:louisacollyerhamlin@yahoo.co.uk)

### Rehearsal dates and Christingle making

*Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December* Costume fitting and giving out readings - 11.30 – 12.30pm (after 10.30 mass)

*Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> December* Practice in church 10am – 12.30pm Full dress rehearsal and Christingle making in the Cloisters.

*Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> December* Christingle Service 4pm (costumes & make-up from 3pm)

### CHRISTINGLE MAKING: Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> December

All ages are welcome to join us in the Cloisters to make our 250 Christingles and have a drink and biscuit (Mums and Dads especially welcome! We'll even give you a cuppa!). This is a tradition that the whole parish gets involved in and the more the merrier.

*Thank you and we look forward to seeing you there!*

### Pre-Christmas Spruce Up

We have a tremendous team of helpers in this church who work very hard to keep our Church and Grounds beautiful all year round for which we are very blessed and grateful!! Can we please ask for 'EXTRAS' (volunteers to come and help with our twice yearly spruce up both inside and outside, within the church grounds, to boost the efforts of our regular team by tackling jobs like brass cleaning and ironing of altar cloths etc... in time for our special Christmas celebrations!..) This year our dedicated morning will be on **Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> December**. There are a variety of indoor and outdoor tasks that need to be taken care of and we hope that both male and female parishioners will be willing to give up a few hours of their time to help us. A sign-up sheet will be in the church porch for volunteers to sign up please. (Even if you can only spare an hour or two, Frs. Anthony and Pius will be delighted!) All teenagers will be made especially welcome, together with those aged 11 – 13 (accompanied by an adult please) but for safety purposes, sadly, no smaller children.



### Christmas Decorations

Thank you to everyone who have already kindly donated decorations, we are still in need of indoor/outdoor lights and decorations such as garlands or tinsel, but please no more baubles. If you do find that you have any additional festive trimmings that are no longer required then please pop them into the parish office. Or, that when you go shopping you buy an extra decoration. No matter how big or small the decoration we would love the donation. If you can donate just one Christmas decoration this year you can help make our church more beautiful for this joyous time of year.

Also, this year we are inviting the children to bring in a homemade decoration to add to our Christmas Trees. There are no rules to what it must look like, only that it must be homemade! We would ask that you bring these in by Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December as we will be decorating the trees that weekend. We are looking forward to seeing what you all create!

### Advent Reading

Copies of '**Walk with Me**' are available at the back of the Church, a donation of £1.00 is encouraged, please put money in the box marked Papers. This little book offers helpful readings and reflections for every day during advent and is an excellent way to prepare for Christmas.

Also available is a brand-new magazine **Celebrate:Advent** for children, its full of activities and quizzes, it will encourage them to think about and grow in their faith while they have fun! 22 pages jam-packed with puzzles and facts. Celebrate:Advent comes with an Advent calendar and activity sheet for even more things to do. This year there's an easy way to refocus on the real meaning of Christmas as we Celebrate:Advent. Please pick up a copy from the back of the church, the cost of these is **£1 each**, please pop your money into the small box provided.