



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

St. Agatha's Catholic Church
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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 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.

**SUNDAY 31ST MARCH 2019 – 4TH SUNDAY OF LENT (C)
 FEAST DAYS, MEMORIALS AND MASSES THIS WEEK**

Saturday 30th
 9.30am Dr Charles Forbes RIP
 6.30pm Paddy Campion RIP

Sunday 31st 4th Sunday of Lent
 9.00am Patricia White
 10.30am Kouadio Family
 6.30pm People of the Parish

Monday 1st
 9.30am Bridget & Eugene Doyle and Flora & Percy Smith RIP

Tuesday 2nd
 9.30am Edith Perera RIP

Wednesday 3rd
 9.30am Toni Pearce RIP

Thursday 4th
 9.30am Holy Souls

Friday 5th
 9.30am Frances & Cyril Jarvis RIP

Saturday 6th
 9.30am David Jane Russell RIP
 6.30pm Marie-Anne Xiberras RIP

Exposition: Monday to Saturday 8.30 – 9.20am.
 Morning Prayer: Monday to Saturday 9am.
 Confessions: Saturday 10.00-10.30am, 18.00-18.15pm and at call.
 Baptisms: By previous arrangement on Sundays at 12.30pm.
 Marriages: Six months' notice required – Diocesan rule.

ON THE FIRST SATURDAY (6th April 2019) OF EVERY MONTH 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, Bill Kerrigan, Tess Bird, Clare Horgan, Keith Fraser, Trish Taylor and Ryan Morrison. *Due to the new data protection rules we are unable to have names on the sick list unless we have written permission from the person to publicise their names. 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

Giovanni Grassi, James McArdle, Francis Brocking, Henry Wright, Sr. Stanislaus Holohan, Mario Bedoye, Maureen Swinbourne, Mary Lott, Alice Baker, Sarah Watson, John McKenna, James Patrick Kennedy, Caroline Hopkins, William Philip Murphy, Alice Delaney, Ellen Desmond, Eugene Doyle, Bernadette Harris, Evelyn Fiaschi, Clare Chambers, George Higginson, Bridget Doyle, Michael McDonnell, Margaret Hardless, Mary O'Connell, Martin O'Brien, George Deeb, Alfred Paish, Charles Philpot, Walter Hewitt, Mercie Young. +++ **May they rest in Peace** +++

OFFERINGS

First collection	Gift Aid	£523.30	Loose	£590.70
Retiring Collection	Gift Aid	£10.00	Loose	£77.66
TOTAL		£1201.66		

Next Sunday the retiring collection will be for the CAFOD Cyclone Idai Appeal.

Further details are available on the Parish Noticeboard.

British Summer Time

Please remember that the clocks go forward this weekend by one hour in the early hours of **Sunday 31st March (Mothering Sunday)**; Sunday mass will feel one hour earlier than usual!

TASTE AND SEE

A REFLECTION OF PSALM 33:2-7

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

This line is an appropriate response to the first readings account of the first meal of the Israelites on the produce of the land of their destiny.

Meals are very significant in Luke's gospel. Nowadays we can hardly appreciate the deep significance of table-fellowship in biblical times. When a person had to grow most of their own food, to share table with somebody was an expression of sharing life. Hence the absolute shock of seeing Jesus eating with people regarded as sinners. The parable of the Prodigal Son reaches its climax in the contrast between the father who takes the wayward son back to the table and the elder son who refuses to do so.

The psalm of the day might be heard on the lips of the forgiven prodigal. The banquet for his return was rendered all the more tasteful by the father's goodness. This father figure gives a human face to the mercy of God. Picture the relief and joy on the son's face, reflecting the radiance of the father at the head of the table.

Look towards him and be radiant;

Let your faces not be abashed.

The prodigal son recalls the doubts and anxieties he had experienced before he was embraced in the father's forgiveness.

He makes his own the lines of the psalm:

This poor man called; the Lord heard him

And rescued him from all his distress.

The radiant face of the father invites us to an honest confession this lent.

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

The Responsorial Psalms of Sunday – Silvester O'Flynn, The Columba Press

Lately Dead

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Tony Spooner who died recently, aged 92. His requiem will take place on Friday 12th April 2019 at St Elizabeth's, Richmond. 'Eternal rest grant to him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him. May he rest in peace. Amen.'

The Apostleship of the Sea

We are seeking a parish representative for this worthy Catholic charity. The Apostleship of the Sea (AoS) provides practical and pastoral care to all seafarers, regardless of nationality, belief or race. AoS port chaplains and volunteer ship visitors welcome seafarers, offer welfare services and advice, practical help, care and friendship. The Apostleship of the Sea in Great Britain is part of an international network known to the maritime world as Stella Maris, working in more than 250 ports around the world. 90% of world trade is transported by ship. However, the life of a modern seafarer can be dangerous and lonely. They may spend up to a year at a time away from home, separated from their family and loved ones and often working in harsh conditions. So, The Apostleship of the Sea provides important support to these seafarers, and relies wholly on voluntary contributions. If you have an association with the world of seafarers or the navy, this may particularly appeal to you. It will not be a very time-consuming role. If interested, please contact Karin in the parish office.

God is more anxious to bestow His blessings on us than we are to receive them ~ St. Augustine of Hippo

HAVE A BLESSED AND PEACEFUL WEEK!

ROMAN CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF SOUTHWARK

A Charitable Incorporated Organisation – Registered Incorporated Charity Number 1173050

REFLECTION – SUNDAY 31ST MARCH 2019

God does not judge as we judge. No matter how far we have strayed from what we understand to be the right path, God is always waiting to receive us back. Jesus put human face on that forgiving love, as Pope Francis reminds us "With a tenderness which never disappoints, but is always capable of restoring our joy, he makes it possible for us to lift up our heads and start anew." (The Joy of the Gospel, 3). There is a challenge in this also, for elsewhere Jesus asks us to be compassionate and merciful as our heavenly father is.

REFLECTION – SATURDAY 6TH APRIL 2019

The invitation of Jesus to the thirsty to come and drink from the living water that he will give leads to the discussion among the people which begins the text for today. While those who come on hearing this invitation regard Jesus as "the" prophet, others explicitly call him the Messiah. Still others question whether Jesus could really be the Messiah because of the popular belief that the Messiah would come from Bethlehem. Jesus will always remain bigger than anything that we can ever imagine. Our most intimate encounters with him must make us realise this. He cannot be captured by the concepts, words or images that we use, and while these help us to get to know him as intimately as we want to. He reveals himself to each of us according to the level of the openness we possess.

God's Word 2019 Daily Reflections, St Pauls Publishing

CAFOD

Every year we participate in the CAFOD Lent Fast Day, not only as a way of raising funds for CAFOD, but also as a way of growing in faith and in understanding some of the issues faced by the World's poor and we thank you for your continuing support. This Family Fast Day our parish has raised £322. Thank you for fasting in solidarity and please keep our brothers and sisters in your prayers throughout Lent.



Baptism

Congratulations to Kaden who was Baptised here at St. Agatha's last week. May God continue the good work he has started.

Baptism Preparation Class

Our next baptism preparation class will be on Sunday 28th April 2019, at 2pm, in the cloister. Please contact the parish secretary to book your place. If you are considering your child's baptism, please complete an application form and join us for this class. Parents need to attend a Baptism preparation class before receiving a date for your child's baptism. Godparents are also encouraged and welcome to attend the class. The Baptism preparation class is for the adults only; it is our experience that parents get more out of the sessions if they are not easily distracted.

Please see the Parish noticeboard for more details of the following events...

'Miserere - From Allegri to Macmillan'

Saturday 30th March at 7.30pm the Merbecke Choir will perform a concert of sacred music at St. Raphael's Church, Portsmouth Road, Kingston.

The New Malden Passion Play

Saturday 13th April 2019 at 1 & 3pm

Blagdon Park Recreation Ground, New Malden

Good Friday Walk of Witness

Churches Together in Kingston invite us all to participate in the Good Friday Walk of Witness beginning at 11.00am at the United Reform Church in Eden Street. Refreshments (hot cross buns) will be served from 10.00am. Everyone is welcome.

The Passion of Jesus

Good Friday, 19th April and Easter Saturday, 20th April

'The Gift' at St Joseph's Parish, New Malden

You are warmly invited to 'The Gift', a monthly post Easter event.



Celebrate Twickenham! 2019

15th and 16th June 2019 at St Mary's University, Twickenham.

Important Upcoming Dates:

Sunday 31 st Mar	Confirmation Mass
Sunday 31 st Mar	FHC Session 7
Sunday 31 st Mar	Stations of the Cross
Wednesday 3 rd Apr	Stations of the Cross
Sunday 7 th Apr	Stations of the Cross

Parish Office

Karin, our Parish Secretary, will be on annual leave from Friday 5th April, returning on Monday 15th April. Fr. Anthony and Fr Pius will still be available in case of emergency or for a pressing enquiry.

Confirmation 2019

This Sunday, 31st March, the Confirmation Mass will take place, at 12pm.

First Holy Communion 2019

Please note the following dates for upcoming sessions:

Children's Session 7	Sunday 31 st Mar	4 – 5pm
Children's Session 8	Sunday 28 th April	4 – 5pm
Group 1 Rehearsal	Friday 3 rd May	4 – 5pm
Group 1 Sacrament of Eucharist	Sunday 5 th May	12 noon
Group 2 Rehearsal	Friday 10 th May	4 – 5pm
Group 2 Sacrament of Eucharist	Sunday 12 th May	12noon

Parish Men's Group

The men of the parish usually meet together on the third Wednesday of each month but due to a clash with another event at the Wych Elm this has now been set for the fourth Wednesday of each month. Therefore, the group will meet on the following dates in 2019: **24th April**, 22nd May, 26th June, 24th July, 28th August, 25th September, 23rd October and 27th November. Please come along and join them.

Altar Servers' Rally 2019

The annual rally for Southwark Altar Servers is on Monday 6th May at The Friars, Aylesford Priory, Kent. Bishop Paul Mason is the principal celebrant. The annual rally gives servers in Southwark a great opportunity to collectively acknowledge and celebrate their special Ministry of Service in the church. Furthermore, the event encourages servers to socialise with other servers and share and renew their faith. If you have not attended before please take the time to 'come and see'. All servers and their families and friends are welcome. A poster with more details is on the church noticeboard. Altar Servers perform a very important role in liturgical services. After approx. 2 years regular serving, servers will be enrolled into the Guild of St. Stephen for Altar Servers and receive the Guild bronze medal. If you or your children are interested in joining the ministry or if you have questions about the ministry, please speak to Frs. Anthony or Pius. Further details are available on the Parish Noticeboard. Please let us know if you are intending to attend.



MONTHLY TALKS AT ST. RAPHAEL'S ON TOPICS RELATED TO OUR CATHOLIC FAITH

St Raphael's Church in Kingston/Surbiton holds a monthly event: "Theology on Tap." Talks on topics related to the Catholic faith will be delivered by a range of speakers from within and outside the Parish. Quench your spiritual thirst with friends in the church hall (Alexander House) over a glass of wine or other refreshment.

Sunday 31st March 2019

Fr. David Howell, Assistant Priest, St Saviour's Church, Lewisham

All are welcome to attend and enjoy a glass of wine with nibbles from 6pm to 8pm.

Donations will be invited each month to cover costs.

Some consider reconciliation as an impossible dream which ideally might become the lever for a true transformation of society. For others it is to be gained by arduous efforts and therefore a goal to be reached through serious reflection and action. Whatever the case, the longing for sincere and consistent reconciliation is without a shadow of doubt a fundamental driving force in our society, reflecting an irrepressible desire for peace.

~ Pope Saint John Paul II

LENT AND EASTER 2019 AT ST AGATHA'S

4th Sunday of Lent

Gospel Reading *Luke 15:1-3, 11-32*
Jesus teaches about forgiveness in the parable of the Prodigal Son.

Reflection

The parable Jesus tells in today's Gospel is unique to the Gospel of Luke. Jesus has been teaching the crowds as he journeys to Jerusalem. As he teaches, the Pharisees and scribes complain and challenge Jesus because he is welcoming sinners at his table. Today we hear the third of three parables that Jesus tells in response to his critics. These three familiar parables—the lost sheep, the lost coin, and today's parable of the prodigal son—invite us to consider the depth of God's mercy and love.

The Pharisees taught a scrupulous observance of Jewish Law. In their interpretation and practice, observant Jews who shared table fellowship with sinners would be made unclean. Like Jesus, the Pharisees hoped to lead sinners back to God. The Pharisees, however, required that sinners first become ritually clean—observant of the Pharisees' interpretation of Jewish Law—before sharing table fellowship. This appears to be one of the major differences between the Pharisees and Jesus. Jesus reaches out to sinners while they are still sinners, inviting them to conversion through fellowship with him. Jesus is God acting among us; by befriending us, he is inviting us to return to friendship with God. Through friendship with Jesus, our sins are forgiven and we, in turn, bear fruit for God. Recall last Sunday's Gospel and the barren fig tree.

Our familiarity with today's parable risks dulling us to its tremendously powerful message. We call this the parable of the lost son or the prodigal son. Any focus on the younger son, however, must also be balanced by an examination of the unusual behaviour of the father.

First we must imagine our first response to the audacity of a son who asks for his inheritance before his father has died. Indignation would certainly be a justifiable response to such a request. Yet the father in this parable agrees to honour the son's request and divides his property among his two sons. How might we describe such a father? Foolish comes to mind, but so does trusting. Without property of his own, the father must rely upon his sons to provide for his well-being.

The younger son takes his inheritance and leaves home. The older son remains, continuing to provide for the father and the household. Having been disgraced by the younger son, the father spends some time watching the road for the return of the lost son. When he eventually sees his wayward son returning, the father not only welcomes him but also runs out to greet him and then honours him with a party. We say that this father is loving and forgiving. Yet these adjectives only begin to describe the depth of love and mercy that characterize the father.

We find no surprise in the anger of the older son. Yet the father appears sad and even confused by the older son's indignation. He says in reply that they should celebrate because the lost son had returned. The father is filled with gratitude and love for the older son's faithfulness. This love is in no way diminished by the father's rejoicing at the return of the younger son. Yet the older son's jealousy reveals his limited understanding of the depth of his father's love.

The Fourth Sunday of Lent is traditionally called Laetare Sunday. Laetare is a Latin word that means "rejoice." Today's Gospel describes the reason for our joy: God's great love for us has been revealed in Jesus. Through his Passion, Death, and Resurrection, Christ has reconciled us with God and one another.

Sunday Connection, Loyola Press

Stations of the Cross

Stations of the Cross will be held at 7.30pm on Wednesdays, Friday mornings after Mass and at 5.30pm on Sundays during Lent. This devotion provides an opportunity for us to walk the road to Calvary with Our Blessed Lord.



Lenten Reconciliation

A Lenten Reconciliation service will be held on **Tuesday 16th April at 7.30pm** here in the Parish of St Agatha for everyone. It is an opportunity for those who would like to go to confession before the Easter Triduum, which begins on Maundy Thursday. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is one of the healing sacraments and a powerful help on our Journey of Faith.

The times and details of all Masses and services are listed in the Lent and Holy Week 2019 Programme that is available at the back of the church. Please note that, on Maundy Thursday, the Mass of the Lord's Supper is at 7.30pm, the Solemn Liturgy on Good Friday is at 3.00pm and the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday is at 7.30pm. There are no morning masses these days, though there are children's celebrations at 12pm on both Thursday and Friday.

Church Flowers during Lent

One of the ways we have decided to observe Lent is by not having flowers in the church during this season of austerity and simple reflection. We hope this absence of flowers during Lent will amplify the resurrection message of the Easter flowers when they arrive!

CTS Booklets for Lent

Our CTS rack in the church porch now has some suitable spiritual reading for Lent; do have a look at what is on offer today. Payments should be put in the wall box marked 'papers'.

My Day by Day

This Lenten booklet is available at the back of the church. There is one copy for each family. This little book offers helpful readings and reflections for every day during Lent and is an excellent way to prepare for Easter. A recommended donation of £1 is welcomed. (Please put money in the box marked 'Papers'.)

Stations of the Cross Paintings

We would like to remind everyone that local artist and parishioner, Bob Meecham, has a display of beautiful paintings, which are his interpretations of the Stations of the Cross, available to view in the cloister. Please feel free to take a look.

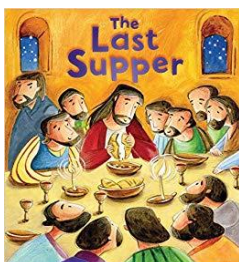
LENT AND EASTER 2019 AT ST AGATHA'S

St Agatha's Church Easter Spring Clean

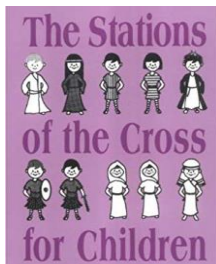
In previous years, when asked, we have been blessed with a great turnout of parishioners to help clear, tidy up and plant in the church grounds. This year we are having a day dedicated to 'Spring Cleaning and Tidying up our Church and Grounds' and we again call on our kind volunteers to help prepare our beautiful church inside and outside for Easter. If you can spare a couple of hours on **Saturday 6th April**, please come along and join us in the Cloister after the morning Mass. 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 assist. Even if you can only spare an hour or two, it will be greatly appreciated! All teenagers will be especially welcome, together with those aged 11 – 13 (accompanied by an adult please) but for safety purposes, sadly, no smaller children. Volunteers who would like to help spruce up the gardens – please kindly bring gardening tools and gloves with you. Refreshments will be available and a soup lunch will be provided after. There is a sheet in the church porch for volunteers to sign up so that we can have refreshments arranged according to numbers expected. Many thanks.

Maundy Thursday and Good Friday Children's Celebrations

All children are welcome to join us at 12pm on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday as we observe both days with child-friendly services. During these hands-on services, children of all ages will walk together through the Last Supper and the Stations of the Cross, learning as they go. On Maundy



Thursday we will need children from year 3 and above and on Good Friday we will need children from year 5 and above, for readings, and actors from year 3 and above to take part in the performance; please sign up at the back of the church or email:



helenmennis@gmail.com or louisacollyerhamlin@yahoo.co.uk

Friday Penance

'The Bishops [of England and Wales] wish to remind us that every Friday is set aside as a special day of penitence, as it is the day of the suffering and death of the Lord. They believe that it is important that all the faithful again be united in a common, identifiable act of Friday penance because they recognise that the virtue of penitence is best acquired as part of a common resolve and common witness. The law of the Church requires Catholics on Fridays to abstain from meat, or some other form of food, or to observe some other form of penance laid down by the Bishops' Conference (Canon 1251). The Bishops decided to re-establish the practice that this penance should be fulfilled simply by abstaining from meat and by uniting this to prayer. Those who cannot or choose not to eat meat as part of their normal diet should abstain from some other food of which they regularly partake'.

The form of penance we chose to adopt each Friday is a matter of personal choice and does not have to take the same form every Friday. Failure to undertake this penance on a particular Friday would not constitute a sin.

'What can I do for Lent?'

'Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving' is the Lenten tradition. We are required to fast by reducing food intake on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, but giving up something (e.g. chocolate or alcohol) is also fasting. Extra prayer during Lent is very important. Other suggestions also include:

- *say some additional prayers each day
- *visit the Blessed Sacrament
- *go to weekday Mass if you can
- *buy a booklet to guide your reflections.
- *make the special effort involved in family prayer.
- *choose one of the Gospels and read it during Lent.
- *study the Sunday readings before coming to Mass
- *read Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation 'GAUDETE ET EXSULTATE'
- *come to the Stations of the Cross
- *receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation
- *Make a special effort to help someone who is poor, sick, old or lonely.
- *Giving to those less fortunate than yourself.

