

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC CHURCH

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4th Sunday of Lent Year A [21st / 22nd Mar 2020]

OUR PARISH RESPONSE TO COVID 19 PANDEMIC

- **The Holy Mass is offered every day at 9.00 am – the congregation will join the Mass in spirit.** As you can't participate in the Mass at this time of pandemic, you can still reach out to our Blessed Lord by making a Spiritual Communion in prayer. [Please use the Spiritual Communion prayer given below.]

Spiritual Communion [Prayer of St Alphonsus]

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in this Holy Sacrament of the altar. I love you above all things and I passionately desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come spiritually into my soul so that I may unite myself wholly to you now and forever. Amen.



- **Video Stream:** Our parish Holy Mass is video streamed and everyone can watch it by clicking the following link: <http://www.holycross-catford.org.uk/livestreaming.php>
- **Church is open after the Mass until 12 noon every day** for anyone who wishes to spend time in prayers with the Lord. This time table will follow everyday including Sundays until further notice. When you are in church aim to keep 2 meters (3 steps) away from vulnerable people (such as the elderly and those with underlying health conditions)



- **Rosary Packs** are available in the parish, containing guidance on how to pray the Rosary and Divine Mercy Chaplet. If you need, or if you know any of any family who would like this Rosary Pack, please contact me.
- **At least Once in Two Days:** kindly adopt a person who is lonely or in need and call them at least once in every two days. If you can, I encourage you to pray the Holy Rosary over the phone with an elderly person who lives on his/her own. If you wish to find a **ROSARY COMPANION**, please give me your contact details
- **To receive information:** Please send us your email addresses to catfordnewsletter@rcaos.org.uk so that we can keep you updated with our parish news. We may also send you prayers and spiritual activities for your families. Convey this message to your friends and family members so that they can also keep themselves updated.
- **Holy Cross Volunteers' Team:** if you are able to give some of your time for the benefit of our community, especially to help the elderly and needy, kindly contact me, Lesley Allen, or the SVP [07835 188411].

Useful Links:

- **To access Holy Mass and prayers** from our Lady of Walsingham Shrine: <https://www.walsingham.org.uk/live-stream/>
- **To access everyday Mass readings** and prayers [from Universalis]: <https://universalis.com/mass.htm>
- **Governments Guidance to contain the pandemic:** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>
- **Lewisham Food Bank:** <https://lewisham.foodbank.org.uk/>

Liturgical Advice given by the Diocese

Baptisms, First Reconciliation, First Holy Communion and Confirmation: celebrations should be deferred until such time that the public health advice is that congregations can gather safely.

Sacrament of Reconciliation: Confession may be offered on request as long as hygiene and social distancing requirements are observed (eg a physical barrier between the penitent and the priest such as a grille and cloth).

Funerals There must be great pastoral sensitivity to this issue. The funeral service should take place at the graveside or at a crematorium, subject to the conditions laid down by the cemetery or crematorium authorities. Arrangements should be made for a Mass to be celebrated *in memoriam* when congregations are allowed to gather.

Archbishop Emeritus Peter Smith RIP: With great sadness the Archdiocese of Southwark must announce that the Funeral Liturgies of the late Archbishop Emeritus Peter Smith, which are due to take place on 29th and 30th March, will no longer be open to the public due to current public health concerns. It is hoped that it will be possible to hold a Mass In Memoriam later this year. Please continue to pray for the repose of the soul of our much loved Archbishop Emeritus: may he rest in peace.



Family, a Domestic Church: Since the Holy Mass cannot be celebrated publicly, please sustain your life of prayer, turning to the Scriptures, the Rosary, to novenas and litanies, using Catholic social media and internet resources to keep connected in the communion of faith. Live-stream celebrations of the Mass and other devotions are available from churches and shrines across the country and around the world. **We encourage every Catholic - individuals, couples and families – to create, if there is not one already present, a simple shrine in their home, with a crucifix and religious images, to provide a focus until that blessed day when we are able to gather in our churches once more.**

A letter from the President and Vice-President on behalf of all the Bishops of the Conference

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In response to the Coronavirus pandemic, so many aspects of our lives must change. This includes the ways in which we publicly express our faith. It is very clear that, following official advice and in order to keep each other safe, save lives and support the NHS, at this time we must not gather for public acts of worship in our churches. This will begin from Friday evening, 20th March 2020, until further notice.

Our churches will remain open. They are not closing. They will be a focal point of prayer, where you will find solace and strength. In visiting our churches at this time, we will observe with great care the practices of hygiene and the guidance on social distancing.

However, the celebration of Mass, Sunday by Sunday and day by day, will take place without a public congregation.

Knowing that the Mass is being celebrated; joining in spiritually in that celebration; watching the live-streaming of the Mass; following its prayers at home; making an act of spiritual communion: this is how we share in the Sacrifice of Christ in these days. These are the ways in which we will sanctify Sunday, and indeed every day.

We want everyone to understand that in these emergency circumstances, and for as long as they last, **the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days is removed.** This is, without doubt, the teaching of the Church (Catechism of the Catholic Church 2181). This pandemic is the 'serious reason' why this obligation does not apply at this time...

The second vital aspect of these challenging times is our care for each other. There are so many ways in which we are to do this: being attentive to the needs of our neighbour, especially the elderly and vulnerable; contributing to our local food banks; volunteering for charitable initiatives and organisations; simply keeping in touch by all the means open to us.

During these disturbing and threatening times, the rhythm of the prayer of the Church will continue. Please play your part in it. The effort of daily kindness and mutual support for all will continue and increase. Please play your part in this too. For your commitment to this, we thank you.

'The Lord is my shepherd, There is nothing I shall want.'



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MASS INTENTIONS

MASS TIME	This Week (21 st – 28 th Mar)	Next Week (29 th Mar – 4 rd Apr)
	<i>Fourth Sunday of Lent</i>	<i>Fifth Sunday of Lent</i>
SUN 22 9.00 am	Myra Hannon - WB	Antione Canjoe Bernard R.I.P.
MON 23 9.00 am	Francesca Candita Simpkins R.I.P.	Mary Monaghan R.I.P.
TUE 24 9.00 am	Brendon Stokes R.I.P.	No Mass Intention Received
WED 25 9.00 am	The Annunciation of the Lord No Mass Intention Received	Len Calver
THU 26 9.00 am	John Van Hill R.I.P.	No Mass Intention Received
FRI 27 9.00 am	Patrick & Evelyn Fletcher R.I.P.	No Mass Intention Received
SAT 28 9.00 am	No Mass Intention Received	Jackie Folkes R.I.P.

This Sunday Readings

First reading: 1 Samuel 16:1,6-7,10-13

David is anointed by Samuel

The Lord said to Samuel, 'Fill your horn with oil and go. I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem, for I have chosen myself a king among his sons.' When Samuel arrived, he caught sight of Eliab and thought, 'Surely the Lord's anointed stands there before him,' but the Lord said to Samuel, 'Take no notice of his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him: God does not see as man sees: man looks at appearances but the Lord looks at the heart.' Jesse presented his seven sons to Samuel, but Samuel said to Jesse, 'The Lord has not chosen these.' He then asked Jesse, 'Are these all the sons you have?' He answered, 'There is still one left, the youngest; he is out looking after the sheep.' Then Samuel said to Jesse, 'Send for him; we will not sit down to eat until he comes.' Jesse had him sent for, a boy of fresh complexion, with fine eyes and pleasant bearing. The Lord said, 'Come, anoint him, for this is the one.' At this, Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him where he stood with his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord seized on David and stayed with him from that day on.

Responsorial Psalm**Psalm 22(23)**

The Lord is my shepherd: there is nothing I shall want.

The Lord is my shepherd;
there is nothing I shall want.

Fresh and green are the pastures
where he gives me repose.

Near restful waters he leads me,
to revive my drooping spirit.

The Lord is my shepherd: there is nothing I shall want.

He guides me along the right path;
he is true to his name.

If I should walk in the valley of darkness
no evil would I fear.

You are there with your crook and your staff;
with these you give me comfort.

The Lord is my shepherd: there is nothing I shall want.

You have prepared a banquet for me
in the sight of my foes.

My head you have anointed with oil;
my cup is overflowing.

The Lord is my shepherd: there is nothing I shall want.

Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me
all the days of my life.

In the Lord's own house shall I dwell
for ever and ever.

The Lord is my shepherd: there is nothing I shall want.

Second reading Ephesians 5:8-14**Anything exposed by the light will turn into light**

You were darkness once, but now you are light in the Lord; be like children of light, for the effects of the light are seen in complete goodness and right living and truth. Try to discover what the Lord wants of you, having nothing to do with the futile works of darkness but exposing them by contrast. The things which are done in secret are things that people are ashamed even to speak of; but anything exposed by the light will be illuminated and anything illuminated turns into light. That is why it is said:

Wake up from your sleep,
rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.

Gospel Acclamation**Jn8:12**

Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God!
I am the light of the world, says the Lord;
whoever follows me will have the light of life.
Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God!

Gospel John 9:1-41**The blind man went off and washed himself, and came away with his sight restored**

As Jesus went along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. His disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, for him to have been born blind?' 'Neither he nor his parents sinned,' Jesus answered 'he was born blind so that the works of God might be displayed in him.'

'As long as the day lasts
I must carry out the work of the one who sent me;

the night will soon be here when no one can work.

As long as I am in the world

I am the light of the world.'

Having said this, he spat on the ground, made a paste with the spittle, put this over the eyes of the blind man, and said to him, 'Go and wash in the Pool of Siloam' (a name that means 'sent'). So the blind man went off and washed himself, and came away with his sight restored.

His neighbours and people who earlier had seen him begging said, 'Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?' Some said, 'Yes, it is the same one.' Others said, 'No, he only looks like him.' The man himself said, 'I am the man.' So they said to him, 'Then how do your eyes come to be open?' 'The man called Jesus' he answered 'made a paste, daubed my eyes with it and said to me, "Go and wash at Siloam"; so I went, and when I washed I could see.' They asked, 'Where is he?' 'I don't know' he answered.

They brought the man who had been blind to the Pharisees. It had been a sabbath day when Jesus made the paste and opened the man's eyes, so when the Pharisees asked him how he had come to see, he said, 'He put a paste on my eyes, and I washed, and I can see.' Then some of the Pharisees said, 'This man cannot be from God: he does not keep the sabbath.' Others said, 'How could a sinner produce signs like this?' And there was disagreement among them. So they spoke to the blind man again, 'What have you to say about him yourself, now that he has opened your eyes?' 'He is a prophet' replied the man. However, the Jews would not believe that the man had been blind and had gained his sight, without first sending for his parents and asking them, 'Is this man really your son who you say was born blind? If so, how is it that he is now able to see?' His parents answered, 'We know he is our son and we know he was born blind, but we do not know how it is that he can see now, or who opened his eyes. He is old enough: let him speak for himself.' His parents spoke like this out of fear of the Jews, who had already agreed to expel from the synagogue anyone who should acknowledge Jesus as the Christ. This was why his parents said, 'He is old enough; ask him.'

So the Jews again sent for the man and said to him, 'Give glory to God! For our part, we know that this man is a sinner.' The man answered, 'I don't know if he is a sinner; I only know that I was blind and now I can see.' They said to him, 'What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?' He replied, 'I have told you once and you wouldn't listen. Why do you want to hear it all again? Do you want to become his disciples too?' At this they hurled abuse at him: 'You can be his disciple,' they said 'we are disciples of Moses: we know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.' The man replied, 'Now here is an astonishing thing! He has opened my eyes, and you don't know where he comes from! We know that God doesn't listen to sinners, but God does listen to men who are devout and do his will. Ever since the world began it is unheard of for anyone to open the eyes of a man who was born blind; if this man were not from God, he couldn't do a thing.' 'Are you trying to teach us,' they replied 'and you a sinner through and through, since you were born!' And they drove him away.

Jesus heard they had driven him away, and when he found him he said to him, 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?' 'Sir,' the man replied 'tell me who he is so that I may believe in him.' Jesus said, 'You are looking at him; he is speaking to you.' The man said, 'Lord, I believe', and worshipped him.

Jesus said:

'It is for judgement
that I have come into this world,
so that those without sight may see
and those with sight turn blind.'

Hearing this, some Pharisees who were present said to him, 'We are not blind, surely?' Jesus replied: 'Blind? If you were,
you would not be guilty,
but since you say, "We see,"
your guilt remains.'
