

THE BLESSED SACRAMENT CATHOLIC CHURCH

Copenhagen Street

Clergy: Mgr. Séamus O'Boyle (Parish Priest) Fr Allan Alvarado Gil
Fr Larry Milby (retired, in residence)

Pastoral Assistant: Sister Miriam Bruder SSND (home: 020 7837 8378)

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Parish Office opening times: Tuesday-Friday 10.00am -2.00pm



THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

24th March 2019

The Gardener, the Fig Tree and the Promise

When people die, especially in tragic or premature circumstances, we are left with a sense of injustice. There are some who will question what kind of God we have who can allow such unfairness. But the bottom line is that life simply isn't metered out to us in equal proportions. Death simply happens. There is no intent behind a natural disaster, and because there is no intent there can certainly be no injustice. In biblical days people imagined that fatal disasters and terminal illnesses were sent as some kind of punishment from God. Had the victims brought about their own fate by living sinful lives? What will Jesus' answer be? No, of course untimely death is not sent as a punishment! But whilst we are pondering the fragility of our lives, Jesus reminds us that any one of us could die in similar circumstances. We only have to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. None of us can bank on living to a ripe old age, and so we must consider how well we are prepared to live and how well we are prepared to die.

At first, today's reading feels uncomfortable. The parable of the fig tree reads like a threat. The tree is not bearing any fruit and so the master commands that it should be axed. A compassionate gardener begs that the tree be given a second chance, and so the master grants another year. It feels like a threat... bear fruit or else! But Jesus knows that threats don't bring out the best in us. Like the gardener who tends the tree and nurtures it, so Jesus is there for all who need a second chance. For those of us who make a commitment to live life in a better way, Jesus is there to support and guide us towards our goals. The parable has moved from something that sounds like a threat to something that sounds like a promise.... something inspirational!

Lent is a time to address some begging questions. How many years have we spent making the same old mistakes? What must we do to make life different? It sounds obvious, but to achieve different results, we must do something different. We are invited to ask God for help in setting new priorities, and we must achieve results that reflect God's love for us, and our love for God.

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PLANNED GIVING ENVELOPES: please collect your new box of envelopes from the back of the Church, and please do not use them until Sunday 7th April. If you Gift Aid your donation, would you please complete one of the forms to help update our records. Many thanks.

LENTEN ALMS: Our Lenten Alms this year will go to the Cardinal's Lenten Appeal, which has a special focus on the food poverty affecting people in every part of the Diocese, much of it hidden. Funds will support foodbanks, schools and other initiatives to relieve poverty, helping people back on their feet and able to live independently. Please take a donation leaflet with you today. You can bring your alms any Sunday before Easter. You can pick up a flier about this as well.

LENT AND GROWING IN FAITH: Tuesday, 26th March, 7:00 – 8:15. "Lord, teach us to pray." (Luke 11:1) Come along to consider and experience various ways of praying

FRIDAYS IN LENT: Mass and Stations of the Cross on Fridays at 7:00 p.m. Opportunity for Confession following Stations.

PREPARATION FOR CONFIRMATION: The next class is on Monday 1st April, in the Crypt at St John's from 6.45pm – 8.00pm. Please make every effort to be there on time!

FIRST COMMUNION PROGRAMME: Next Children's class, Sunday 28th April, 9:45; next Parents' Meeting, Thursday, 2nd May, 7:00 p.m.

VOLUNTEERING HERE: The teams that do regular **cleaning** in church could use more help. Interested? Let Zeny Sagun or Sister Miriam know.

The **foodbank** is always grateful for your help. If you are interested in helping with the general running of the foodbank when open alternate Thursdays, please talk to Attracta (8:30 Mass) or Sister Miriam (11:00 Mass) This could be helping set up from 11:00 a.m. and clearing up at the end and /or assisting with registration, administering food distribution, serving refreshments between 1:00 and 3:30.

LAST SUNDAY'S OFFERTORY COLLECTION: Envelopes: £212.66 loose cash: £277.92

Thank you for your generosity

REQUESTS FOR PRAYERS:

Please remember to pray for Douglas Goodbody who died recently, and for all those whose anniversaries are about this time. May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

HEALING FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK: especially Liam Buckley, Doreen Clayton, Tom Hunt, Sophia O'Donnell, Monica Smith (O'Leary), Cassie Robinson, Tessa Charlton, Michael Hehir, Emmanuel Tala, Mary Wallace, Nina & Jocelyn Hillgarth, Filomena Barbo, Colin Harris, Nora Moran, Maria Carrano, May Cullen., Gordana Tancevska, Irene Bryan, Phuong Quach, Albert Boateng, Anne & Thomas Griffin, Freddie Mudd, Margaret Cross, Catherine Barnes, Hazel Hoyte, Angela Neary, Irene Cullen, Gerry Twomey, Barbara Johnson, Josephine Onwuka, Pauline Timlin, Kevin Corcoran, Patrick McShane, Margaret Walsh, Russell Reyes, Florence S Philip, Amidu (Blessing) Yamba, Evelyn Corcoran, Gerry Corcoran, Eamon Hanahoe, Mary Paditey, Kieran Vos, Bridget Ryan, Barbara Baggs.

MASSES THIS WEEK:			
DATE	FEAST DAYS	TIME	INTENTION
Sunday 24 th March	THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT <i>(Parish Mass Book p.160)</i>	8.30am	All our Parishioners
		11.00am	Intentions of Mr & Mrs Shaikh
Monday 25 th March	Lent feria	10.30am	Private Intention
Tuesday 26 th March	Lent feria	10.30am	Intentions of Bl. Sacrament School
Weds. 27 th March	Lent feria	10.30am	Private Intention
Friday 29 th March	Lent feria	<u>7.00pm</u>	Private Intention
Saturday 30 th March	Lent feria	10.30am	Private Intention
Sunday 31 st March	FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT <i>(Parish Mass Book p.168)</i>	8.30am	Private Intention
		11.00am	All our Parishioners

Weekday Masses: Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday 10.30am

Weekend Masses: Saturday 10.30am, Sunday 8.30am & 11.00am

Confessions: Sunday 8am-8.20am: 10.30am – 10.50am

Weekday Mass at St John the Evangelist Monday - Friday at 10.00am – All welcome

Confessions at St John's on Saturday 10.30-11.15am and 5.15-5.45pm

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A Parish of the Westminster Roman Catholic Diocese Trustee, Charity no. 233699