

COVID PRECAUTIONS: From Thursday 27th it will no longer be mandatory to wear face coverings inside public places and public transport. **HOWEVER**, it remains the recommendation of the bishops that we should continue to wear face coverings in church for the well-being of the greatest number of the faithful. Please do respect this.

The high level of Covid infections still taking its toll around us makes parish life still very awkward - but we carry on with basic good sense precautions to make our buildings accessible to as many as possible. Please do take on board the regular appeals for more volunteer welcomers and cleaners - this is a simple way to help make things work well, and will help build up the parish for the future.

NEW GUIDELINES ON COVID PRECAUTIONS: The bishops have sent new guidelines, and as a result you will see a few “returns to normal” in church. Holy Water is once more available at the door of church. Books and papers can now be used again. All steps in the right direction...

“THE GOD WHO SPEAKS” SCRIPTURE FESTIVAL: 3-5 February at St Albans Cathedral. All are invited to join pilgrims for a one time only Scripture Festival at the beautiful St Albans Cathedral. There will be a wide variety of activities and ways to explore and experience The God who Speaks. Open 10am-4pm Thursday and Friday and 10am-3.30pm on Saturday. For info visit rcdow.org.uk/scripturefestival

Also Saturday 5 Feb at 11am BEHOLD THE WORD performance. Come and watch Steve Murray-Hanson from Behold Ministry bring familiar parables and scripture narratives to life through mime. Free but booking recommended.

Rcdow.org.uk/scripturefestival/whats-on

SYNODAL PATHWAY: We still hope to provide a practical opportunity for us all to participate in the listening stage of the Synod process that Pope Francis has begun. Perhaps when the covid infection rate starts to recede and our new assistant priest arrives this will be more easy to enable. Keep it in your prayers.

THANKS FROM “AID TO THE CHURCH IN NEED”: Thanks to your wonderful and generous compassion, more than 330 projects across 76 countries were paid out in 2021 by the UK office of Aid to the Church in Need – one of the best years on record and achieved in spite of the COVID pandemic. Projects supported by Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) included urgent medical support for Syrian Christian refugee families in Lebanon, subsistence aid for priests, Sisters and catechists ministering in Sudan’s Nuba Mountains, and a Church-backed campaign providing emergency COVID-19 help for the poor in Delhi’s slums.

Neville Kyrke-Smith, national director ACN (UK), said: “Given the immense challenges our brothers and sisters faced in so many countries last year, I am once again humbled by our benefactors’ love in response to their suffering.

Mr Kyrke-Smith stressed that ACN (UK) had not forgotten long-term priorities, and was still helping Christians in the Middle East suffering from regional conflicts and targeted attacks from extremist groups. Syrian refugees who fled to Zahlé, east Lebanon, received ongoing support including food packages, hygiene kits, rent assistance, fuel, and medical needs.

The UN does not provide these Christian families with any assistance – all international aid is channelled via the Muslim-majority unofficial camps where Christians are afraid to live.

Other support provided by the UK office during 2021 included support for seminarians – particularly in Africa, Eastern Europe and the subcontinent, reconstruction of churches across the globe, such as St Joseph’s, Kragujevac, Serbia, and rent support for struggling families including in the Syrian capital Damascus, as well as Mass stipends to support poor priests. Learn more about Aid to the Church in Need at acnuk.org.

GOOD COUNSEL NETWORK SEND NEW YEAR GREETINGS: With thanks for your support by prayer and financial donation, GCN write as follows: “I write at the end of another difficult year. A second year dominated by Covid 19 and the restrictions imposed on life to reduce its spread. And also a year which – for pro-lifers – was dominated both by more and more attempts in Parliament to loosen abortion laws and expand euthanasia and the “pills by post” method of abortion. These home abortions mean that abortion vulnerable women have suddenly become far more difficult to reach, to offer help to and that abortion has become even quicker, allowing less time for counselling or even for calm thought and decision making. This is something the abortion industry have claimed as a great victory – more women having more

abortions, quicker and more cheaply (cheaper for the abortion provider, not for the “purchaser” which is usually the NHS) in their own home. Statistics tell a different story, showing women receiving the pills with no checks on who will actually take the pill, or on any of the medical facts (is she right about how far along in the pregnancy she is? Has she got health issues or mental health issues she isn’t telling about?) and whether the woman is being abused or pressured. They also show that thousands of women have needed hospital treatment following their Pills by Post abortion. Furthermore, the Pills by Post scheme, coupled with buffer zones at the busiest abortion centres here in London, have vastly reduced the number of women we can reach. The number of babies whose Mothers we have been able to support were down last year, and in response to these challenges we are developing new outreaches to reach and support Mothers at risk of abortion. We will monitor which approaches are most successful over the next few months and develop new services to meet the current challenges we face.”

CHARITY GALA IRISH CONCERT: In Aid of the British Heart Foundation and the Michael Sobell Hospice. Salvatorian College 26th February. Featuring John McNicholl; Terrance O’Flaherty and the London Irish Youth Orchestra. Poster in St Gabriel’s.

CHORISTER OPPORTUNITIES AT WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL CHOIR SCHOOL: Open to boys with musical potential in years 2 & 3. Becoming a chorister offers boys the chance to sing at the Cathedral and on tour internationally. Boys also receive an outstanding education. Interested parents should contact Director of Admissions, Ms Lucy Auger Westminster Cathedral Choir school, Ambrosden Avenue SW1P 1QH. Tel: 020 7798 9081. Email office@choirschool.com web: www.choirschool.com

WESTMINSTER DIOCESAN LOURDES PILGRIMAGE 22-29 JULY: The Diocesan Pilgrimage Office writes to us as follows:

Plans for Westminster Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes from 22nd to 29th July 2022 are well under way! The Grotto has in fact been open since spring 2020 and awaits the return of international groups of faithful pilgrims and rest assured, Our Lady is abundant in patience.

In ongoing planning for this, the first Westminster Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes since the Coronavirus pandemic began, it is important to know who intends to travel with Westminster Diocese and in what capacity. For this reason, an Expression of Interest Form is available in paper copy (attached) or online for completion. Please remember to tick 'Yes' or 'No', and to read and sign the Privacy Statement before returning the form, and note, the completion of the Expression of Interest Form does not constitute a commitment to make a booking.

An online link can be found via: <https://forms.rcdow.org.uk/lourdes-pilgrimage-2022-expression-of-interest/> on the Westminster Diocese Pilgrimages webpage.

It goes without saying that, given the fraught difficulties that independent travel might unexpectedly incur, it is suggested, and by some, even recommended under the current climate, that all Westminster participants opt to travel together as one body of pilgrims to Lourdes, possibly with the same travel operator and, moreover, that every traveller possess the appropriate travel insurance product e.g. with Tangney Tours (01732 88 6666). This type of policy offers cover for the potential eventualities which may occur with travelling abroad, and more especially if a Covid-19 related medical incident or other were to occur.

[NB: If you are a registered practising Doctor or Nurse please make this known on your form and also on your booking form should you choose to travel with the Diocese of Westminster on Pilgrimage.]

The organisers of the Westminster Pilgrimage to Lourdes would very much appreciate it if you could kindly complete the Expression of Interest Form – either online or by paper copy – and return it as soon as you can.

MASS FOR WORLD DAY OF THE SICK - PROVISIONAL ARRANGEMENTS: The annual Mass for the World Day of the Sick will take place at 2pm on Saturday 12th February 2022 at Westminster Cathedral. We are hopeful that the Mass will go ahead as planned and that we’ll be able to welcome all those who wish to attend in person. However, at the time of writing, it is unclear whether this will be possible. Thus, plans are provisional at this stage.

Parishioners planning to attend with wheelchairs should alert the parish office so that the cathedral can make necessary arrangements.

ROOMS TO LET - OLDFIELD CIRCUS: Double bedroom available at £525 pcm. Single bedroom available at £350 pcm. Rent includes bills and WIFI. Females only – Suitable for single professionals, non-smoker. Beautifully presented furnished rooms in a newly refurbished 3-bedroom house in Oldfield Circus – Northolt. House includes a large modern kitchen, two bathrooms, driveway, patio/garden and use of dining room. Close to shops. 10-minute walk or short bus ride to both Greenford and Northolt stations. Contact Veronica: 075 073 12015.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES AT SRRCC: SRRCC are looking for outstanding practitioners who can to join them from September 2022 to deliver high-quality lessons to ensure great learning. Salary negotiable dependent upon calibre and experience. Current teaching vacancies: Subject Leader of Physics (closing date 6th February) and Teacher of English (closing date 4th February). They are also looking for an Assistant Site Manager (closing date Friday 28th January). For more details visit the website: <https://www.strichardreynolds.org.uk/our-college/vacancies>

JOB OPPORTUNITIES AT SACRED HEART HIGH SCHOOL, HAMMERSMITH: Sacred Heart are looking to appoint an experienced Administrative Assistant for our busy Student Services Centre. The closing date is noon 7th February. Please see TES for further information. [Administrative Assistant, London - Tes Jobs](#)

ST MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC GRAMMAR SCHOOL - Applications for Sixth Form Entry in September 2022 open until 28 February. If you are interested in applying for a Sixth Form place at St Michael's please take a look at the virtual open evening on our <https://www.st-michaels.barnet.sch.uk/new-sixth-form-page/virtual-sixth-form-open-evening/> Applications can be made online through the Apply NOW button.



Support our parish.

You can make a donation to the parish by scanning the QR code or making a card payment on the card machine at the entrance of both of our churches.