

Church of St John the Evangelist, Islington

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Parish priest: Fr Rajiv Michael, **Asst Priest:** Fr Jakub Jozsko, **Administrator (Mon/Thu/Fri):** Grace Wu

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First Sunday of Lent (Year C – 9th March 2025)

This Week		
Weekday Masses, Devotions, talks	Sunday Masses	Confessions
Mon, Tue 10am Mass followed by Adoration then the church will close	Saturday Vigil 6pm Sunday 10am, 12 noon, 6.30pm	Saturday 5:30 - 5:50pm (and anytime, as possible, on request)
Wed 11am Funeral Mass		
Thu 10am Mass + Lenten talk		
Fri 10am Mass + Stations		

As Lent begins, the church calls us back to the three great pillars of the Christian life: prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Especially in the West, we have a tendency to spiritualise things, but *doing* things is necessary because how we act in the body affects our souls. *Prayer.* Teresa of Avila, the great teacher on prayer, compared prayer to breathing. She described prayer as ‘an intimate sharing between friends’ and taking time ‘frequently to be alone with Him who loves me’. The soul which gives up on prayer, simply dies. Come to Mass regularly. *Pray. Fasting.* The gospels take for granted that fasting is a regular aspect of the Christian life. Jesus said *when*, not *if* you fast (Mt 6:16). Some demons come out only when fasting is added to prayer (Mk 9:29). Fasting is not dieting. The motive changes everything. Sometimes, we can feel hopeless about overcoming some long-held vices and addictions. Fast and pray, and you will find victory. *Almsgiving.* The value Scripture places on almsgiving (giving money, especially to the poor) might be surprising. Almsgiving delivers from death (Tob 12:8-9), atones for sins (Sir 3:30) and without it, prayer and fasting can be hindered (Isa 58:6-7). Prayer unites one’s spirit to God and fasting disciplines the chaotic body, but almsgiving pulls us out of our own world to face the needs of our neighbour. All this doing, however, is meant to transform our hearts. This is something only the Holy Spirit can do, but we can be sure as we take up our Lenten battle, he is there with us, just as he fought with Jesus in the wilderness. And may you find God’s immense blessings (Isa 58:8-11), this Lent.

News & Events

New Website Mass times, Lent events and newsletters are all up on our brand-new website. Do take a look and if you have any suggestions, please share it with us. Thank you. <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/islington/>

Church closed for 2 days After 11am, the church will be closed on **Monday 10th March** and **Tuesday 11th** for a recording. We apologise for any inconvenience caused.

Lent Talks and Devotions We’ve begun a series of talks on the gospel of John. These will be each Thursday, after mass at 10 AM, for about 20 mins, from 10:30 AM. These will be given by Fr John Hemer, who lectures in Scripture at the Seminary. The next talk is on **March 13th**. Some people found the first talk a bit technical – but if you’ve got that out of the way, the next ones will be more accessible. It’s a great opportunity to go deeper into Scripture with perhaps the most puzzling while beautiful of the gospels – that of St John the Evangelist. We also have the **Stations of the Cross** every **Friday after the 10am Mass** during Lent. There are more events on the website, some based at Blessed Sacrament Church, so do take a look.

SVP are coming to talk The Society of St Vincent de Paul are one of the many groups in the Church, who have over decades done incredibly good and inspiring outreach work in parishes across the world. We are really happy to invite them to our parish, with the hope of setting up our own group here. They provide practical

support to those living in poverty and help in practical ways for members of a parish, whatever it might be. They'll be coming to chat about their work after Sunday Masses **March 29th and 30th**. It would be great if people would like to volunteer with them. Especially over Lent, it's a great opportunity to grow in your faith by serving your neighbour with the SVP. An information evening will give more info on this later.

Requiescat in pace At St John's, the funeral for **Patricia Rose McGonigle** will be celebrated on Wednesday 12th March at 11am; **Wieslawa Marie Zygodllo** is on Monday 17th March 2025 at 12 noon. There will be no 10am Mass or adoration on that day.

Mary's Meals would like to say a big thank you for your attention last Sunday and for taking the foreign currency envelopes. All you need to do now is to fill the envelope (or any suitable carrier) with foreign currency – it can be currency in or out of circulation. You can drop it through the Presbytery (the house to the left of the church) letterbox. Your generous donations last weekend (in sterling) reached just over £800. The charity is very grateful.



Donation for Missals Thank you to those of you that have donated so far. If you would still like to make a donation to help cover this cost, it would be gratefully received. Our new missals cost us over £2500. You could also dedicate one of the altar missals towards a loved one; if you wish to do so, please contact the parish office. In the meantime, please take home the old missals, laid out outside – they can be a great way of praying with scripture this Lent.

Been to the Vue? Vue Cinema is showing a rare **Bonhoeffer** right now but not for long. Dietrich Bonhoeffer was a Lutheran pastor and a martyr for the faith in Nazi Germany. He was one of the few church leaders to stand up to Hitler and lost his life as a result. His story is truly inspiring. Take this opportunity to watch a true-event inspired historical drama and be inspired!

Westminster Cathedral Choir will perform Bach's retelling of St John Passion **Tuesday 18th March 2025 at 7.30pm** at Westminster Cathedral. It is a wonderful event to go to, in Lent- tickets are available now from <https://www.ticketmaster.co.uk/westminster-cathedral-tickets-london/venue/254582>

Do you know what a Jumbulance is? A Jumbulance is a medically adapted coach that's accessible for wheelchairs and stretcher beds making travel easier for those that may require specialist equipment or support to get away. The Jumbulance Trust is running a pilgrimage to Lourdes from **Friday 18 to Friday 25 April**. If you're interested in a place as a carer or a person with a disability then please visit this web page <https://www.jumbulance.org.uk/uk-destinations> or telephone Laura Owens on 074 8341 4330.

A walking pilgrimage that starts at your doorstep (nearly) The Westminster Way is a gentle walk of about 5 miles from Tower Hill to the Cathedral, passing through Moorfields, Charterhouse, Ely Place, Maiden Lane and Westminster. Just start when it suits you and you can break it up into stages too so great for all generations and people with disabilities. There are excellent guides to the route, highlights and suggested prayers here <https://rcdow.org.uk/jubilee-2025/westminster-way/>

Westminster Justice and Peace Pilgrimage – If you'd like to join this group for the Westminster Way pilgrimage then they'll warmly welcome you. They'll be setting out on Thursday 29th May 2025 from 11am to 4pm. They'll be starting at the RC Church of the English Martyrs, 30 Prescott St, London, E1 8BB

Jubilee Year Indulgences The Diocese of Westminster has produced a guide on how to obtain the plenary indulgence for the Jubilee Year, without the need to travel to Rome or other pilgrimage centres around the world. The guide is available as <https://rcdow.org.uk/jubilee-2025/the-jubilee-indulgence-step-by-step/>

National Pilgrimage of Hope A more ambitious National Jubilee Pilgrimage of Hope takes four routes to Nottingham, which all arrive at St Barnabas Cathedral on **13th September**. You can join the pilgrimage for a day of walking if time strapped. The southern route (St John) will pass through this diocese. Please see its website above for further information at <https://www.pilgrimways.org.uk/national-pilgrims-of-hope-walking-pilgrimage>