



CATHOLIC CHURCH OF OUR LADY, ST JOHN'S WOOD



+ 5th Sunday of Lent, Year A - 26 March 2023

Westminster Roman Catholic Diocesan Trust: Registered Charity Number 233699

Come Out, Come Out, Wherever You Are

Three years ago last Sunday the church was open only for private prayer and I had to ask you to leave so that I could celebrate and stream the Mass. By this, the fifth Sunday of Lent, when I veiled the statues, the church was closed since the lockdown was in full swing. While the veiling of statues is designed to highlight that this time of year is different and important, to help us focus on the words of the liturgy, and to create a sense of anticipation of the joy of Easter, three years ago the fact that you were all hidden really brought home to me how you, the people, are one of the joys of a parish. And for you, as so many said during the Synodal conversations, not having access to the Lord truly present in the Eucharist veiled Him from your senses. Thus it was a wonderful day when you and the Lord were face-to-face once more. And that wouldn't have been possible without all those who volunteered to clean the church each day and to steward at Mass for so many months. But where has that great volunteer spirit gone? I say that because the only "easier" things in lockdown were First Holy Communion and Confirmation classes because for all the drawbacks of being online, there were no safeguarding issues to address. But now that we are meeting in person with our children and young people, the ratios of candidates to catechists (seven to one) must be followed. And therein lies the difficulty—apart from the parish team, we have five catechists out of nearly 1000 parishioners, a feeble one in 200 people, which is, by law, simply not enough to prepare all those who wish to celebrate these Sacraments in this, their own parish. Yes, Fr Ben and I have asked people to help with eleven Communion classes or nine Confirmation sessions a year, but with little success. Hence next year will see just 21 first come, first served places for each Sacrament. Any further children will be turned away. And when that happens, the first death-knell of your parish's future will have tolled. We can say Mass, hear Confessions, visit the sick, manage the buildings and finances, but by law we cannot catechise without more adults present. So I beg you, gaze upon those veiled statues and ask, is your vocation to be the first and best teachers of our children hidden too? If it is, please be a gift to our children by uniting with those saints and unveiling your noble and generous hearts to us at Easter. *Fr Kevin*

Mass Times

Sunday

6:00pm (Saturday)
9:00am, 10:30am, 12:00 noon,
6:00pm

Weekdays

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday:
10:00am
Thursday: 7:00pm
Friday & Saturday: 10:00am

Rosary

After weekday Mass

Exposition & Confessions

Saturday 10:30am—11:00am

Confessions

Saturday 5:15pm—5:45pm

Stations of the Cross

Thursday 7:30pm

Music for Sunday

Missa Come fuggir (Hassler)
Fremuit spiritus Jesus (Clemens
non Papa)
207 At the name of Jesus
139 Glory be to Jesus
214 Father, hear the prayer we
offer

Sunday Readings, page 170

Ezekiel 37:12-14
Psalm 129 R. v 7
Romans 8:8-11
John 11:1-45

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020 7286 3214 <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/stjohnswood/>

Facebook: Our Lady's RC Church, St John's Wood <https://www.facebook.com/ourladysjw>

Parish Clergy:	Fr Kevin Jordan (kevinjordan@rcdow.org.uk) Fr Ben Woodley (benwoodley@rcdow.org.uk)
Parish Sister:	Sr Brigid Collins, RSM (brigid@rcdow.org.uk)
Parish Administrator:	Claudia McHugh (stjohnswood@rcdow.org.uk)
Director of Music:	Martin Toyer (martintoyer@rcdow.org.uk)

A Leaflet with the times of all Masses and Confessions for the remainder of Lent and Easter week is available to take home with you today. Please give them out to people who might be thinking of coming to our parish over Easter.

Easter Offering. This week you can take home an Easter offertory envelope. This is your Easter gift to the parish which can be given in at any time during Holy week and the Easter season. Thank you for your kindness, thoughtfulness and generosity throughout the year and especially in these difficult times.

Tea & Coffee is available today in the parish hall after the 9:00am Mass. We will then have a break and look forward to welcoming you back on 23 April. We are looking for volunteers to set up before mass and serve refreshments after, approx. every 2 to 3 weeks, please contact Claudia in the office.

Confirmation Programme The last session is on Sunday 26 March 2023 from 4:00pm—5:30pm in the parish hall.

English Classes/Parent and Toddler Group/Over 50's/Creative Writing: no sessions from 3 to 14 April. English classes resume on Monday 17 April; Parents & Toddlers and Over 50's on Tuesday 18 April. Creative Writing resumes on Thursday 20 April.

First Holy Communion Programme The last session is on Saturday 22 April 2023 from 12:00pm—1:00pm in the parish hall.

Volunteers for Church cleaning If you can help one evening every 5 weeks, please contact Claudia in the office.

New linen rota for April to November 2023 available on our website.

Electronic Giving. Please see our AFR in the porch and above all, *Gift Aid* using the *Collectins* by following the prompts to register your card or 'phone on the machine or scan the QR code and register it at home. Standing orders are the easiest way to give regularly and can be set up via <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/stjohnswood/donating-to-the-parish/>. Thank you.

Planned Giving Envelopes are available for collection at the back of the Church after all Masses this weekend. If you would like to give regularly by standing order or learn about other ways of giving or use weekly offertory envelopes, please see the member of the Finance Committee who is distributing the envelopes.

The Cistercian Nuns of Holy Cross Abbey, Whitland, Pembrokeshire, are inviting single Catholic Women between the ages of 25 and 45 who are discerning a vocation to experience their monastic life during one of three weekends: Friday 28 April—Monday 1 May; Friday 11 August—Monday 14 August or Friday 20 October—Monday 23 October 2023. www.hcawhitland.co.uk; to register contact comeandseehca@gmail.com.

Vocations Evening On Wednesday 17 May 2023, there will be an Open Evening at St James, Spanish Place, for any men interested in learning about or discerning a vocation to the priesthood. The regular evening Mass at 6:00pm will be followed by a gathering in the social centre for a short presentation, informal conversations and refreshments. Do come and join us if you can. Nearest tube: Bond Street and Baker Street.

Social Media. Do visit <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/stjohnswood/>, and Our Lady's RC Church, St John's Wood *Facebook* page which is regularly updated.

Thank you to those who have suggested topics for our adult catechesis sessions beginning in May. More ideas are most welcome. As a taster, you might follow Fr Mike Schmitz's *Catechism in a Year* podcasts <https://www.youtube.com/@TheCatechismInAYear> or <https://hallow.com/>.

Day	Location	Time	Group
Monday	Upper & Lower Hall	10:00am-12 noon	English Class
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday	Upper Hall	9:30am-11:30am	Parents & Toddlers
Tuesday	Upper Hall	1:00pm-4:30pm	Over 50's
Wednesday	Upper Hall	1:00pm-2:00pm	Art Class
Thursday	Lower Hall	10:30am-12 noon	Creative Writing