



Newsletter

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT
17TH / 18TH FEBRUARY 2024

Catholic Church of St Mary Magdalen

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Parish Priest: Fr Ben Woodley

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Secretary: Ursula Campbell ~ 9-12am, Mon, Tues, Wed & Fri

PLEASE REMEMBER TO TURN OFF YOUR MOBILE PHONE DURING MASS, THANK YOU

Mass times

Saturday: 6.00pm,
Sunday: 9.00am,
11.00am,
1.30pm (in Polish),
4.00pm (in Polish)

Weekdays:

Mass Mon – Thurs
& Sat 9.30am
Fri 12.30pm

Rosary: after weekday &
Sat 9.30am Masses



Live streaming access online:-

Mass Book Page No 152

<https://www.churchservices.tv/whetstone>

& click on the play button.

We are now in the holy season of Lent.

Learning from the wise counsel of Saint Benedict, Co-patron of Europe and the father of monks and nuns in the West, c.480 - c.547, choose for yourself a Lenten book. This is a book which you will especially prioritise during the holy season. The *Imitation of Christ* by Thomas à Kempis is indeed a deeply cherished example. Pray about your choice. Where is the Holy Spirit leading you in your spiritual and intellectual pilgrimage through this Lent? All our choices need to have the day when we will finally meet the Lord face to face as our daily guiding

compass, when we will meet He Who is the eternal Truth, Who suffered, died, and rose in the unapproachable tenderness of divine mercy for each of us.

On Ash Wednesday, from the Gospel of Saint Matthew, Jesus teaches that it is not a matter of if we fast, if we give alms, or if we pray; but, rather, when we fast, when we give alms, and when we pray. These divinely taught holy practices are there to help us actually see the need to break, to rend worldly, self-sufficient, arrogant hearts (Joel 2:12) that we may be healed, recreated by grace from heaven, from, "the Father of all light, with him there is no such thing as alteration, no shadow of a change" (James 1:17). Jesus, in the Gospel for Ash Wednesday, stresses that it is not how things look, how they sound, it is not the state of the external garment which concerns Him, rather it is the inner garment of our hearts, of our souls which is the focus, the relentless goal of His mission. If we are living lives which place anything above the call and teachings of the eternal Lord, are we out of our minds, do we need to come to our senses (Lk 15:17)?

This First Sunday of Lent continues with the Lord's unchanging will to transform the inner garment of our souls, our hearts. Jesus commands, "repent, and believe the Good News", there it is, the command from heaven. The foundational road for our souls and bodies to putting on the garment of salvation, of imperishability, is Baptism. Baptism features high in the readings for this Sunday, with Saint Peter referring to the flood of Noah as a type of baptism. The flood demonstrates the power of the Lord to destroy sin, for the human family had turned so far from the Lord, hearts were stone (Ezekiel 36:26), but the flood water also purified the land, and it allowed Noah and his new Eden to be saved, as they were held by the waters in the wood (reminding us of the wood of the Cross) of the boat.

Baptism is thus the eternally defining moment when the human person receives the purifying power of the Lord to destroy sin – the stain of the Original Sin and personal sin – and then receives the actual sinless and glorious life of heaven. The human person will be clothed in the garment of holiness, in the garment of righteousness. This is only possible through Jesus dying for our sins, and rising to justify us. The Holy Spirit brings Jesus' path, Jesus' victory. As Lent is upon us, may we, dear friends in the Lord of Light, look to the internal garment of our hearts, of our souls, and repent - His joy awaits us. To be baptised and not to come to Holy Mass, is a turning away from the Lord, is a choosing the world over the Lord; it denies our continual need for His teaching, His grace, His heavenly Food for the journey. Repent!

Fr Ben

Pre-Lent Carnival 2024 took place last Saturday evening. A big thank you to all who supported this event by attending, organising the food, bar, and entertainment. There was a wonderful crowd of children and young people, great fun and a sense that it was truly good to be together. A grateful start to Lent.

We are repeating **Frugal Lunches** after the 12.30pm Mass each Friday during Lent. They were popular last Lent.

Stations of the Cross

During Lent, the Stations of the Cross will be celebrated on Saturday evenings at 5.00pm prior to 6.00pm Mass, instead of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Also, on Thursdays at 6.30pm. Everyone is encouraged to take part in this most holy remembrance of Our Lord's Passion.

The Journey Towards the Synod of Bishops in October 2024

In preparation for the meeting of Bishops in Rome, this October, our Bishops have asked us to have two meetings during the month of February to reflect upon mission within the parish. Our thoughts will be given to the Dean, who, in turn, will bring the whole Deanery's reflections to our Bishops. The next meeting will be in the parish hall on **Monday 26th February** from 7 – 8pm. Thank you.

CAFOD Family Fast Day falls on **Friday 23rd February** with a collection after the Masses this Sunday 17/18 & 24/25 February. This Lent, your donations to CAFOD's Family Fast Day appeal will help hardworking people like James the fisherman in Liberia with resources, tools and training to feed their families for good. Give today using the envelope or online at cafod.org.uk and please join us in praying with James that our sisters and brothers around the world have what they need to feed their families.

CAFOD Israeli-Palestinian Crisis Appeal

Donate to CAFOD's Israeli-Palestinian Crisis Appeal at cafod.org.uk/ipc or call 0303 303 3030 to support those affected and get funds to local trusted experts in Gaza and southern Israel who have been working alongside communities helping those most in need. Your donation will help support aid workers providing urgent humanitarian aid including food, water and emergency shelter to those in need. Thank you for your prayers.

Refreshments after 9.00am Mass

Please pop into the Parish Hall for tea, coffee and biscuits after 9.00 am Mass every Sunday, starting this Sunday. If you would like to help out and be put on the rota, please contact Anna Franchi on 07713 631389.

Sacramental Preparation courses are underway - please keep these children and young people in your prayers'.

Lent Day-by-Day Booklets - for Children and Adults will be available this weekend, from Children's Liturgy catechists or from a basket at the church porch. Please give a donation for Adult booklets.

Baptism

Parents wishing to have their child/children baptised are asked, in the first instance, to contact Fr Ben, or to speak to Winnie Brady, for details of the forthcoming Baptism preparation course, which is due to begin in the next few weeks. Regular attendance at Sunday Mass is a pre-requisite prior to preparation for and celebration of the Sacrament.

Parish Hall

Our Parish Hall is available for hire.

Book it for exercise or tutoring classes, children's parties, celebrations or meetings. Services can include hourly or all-day bookings with kitchen facilities. Please contact the Parish Secretary on 020 8445 0838 for details.

11am Mass Choir

We are always open to new members joining us. We rehearse at 10.15am. each Sunday to learn the music for the Mass. Come along and try it out, we are keen to find younger voices (10 and over) and male voices to get a good balance of sound. Instrumentalists also welcome, Grade 3 and over.

For more information call Vicky on 07934 651491 or come and see me after the 11am Mass at the back of the Church.

Pay Car Park

Free Parking for Mass goers is:- **Saturday 5.30pm-7.30pm and on Sunday 8.30am-5.30pm**, we must adhere to them, even by a few minutes!

Please be aware that outside of these times, a penalty will be issued – with no appeal through the parish under the terms of the contract.

PRAY for those who are sick especially Deborah Longford-Ross, Luciana Maestranzi, Patricia Rutt, Nora Prior, Vlasticha Marek Elsie & Paddy Lyons and Peter Carney. We also pray for the housebound, and those in residential care and in local hospices and hospitals and the Faithful Departed especially Peter Jackman & Lydia Thielamay.

Hospital Admissions The religious status of patients admitted to hospital can be overlooked or not registered.

Please make sure that this information is registered with the Ward Staff.

The Catenians would love to welcome you to London Northern Heights. We form part of an international network of Catholic men and their families who aim to support those in need or less fortunate, whilst creating a space to socialize with like-minded people.

Please see notice board and parish website for more details and email Mick Cunningham on: michaelcunningham@live.co.uk

March for Life UK

Would you like to connect locally, in-person, with other people who support the pro-life cause? March for Life UK are inviting people to be part of a new initiative called

'Connect' which will help establish local pro-life groups to pray, fundraise, socialise, educate and get involved in outreach. To find out more and be part of an initial online meeting please email Isabel at info@marchforlife.co.uk

The **SVP** are distributing **over 10,000 Vinnie Packs** containing cold weather essentials to the homeless this winter. Please could you consider sponsoring packs at a suggested donation of £4.20 per pack? Donations can be sent to **Vinnie Packs, PO Box 72264, London SW1P 9EZ** with cheques made out to SVP or by bank transfer to Nat West **sort code 60-60-04, account no. 4608 8237**. Thank you so much for your support

The **St Michael's Lourdes 2023 Team** thank the parish for your support for their pilgrimage to Lourdes

What is the mission of a Red Cap?

"12 students of St Michael's join the young volunteers from all around the Diocese of Westminster to serve as "Red Caps" in Lourdes- to assist, help and care for the sick, elderly and disabled pilgrims. It is the Red Caps role to help their pilgrim in whatever capacity they are required to – mainly taking them to the main services while in Lourdes: taking part in the liturgical processions, and celebrations; on a visit to the grotto or taking them to the shops or even to a café for a coffee. The Red Caps help the sick and elderly pilgrims with their needs throughout the pilgrimage, ensuring all pilgrims get the most out of their time in Lourdes." (Students' sharing)

"Walk in their shoes" – is a sponsored walk for Together in Barnet on **Saturday 2nd of March**. Please see notice board for more details.

The Westminster Cathedral Choir School has chorister opportunities for boys with musical potential in Years 2, 3 or 4.

Every September, WCCS welcomes up to 6 choristers into Year 4 or 5. Becoming a chorister at Westminster Cathedral offers boys the opportunity to sing both here in central London, and on tour internationally, in one of the world's great choirs. Boys also receive an outstanding education at one of London's leading schools, up until the end of Year 8.

Understandably, families (even those with musical children) may find the whole idea of a choir school mystifying. That's why this year we are offering families the chance simply to explore the idea by joining us and other families on a brief Zoom call. We take a behind-the-scenes look at the life of a chorister, focusing on what it means to board, and why being in a top choir is such a joyous experience.

Our next Zoom sessions, each lasting 30 minutes, are at 6.30pm on **Wednesday 13th March**. Families contact Lucy Auger for a link. Email lauger@choirschool.com

Please see noticeboard for more details.

A Day with Mary are holding a pilgrimage to Fatima from **Friday 7th – Friday 14th June**. Please see notice board for more details.

Annual Mass of Thanksgiving for the Sacrament of Matrimony - Westminster Cathedral, **Saturday 25th May** at 2:30pm.

The Cardinal is inviting to this Mass all couples in the Diocese, who are celebrating their **5th, 10th, 25th, 30th, 40th, 50th and 60th (and every year over 60)** wedding anniversary of Catholic marriage in 2024. If you are celebrating an anniversary, please give your parish clergy the following details: husband and wife's names, wedding date, full postal address and email (or telephone number, if no email).