

St Mary Magdalen Catholic Church

February —Month of the Holy Family

First Sunday of Lent

22 February 2026

This Parish is part of Westminster Roman Catholic Diocesan Trust, Registered Charity No: 233699

Presbytery

Peter Avenue, Willesden Green,
London, NW10 2DD
Tel: 020 8451 4677

Parish Website: Roman Catholic Parish of Willesden Green – Church of St Mary Magdalen (rcdow.org.uk)

YouTube: St Mary Magdalen RC Church, Willesden, London - YouTube

Facebook: St Mary Magdalen RC Church, Willesden Green | London | Facebook

Parish Clergy

Monsignor Roger Reader KCHS
rogerreader@rcdow.org.uk

Father Matteo Di Giuseppe
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Father Kamal Kanawadi
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Parish Office

Maria Nowicka
willesdengreen@rcdow.org.uk

Parish office open:
Tuesday-Friday 10:00am - 3:00pm

Parish Outreach Worker

Barry Phillips-Devaney
wgoutreach@rcdow.org.uk

Mass Times

Saturday 6:30pm (Vigil Mass of Sunday)
Sunday: 9:00am*,
10:30am, 12noon & 6:30pm
Monday— Saturday: 9:30am*
**Livestreamed*

Eucharistic Adoration

Weekdays and Saturday:
One hour before morning Mass

Confession

Saturdays: 10:00am—10:30am
5:30pm— 6:15pm
& At Call

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT (YEAR A)

Lent begins not with triumph, but with testing. Immediately after his baptism in the Jordan, after the heavens open and the Father declares, "This is my beloved Son," Jesus is led by the Spirit into the wilderness. The desert is not an accident. It is the place of stripping away, of hunger, of exposure. It is also the place where Israel once wandered for forty years, learning—often painfully—what it meant to depend on God.

In Year A, the Church pairs this Gospel with the story of Adam and Eve in Genesis 2–3. The contrast is deliberate. In Eden, abundance surrounds the first humans, yet they grasp at what is forbidden. In the wilderness, Jesus is famished, yet he refuses to grasp at power or privilege. Where Adam succumbs to the serpent's subtle distortion—"Did God really say?"—Jesus meets each temptation with the clarity of Scripture: "It is written."

The first temptation—"Turn these stones into bread"—is not merely about hunger. It is about using divine power to serve oneself. Jesus' response, quoting Deuteronomy, reminds us that life is more than survival: "One does not live by bread alone." In a culture obsessed with consumption and immediate satisfaction, this is a bracing reminder. Lent invites us to rediscover our deeper hunger—the hunger for meaning, for communion, for God.

The second temptation—"Throw yourself down"—is about spectacle and control. If Jesus were to leap from the Temple and be rescued by angels, he would win instant acclaim. But faith is not a stunt. It is trust without manipulation. "You shall not put the Lord your God to the test." How often do we bargain with God, demanding signs before we commit ourselves? Lent calls us to a quieter, steadier fidelity.

The third temptation—"All these I will give you, if you bow down and worship me"—is the most revealing. It offers a shortcut to glory without the cross. Power without suffering. Kingship without obedience. Jesus rejects it decisively: "You shall worship the Lord your God, and him alone shall you serve." In doing so, he defines his mission—and ours—not as domination, but as faithful service.

This Gospel is not merely about Jesus long ago. It is about us now. Saint Paul, in Romans 5, speaks of Adam and Christ as two representatives of humanity. In Adam, sin and death enter the world; in Christ, obedience and life. The First Sunday of Lent confronts us with a choice: Which pattern will shape our lives? The grasping of Eden, or the trust of the desert?

Lent is our annual desert. Through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, we face our own temptations—to self-reliance, to pride, to compromise. But we do not enter this season alone. The same Spirit who led Jesus into the wilderness accompanies us. The One who resisted temptation on our behalf now strengthens us in ours.

The Peace of Christ
Fr Matteo

We pray for:
Those who are sick: Rose McDermott, Patrick Casey
Those who have died recently: Pat Varley
Those whose anniversaries occur at this time: Paul Cunningham, Mary and Patrick Gavahan,

PARISH & DIOCESAN NEWS

Collection 15 February 2026 amounted to £1,364.69
Standing orders for January: £3,941
Contactless Income for January: £362.80
Thank you for your generosity in whatever way you give.

LENT 2026

OUR LENT 2026 COURSE STARTS THIS WEEK:
Wednesday February 25th at 7.00pm:
We Dare To Ask features five sessions on the theme of our Baptismal Vocation. Each session uses scripture, prayers, a reflection and questions, to help us prepare to renew our baptismal promises at Easter.

This course runs for five weeks and takes place in the upstairs hall of **The Church Of The Transfiguration, Kensal Rise.** Course booklets will be available for free; tea and coffee will also be provided.



More information about all our events in Lent can be found in a separate leaflet: LENT 2026

PARISH DIARY

Monday 23rd February **FIRST HOLY COMMUNION 5:30pm**	Session 4: God helps me get it right St Mary Magdalen school **6:00pm PARENTS' MEETING in school hall.**
Monday 23rd February **CONFIRMATION 6:00pm**	Session 4: Jesus—more than a mere man. Church of the Transfiguration
Tuesday 24th February	**COFFEE MORNING** With the pupils from St Mary Magdalen Junior School
Friday 27th February	STATIONS OF THE CROSS 6:00pm
Saturday 28th February **FIRST HOLY COMMUNION 11:00am**	PENITENTIAL SERVICE for First Holy Communion candidates in St Mary Magdalen Church

Mass Intentions commencing—Sunday 22 February

Saturday	6:30pm	Mary and Walter Manning	**RIP**
Sunday	9:00am	Hannah Cahillane	**RIP**
	10:30am	Paul Cunningham	**Anniv**
	12:00pm	Mary Egan	**Get Well Ints**
	6:30pm	People of the Parish	**Ints**
Monday	9:30am	Marian Faulkner	**Get Well Ints**
	4:00pm	Funeral—Patrick Varley	**RIP**
Tuesday	9:30am	Maria Teixeira	**Ints**
Wednesday	9:30am	Mary and Patrick Gavahan	**Anniv**
Thursday	9:30am	Rita and Samuel Ngwoke on their Wedding Anniversary	**Ints**
Friday	9:30am	Helen Murray	**Ints**
Saturday	9:30am	William Delaney	**RIP**

FUNERAL NOTICE

The Requiem Mass for the late
Patrick Varley
will take place on Monday, 23rd February at 4:00pm
followed by repatriation to Ireland.

May he rest in peace ✝

CAFOD Family Fast Day– Friday 27th February

This Lent, live out the Gospel call to love your neighbour. By fasting and giving what you save, you join in Christ's compassion and help another family put food on the table. Your donation can help families around the world grow food in difficult conditions – such as on flood-resistant floating gardens or using solar-powered water pumps in times of drought. Collect a CAFOD envelope to bless others with your support, donate online at **cafod.org.uk/envelope** or call **0303 303 3030**. Text **CAFODLENT to 70085** to donate £10.

CAFOD A better world needs all of us

FRIENDS OF THE HOLY LAND—Sharing personal stories…

Our first story is a short video featuring Daniel, a young Christian from the Holy Land. Thanks to your support Daniel is completing his studies in Nursing at Bethlehem University, with help from Friends of the Holy Land.

In the video (link below), you'll hear first hand what daily life is like for Daniel, the challenges he faces and the hope that sustains him. These stories remind us that behind the headlines are faithful people seeking to live, work and worship in difficult circumstances. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zsHuiLhmcnI

Please pray for Daniel's request, for peace, provision and perseverance for Christian communities across the Holy Land.

THE ANNUAL MASS OF THANKSGIVING FOR MATRIMONY

will be celebrated in Westminster Cathedral on Saturday 23rd May 2026 at 2.30pm.

The Archbishop invites couples in the Diocese celebrating their **5th 10th, 25th, 30th, 40th, 50th and 60th (and every year over 60)** wedding anniversary of Catholic marriage in 2026.

If you are celebrating an anniversary, please email the parish with the following details:
Names of husband and wife, wedding date, number of years married, postal address, email or phone number. These details will be forwarded to the Diocese who will send out the invitation.
Please contact the office by the end of March. *Thank you.*

SVP AND CAFOD WORK EXPERIENCE

The St Vincent de Paul Society and CAFOD are working together to offer a week of free residential work experience for 20 young adults in England and Wales. The experience will run from 21st – 26th June in London. Candidates must be aged 18-25 years old, but priority will be given to those in their first or second year at university. Applications close on the 6th April. For any queries, please contact KeziaH@svp.org.uk. To apply visit here: https://svp1.formstack.com/forms/work_experience_application_form_2026

REMINDER: FOODBANK COLLECTION NEXT WEEKEND