

The Week Ahead

Mon 12th	Lent feria	7.15am, 12.30pm, 6.00pm
Tues 13th	Lent feria	7.15am, 12.30pm, 6.00pm
Wed 14th	Lent feria	7.15am, 12.30pm, 6.00pm
Thur 15th	Lent feria	7.15am, 12.30pm, 6.00pm
Fri 16th	Lent feria	7.15am, 12.30pm, 6.00pm
Sat 17th	St PATRICK	10.00am

		6.00pm (<i>1st of Sun</i>)
Sun 18th	FIFTH SUNDAY	8.30am; 9.30am [<i>Extraordinary Form</i>]
	OF LENT	10.30am [<i>Solemn Latin</i>]
		<i>Missa Sine nomine Palestrina</i>
		<i>Salvator mundi Tallis; O crux ave Morales</i>
		12.00, 4.00pm, 7.00pm

On the Fridays of Lent there will be Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament all day and the Stations of the Cross follow the 6pm Mass.

The **St Vincent de Paul Society** fund-raising bike ride will be held this year on **24th June**. The route will be along canal paths and should suit young or old cyclists. Last year £3,250 was raised and with your help SVP hopes to raise even more this year.

We have two special evenings of music to mark the Lenten season. They are intended as devotional exercises as well as providing the opportunity to hear two great pieces. On Friday 16th March **Pergolesi's "Stabat Mater"** will be performed and then on 23rd March the **"Tenebrae Responses" by Victoria**. The start time on both occasions is 7.30pm (after the Stations of the Cross) and each will last around forty minutes: **there is no cost, but there will be a retiring collection to help towards expenses.**

The **Easter Vigil** is the time in the year when those under instruction enter more deeply into the communion of the Catholic Church. This year's cohort includes three adults for Baptism, two Christians from other traditions to be received, and seven others who are Catholics seeking Confirmation. Two of the group will celebrate Holy Saturday in their home parishes while the rest – ten in total – will be here with us at Saint James's: they are God's gift to us and we should pray for them as Easter comes nearer.

Holy Hour and Benediction

Saturday
4.45pm-5.45pm

Confessions

Weekdays
12.00-1.00pm
Saturday
10.30am-Noon
& 5.00-5.45pm

Last weekend's Collections £3,274-00
(Includes Envelopes but not Bankers' Orders etc.)

St James's Roman Catholic Church, Spanish Place
22 George Street, London W1U 3QY



Fourth Sunday
of Lent

[Laetare Sunday]
11th March 2018

TODAY'S LITURGY
[Parish Mass Book - page 166]

Exodus 17:3-7; Romans 5:1-2,5-8; St John 4:5-15,19-26,39-42.

Psalm Response: **O that today you would listen to his voice!**
'Harden not your hearts.'

Latin texts are on
pages 77/78 of the
parish mass book

10.30am Missa brevis in D minor *Mozart*
Laudate Dominum Mozart
Fantasia chromatica Sweelinck

*Refreshments (Tea & Coffee) are served after the 9.30am Mass
& wine together with soft drinks are available
after the Solemn Mass in the Social Centre (in the Crypt).
Do join us if you have the time.*

The Reverend Christopher G. Colven (Rector)

The Reverend
Nicholas
Kavanagh

The Reverend
David J
Irwin

The Reverend
Hugh
MacKenzie

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The Rector writes

A commentary on Saint Matthew's Gospel contains this insight: *"If grace reaches our heart, we will finally look up to Jesus and meet his eyes, but only stimulated by our sense of being fixed by someone's regard, of feeling the warmth of that gaze melting away our indifference and extricating us from our immersion in the ephemeral"*. Although these words apply directly to the conversion of Matthew the tax collector, they would seem to have a wider significance as we move closer to Holy Week. The liturgical chain which moves us from Palm Sunday through to Holy Saturday and the Easter Vigil is, at one level, a re-enactment of events which took place two thousand years ago, but it also provides an annual opportunity to allow the living Christ more space in our lives. We are a sacramental people, believing that God continues to speak to us through a language of effective signs. *"Come then let us run with him as he presses on to his passion. Let us imitate those who have gone out to meet him, not scattering olive branches or garments or palms in his path, but spreading ourselves before him as best we can, with humility of soul and upright purpose"* (Saint Andrew of Crete).

It is this meeting of Jesus' eyes with our own which is the purpose and the definition of our lives as Christians. The Letter to the Colossians (3:3) reminds us: *"now the life you have is hidden with Christ in God"*, and it should be both our duty and our joy to grow deeper into the personal relationship which is held out to each of us by our Redeemer. Let us make no mistake: what is on offer is nothing less than an intimate experience of the communion which unites the Trinitarian Godhead – we are invited not just to know that God exists but to establish an individual chemistry with Him. God wants a friendship with every person he has created, excluding no one, and just as each of us is unique so the terms of our personal relationship with our Creator are unique. There is nobody who exists, has ever existed, or will ever exist, who is called to quite the same identity before God.

Saint Veronica is said to have been so moved with compassion at the suffering Christ that she broke through the crowds to wipe his face of the blood and sweat which had accumulated. Her reward, so tradition tells us, was to have the Divine features imprinted on her towel. The name Veronica means *"true image/icon"* and just as Christ's likeness was given to her in this material way, so it is the Father's desire that each of us should become living images/icons of his Son. The stuff of Veronica's towel helps us understand that the imprint of Christ on the heart and soul of the believer is so much more than just a manner of speech – it is truth at the deepest level of reality open to the human person.

That Jesus is looking directly at each of us, trying to catch our eye, is not in doubt. We talk about prevenient grace meaning that the Holy Spirit is constantly preparing the way for fresh encounters between God's beloved Son and those who share his image and likeness. But *"the warmth of the gaze of Jesus"* has to be recognised and accepted. Divine respect for our personal autonomy is absolute and, though the Good Shepherd will never stop knocking at the human heart and consciousness, there has to be a willingness to take up what is being offered. "The Living One" of the Book of Revelation (3:20) says: *"Look I am standing at the door knocking if anyone of you hears me calling and opens the door, I will come to share your meal, side by side with you"*. The ball is thus placed firmly in our own court. What is our response to the words: *"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full"* (John 10: 10)? Do we truly want to respond heart to heart to Jesus' invitation?

This weekend marks the halfway point in our Lenten journey. In three weeks we shall be celebrating Easter. "The Church year which makes present and portrays the life of Christ is mankind's greatest work of art: and God has acknowledged it and allows it year after year, always granting it new light, as though one were encountering it for the first time" (Jochen Klepper). These coming days give us the opportunity to meet the eyes of Jesus and return his gaze in ways that we have never done before. "Behold, now is the favourable time: this is the day of salvation" (2 Corinthians 6:2).

Christopher Colven

NOTICES

The **Lent Course** continues on Wednesday. Refreshments will be served in the social centre after the 6pm Mass, and each session will begin at 7pm and end by 8pm. We are using material prepared by Father Stephen Wang which is designed to deepen our understanding of the Eucharist. **This third session is concerned with the graces given in our reception of Holy Communion.**

Please pray for the soul of **Joseph Suliman**, a relative of one of our families, who has died suddenly while working in Dubai. He was 32 years old. Please pray, too, for **Percy Waite** who was killed in a recent traffic accident: he was aged 82 and used to attend the Sunday 10.30am Mass. **RIP**

The collection for **CAFOD's Lent Fast Day** has raised **£2,766** to date. Any contributions to the Cardinal's Lent Appeal may be left in the marked slot near the main door – so far £1,010 has been donated.