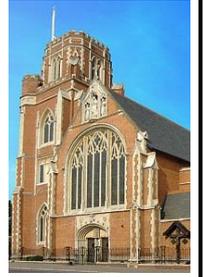




# St Thomas à Becket Catholic Church

Parish Priest: Father Alex McAllister SDS  
Becket House, Santos Road, Wandsworth SW18 1NT  
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Parish Office: 9.30-14.30 Monday to Friday



First Sunday of Lent

18th February 2018

Repent and believe the Good News

## Mass Times

**17th Sat Feria**

9.30 *John Heraty +*

17.30 *Paul Julius Mabira sick*

**18th Sun First Sunday of Lent**

10.00 *Peter McGinley +*

15.00 (Royal Hospital) *People of the Parish*

**19th Mon Feria**

9.30 *John Heraty +*

**20th Tue Feria**

9.30 *Peter Robbins (ill)*

**21st Wed Feria**

9.30

**22nd Thu Chair of St Peter the Apostle**

9.30

**23rd Fri Feria**

9.30 *Mel McCabe +*  
followed by Stations of the Cross

**24th Sat Feria**

9.30

17.30 (Vigil Mass) *Tess Keaney+*

**25th Sun Second Sunday of Lent**

10.00 *Robert Reese Williams Thanksgiving*

15.00 (Royal Hospital) *People of the Parish*

17.30 Stations of the Cross



The Temptation of Jesus in the Desert

## Lenten Penances

A priest I knew very well used to give up smoking every Lent. Then as soon as Easter Sunday arrived he took up smoking again. I found this surprising and I once asked him why after going through all the cold-turkey of giving up smoking for Lent he took it up again immediately Lent was over. His answer was, 'I just like smoking.'

For him, giving up smoking for six weeks was a real sacrifice. It cost him a lot because he was not only habituated to it but he really enjoyed smoking and got a lot of pleasure out of it.

Every Catholic ought to take on some worthwhile penance for Lent. It should be something that is a real sacrifice and that requires some serious effort. It could be something as simple as getting off the bus three or four stops before home. It could be making an effort to go to mass on a Saturday morning or on another weekday. Or perhaps doing the Stations of the Cross a couple of times a week. Fasting is another important penance that is very appropriate during Lent and which any of us could take up.

Whatever the sacrifice we must make sure that we offer it up as our gift to God, recognising that it is our small contribution to the sufferings that Christ himself underwent on our behalf.

*Father Alex*

## Confessions:

Saturday 10.15-11.00 and at call

**Sunday Readings:** Year B **Weekday Readings:** Year 2

**Cycle of Prayer, Lent:** Candidates for the Sacraments, Needy and Hungry of the World, Women's World Day of Prayer, Penitents and Wanderers

**Next Week's Liturgy Group:** John

**Baptisms & Marriages:** Please contact the Parish Priest

## The Stations of the Cross



**Fridays of Lent at 10.00 &  
Sundays of Lent at 17.30**

Booklets are available  
so you can make the Stations at any time

*We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you,  
because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world*

**A hedge between  
keeps friendship green**

### First Communion

No First Communion classes today due to Half term.  
Coffee and Tea in the Corry Hall after Sunday mass.

### Young Adults

There will be a Wine and Cheese Evening for Young  
Adults 19.30 in the Corry Hall on Thursday 22nd Feb.  
Theme of the discussion: Effective Communications.

### Confirmation

Unfortunately, due to lack of applications this year  
we have asked the Bishop to postpone the  
Sacrament of Confirmation until next year.

### Newsletter by E-mail

If you wish to receive the parish newsletter by e-  
mail please inform becket.westhill@btinternet.com

### Seniors Club

Gifts or unwanted presents are needed and will be  
gratefully received for Bingo prizes for our Seniors  
Club. Please leave it at Parish office. Thank You.

### Pastoral Letter

Please find a Pastoral Letter for Lent from our  
Archbishop attached to this newsletter.

**Happiness is when what you think,  
what you say, and what you do  
are in harmony**

Gandhi

# CAFOD

Next Sunday we will take up a second collection to  
mark Lent Fast Day and to support the work of  
CAFOD in the third world. Please be generous.

### Upcoming Dates

Young Adults Wine & Cheese ..19.30 22nd February  
Marriage Preparation Course..... 24th February  
Seniors Club ..... 28th February  
Parish Council ..... 6th March  
Parish Council ..... 5th June

# Lenten Retreat

by Fr Gerard Bradley

Tuesday 20th February  
Beginning the Journey to Easter

Tuesday 27th February  
The Person of Jesus Christ

Tuesday 6th March  
Being a Disciple of Jesus

Tuesday 13th March  
The Passion and Death of Jesus

Tuesday 20th March  
Finding His Presence in all things

**19:30 @ JTB Catholic Church, Purley**

### Church Cleaning

If you can help with Church cleaning please let the  
Parish Secretary know. You can choose the time that  
suits you best.

### Lenten Reflection

Judy Carlisle will lead a Lenten Reflection after Mass  
on Wednesday 21st February (note date change)  
and also at 19.45 on Monday 26th in the Corry Hall.

**Judas was not the first or last person  
to betray Jesus,  
merely the most famous**

### Last Week's Finances

Parish Collection £602.29, Bankers Orders £ 384

### Upcoming Second Collections

Sunday 18th February Church Maintenance Fund,  
Sunday, 25th February CAFOD Family Fast Day.

### Rotas

**Sunday Welcome & Coffee:** M Harrison

L Northeast n/w A Ollva, E Falcone

**Readers:** Sat: E & N Falcone, C Kawesi, Sun:  
G Donaldson, L Brown, L Northeast n/w Sat: N Nolan,  
S Vas, E De Souza Sun: T Brown, A Harris, A Stacey

**Eucharistic Ministers:** Sat: E Falcone, D McGavin,  
C. Kawesi Sun: D Lyons, E Sinclair, L Delos Santos,  
J Cato n/w Sat: J Cato, D McGavin, C Kawesi Sun:  
A Nobis, R Nwodo, P Fahy, R McMullan

**Flowers:** V Barkho n/w A Oliva

**Royal Hospital:** Sr Pauline n/w A Robbins



**THE MOST REVEREND PETER SMITH L.L.B., J.C.D., K.C.\*H.S.,  
ARCHBISHOP OF SOUTHWARK,  
ARCHBISHOP'S HOUSE, 150 ST. GEORGE'S ROAD, SOUTHWARK, LONDON, SE1 6HX  
TEL: 020 7928 2495 FAX: 020 7928 7833**

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Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Season of Lent, and the readings at Mass speak to us of the need for prayer, of fasting, and almsgiving. We might be forgiven for feeling a little dispirited and despondent at the prospect: first a day of fasting and abstinence, and then six weeks of penance to come!

With that thought in mind I am looking out at the sleet and rain drifting down in the bitter north-easterly wind, and I'm sure that you, like me, long for the first signs of Spring. We are still in the grip of a rather bitter winter, and there remains an undeniable atmosphere of gloom in the world outside my study window – a gloom reflected not only in the weather but in the daily news bulletins which seem to be filled with “bad news” of wars and civil disturbance, drought and poverty in Africa and other parts of the world, the constant threat of terrorism, the upsurge in refugees fleeing their war-stricken homelands and the flourishing of human trafficking – the list could go on and on!

Sometimes the darkness and gloom of winter is not simply something outside us, but seems to have invaded our very hearts and chills the very depths of our being. We can go through periods when our faith seems to suffer such a “winter”, a winter which seems so prolonged as to appear endless. In especially dark times we may even feel that we have lost our faith altogether. We can become anxious and fearful; beginning to think that we are being tested beyond our strength and endurance, or even that God has finally given up on us and abandoned us. Then we weep and mourn for the lost times when our faith was strong giving us the power to bear the stormy blasts which assailed us in times past and which came so unexpectedly and for no apparent reason.

But the message of Lent is a message of hope and trust in the person of Jesus, our Saviour and redeemer, who says to each one of us, “I am with you until the end of time.” Despite appearances, the winter does eventually come to an end in the glorious new life which blossoms in the Springtime of God's infinite love and compassion. The Risen Christ is our Light and our Hope. Jesus, our Saviour invites each one of us to follow willingly and generously in his footsteps, and to be led by that light which no darkness can ever overcome. Each day we are invited to die a little more to the sin and selfishness which wounds the life of each one of us, and to grow in the light and love of Jesus Christ. We are invited to enter willingly and generously the narrow gate of prayer, fasting and almsgiving, for that is the way to die to the false self within us and grow into new people formed ever more deeply in the image and likeness of God.

In order to do that, Jesus tells us, *“If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross every day and follow me.”* The constant temptation is to turn in on ourselves, give way to selfishness, to fear and anxiety, becoming pessimistic and cynical. The temptation is to try and take a short cut to happiness and contentment, by looking for security and fulfilment in material comfort and the many pleasures offered by this world. The temptation is to think only of ourselves and our own needs and desires; to close ourselves off from the suffering around us and ignore the poverty and need of those worse off than ourselves. And here I speak not only of material poverty, but emotional, spiritual and mental poverty.

The antidote to these temptations is to be found first of all in prayer. Prayer, personal and liturgical, takes us out of ourselves and places us firmly in the hands of God. Right at the beginning of his Apostolic Exhortation on, "The Joy of the Gospel", Pope Francis challenged every one of us when he wrote: *"I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting him encounter them. I ask all of you to do this unfailingly, each day. No one should think that this invitation is not meant for him or her, 'since no one is excluded from the joy brought by the Lord' The Lord does not disappoint those who take this risk; whenever we take a step towards Jesus, we come to realise that he is already there, waiting for us with open arms."*

So why not try this during Lent at the beginning of each day. Spend a few minutes in quiet, silent prayer, as individuals or as families, responding to God's request to us through the psalmist in Psalm 45: "Be still and know that I am God", and in Psalm 37, "Be still before the Lord and wait in patience." These few minutes of silent prayer can be divided into three little petitions: "Lord open my ears that I may hear; open my eyes that I may see; open my heart and rekindle within it the gift of the Holy Spirit, the fire of your love." What will we be asking for? First of all we are asking for the grace to hear the cries of the poor in our communities. Then we are asking for the grace to see those in need, in our own communities and in the wider world. And finally we are asking for a renewal of the Holy Spirit in our hearts, the fire of God's love.

Lent is essentially an opportunity to be reborn and grow still more in the life of the Spirit. It's a task which requires courage and effort. We are asked to open our hearts, through prayer, fasting and almsgiving, and to receive once again the gift of God's love and mercy, allowing him to renew our lives so that we witness to the Good News of God's love, mercy and compassion, especially to the poor and needy.

Let's pray for each other during this season of Lent so that we may worthily celebrate the joy of Easter, the great Paschal mystery of the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Christ, our Saviour and Redeemer.

With an assurance of my prayers and blessing for you all,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'P' followed by a plus sign and the name 'Peter' written in a cursive script.

Archbishop of Southwark

Given at Southwark, 4<sup>th</sup> February, 2018.