
The Easter Season

Lent is 40 days of fasting, but Easter is fifty days of feasting! Let's continue to celebrate the Lord's resurrection and to find in it peace, hope and joy. Throughout this season we try to be especially conscious of the presence of the risen Lord, symbolised by the Paschal Candle which burns among us. We are also conscious of the work of the Holy Spirit, whose coming we celebrate at Pentecost, the last day of Eastertide.

Today's Readings

Last week we heard St John's account of two encounters between the risen Lord and the disciples: the first, without Thomas, on Easter Sunday evening, and the second (with him) on the following Sunday. Today we hear St Luke's account of the first of those meetings. Luke picks up the story immediately after two disciples had seen Jesus on the road to Emmaus: they return to the others and tell them what has happened. Then Jesus appears to them all. Luke emphasises especially the bodily truth of the resurrection: Jesus is not a ghost or simply a spirit, but has truly risen, body as well as soul. He even eats with them to prove this. As in John's account, Jesus sends the Apostles out in His name.

Throughout Eastertide the first reading comes from the New Testament, unlike during the rest of the year. We read from the Acts of the Apostles, a wonderfully engaging book which tells the story of the Apostles' life and work in the early days and years of the Church. It begins with the Lord's Ascension, continues with the fullest account we have of Pentecost, and then follows especially the missionary activity of St Peter and St Paul. Today's first reading encourages us to repent and turn to God for forgiveness of our sins.

In the second reading we are assured of forgiveness, because "we have our Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ who is just." By rising from the dead, Jesus has entered eternal life and now intercedes for us in heaven.

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MASSES THIS WEEK

Office: Psalter week 3; Sundays: year B; Weekdays: of Eastertide

Morning Mass is livestreamed each day and will be available for viewing later in the day on our YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/StClaresChurch>

Date	Time	Occasion	Intention/Details
Saturday	8:30pm (vigil)*	THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER	Teresa Nicklin RIP
Sunday 18 th	9:30am*		Ray Parr RIP
	11:30am*		People of the Parish
	6pm*		Most abandoned souls in purgatory
Monday	9:30am		For Barney
Tuesday	9:30am		Mary Christine McGinty RIP
Wednesday	9:30am		Joseph Swamy RIP and deceased family
Thursday	9:30am		Nicola McAnulty RIP
Friday	9:30am	SAINT GEORGE	Peter Hampson RIP
Saturday	9:30am	FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER	Anne Topping RIP
	6pm (vigil)		Mary & Eddie Sinnott RIP
Sunday 25 th	9:30am*		People of the Parish
	11:30am*		Mary Gallagher RIP
	6pm		Ints Connell family

*** These Masses can only be attended by those who have booked in advance.**

LATELY DEAD: Please pray for **Teresa Nicklin, HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh** and all who have died recently.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION: Saturdays 11am-12noon and by appointment.

ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT: Monday-Friday 5pm-6pm, Saturday 11am-12noon, Sunday 3-4pm.

ANNIVERSARIES: Frank Barnish, Frank Harrison, James Greenwood, Len Jones, Victor McGowan, Mary Sinnott, Joan Maxwell, Margaret Woodruff, Anne Topping, May Hargreaves, Peter Hampson.

POPE'S PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR APRIL: We pray for those who risk their lives while fighting for fundamental rights under dictatorships, authoritarian regimes and even democracies in crisis.

ATTENDING EVENING MASSES: From next weekend (24th/25th April) there will no longer be any requirement to book for the Saturday or Sunday evening Masses. We will still need to keep a record of those who are attending, including contact details, to assist with track and trace. Records are kept for three weeks, then destroyed, in line with government guidance. Booking remains necessary for both Masses on Sunday morning – please contact us if you would like to attend these.

SEEKERS AND SENT GROUPS: Our youth groups for school years 4-6 (Seekers) and Years 10-11 (Sent) are starting again, but numbers are limited due to Covid restrictions. Please contact us (or Ruth or Joe directly) if you'd like to attend.

PARISH/SCHOOL QUIZ NIGHT: This Friday, 7pm on Zoom, a joint parish/school PTFA quiz. To join us for this fun online social event, please email for the link for the Zoom meeting. There will be a good variety of not-too-hard questions!

GIFT AID SCHEME: A Gift Aid tax reclaim will be submitted shortly to HMRC. Please notify us if you are no longer a taxpayer or you paid insufficient tax during 2020/21 to cover the tax that will be reclaimed on all your donations given under Gift Aid to all charities during the tax year. At the present standard rate of tax of 20%, 25p is reclaimed for every £1 donated. If you have moved house during the tax year please let us have your new address.

GIFT AID ENVELOPES: The 2021-22 Gift Aid envelopes are now available in the narthex, for use from next weekend. If you use envelopes, please collect yours today. Your number may have changed, but boxes are labelled with your name.

DONATING BY STANDING ORDER? If you donate to the parish by standing order and you gift aid your contribution, there should be a set of envelopes for you to cover the special collections which take place through the year. Many of you will be contributing to these collections but we cannot claim Gift Aid from them unless you use an envelope, so please take a set if you can.

THE CASTLERIGG LOTTERY: In order to support for our diocesan youth service, Castlerigg Manor have started a lottery. It's just £3 a month to join; the winner takes half the pot each month! Register at www.castleriggmanor.co.uk/lottery

“The witnesses report an important detail: the risen Jesus bears the marks of the wounds in his hands, feet and side. These wounds are the everlasting seal of his love for us. All those who experience a painful trial in body or spirit can find refuge in these wounds and, through them, receive the grace of the hope that does not disappoint.”

Pope Francis, Urbi et Orbi, Easter Sunday 2021

Events this week (occasional/one-off events in bold type)

Day	Time	What?	Where?
Every day	Anytime	Food Bank Collection	House Porch
Sunday 18 th	3pm-4pm	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament	Church
Mon-Fri	5-6pm	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament	Church
Monday	7:30pm	Parish Pastoral Council	Zoom
Tuesday	7:30pm	Fabric and Finance Committee	Zoom
Friday	7pm	Parish/School Quiz Night	Zoom
Saturday	11am	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament	Church
Sunday 25 th	3pm-4pm	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament	Church

Events marked 'YouTube' are streamed live on our channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/StClaresChurch>

A prayer of spiritual communion

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

Stand with Fr Stan

The Indian Jesuit priest Fr Stan Swamy SJ celebrates his 84th birthday on 26 April. Fr Stan was imprisoned last October on baseless terrorist charges which he vehemently denies. He has now spent over 180 days, including Christmas and Easter, behind bars in Taloja prison in Mumbai.

An international campaign – **Stand with Stan** - has attracted huge support. In Britain, politicians of all parties have raised his situation in Parliament. Shortly before Easter, a bail application to secure Fr Stan's release because of his age and infirmity (he has Parkinson's disease) was rejected by the Indian courts. A statement from Rome strongly condemned the decision of the Court and said:

"We stand united with Stan and many other human rights defenders at this crucial juncture. We commit ourselves to continue our effort, both nationally and internationally, to bring truth and justice to light and advocate for the rights of vulnerable people in a peaceful, non-violent way."

You are invited to send Fr Stan a birthday or Easter greeting expressing your solidarity with him.

The card can be very simple; a postcard or even a piece of folded paper.

Please send it by 21st April in an envelope to: Fr Stan Swamy SJ, c/o Jesuit Missions, 11 Edge Hill, Wimbledon, London SW19 4LR.