



The Arena Weekly

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newsletter

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Dear All,



Paschal Candle with the Cross, the Alpha and Omega, the five 'wounds of Christ' and the year (2020) plus two special symbols - the rainbow and the butterfly.



DEATH TO LIFE We may not be using St James' for services until mid May at the earliest, but the Church hasn't been moth-balled and we want to get back in there as soon as we possibly can! So the purple veiling of Passiontide has now been replaced by white Easter hangings and the Paschal Candle is in place at the centre of the Church, ready to shine out once 'normal service(s)' are restored!

Of course we have missed a couple of things - the Easter garden and (for our children) the traditional egg hunt at the end of the 10am Mass on Easter Day. But they will come back in 2021 and I hope we will enjoy them even more then.

SOCIAL MEDIA It was brilliant to get so many messages from our congregation (past and present) over Easter. It was lovely to get a text from *Jonathan, Lessia and Aimee Bruce* in East Sussex: "We send our love and our prayers to you all and we will watch your Mass after the one at our own Church. We often think back to happy times in N1." *Chris Carter* was also planning to watch the service on our YouTube channel but also wrote to say how *Arnold and Egon* are enjoying the Sunday School packs. *Dionne Carter* (no relation) said she was planning to watch the 'service thing' (!) as was *Maria Flavius* who was also saying how grateful she was for the regular communications from St James' "until this is all over". *Nick Powell* texted to say that *Matilda and Barnaby* are enjoying the craft work packs immensely in their base in Highbury and *Lisa Follett* said she was praying for "better times ahead". *Rhidian Jones* our organ adviser, based in Maidenhead, kindly remarked on the sermon for Easter morning. *Philip Kingston* agreed that the coronavirus had been something of an earthquake "but as greed has been in control for so many decades, for sure something truly salutary was required." *Gregory Tingay* who made our wonderful altar candlesticks said that he had been thinking of us during the lockdown but went on to say that he had recently met *Liz Adekunle* the Archdeacon at an exhibition of his pottery. Apparently she had remembered his contribution to St James' too. *Kerri Allen* our Communications Officer said the weather was so good she had been watching the Easter morning Mass in her garden in Canonbury. *Vicky Bellamy* said that she hoped the experience of this virus would make humans a more kind and considerate race and *Shirley Chinery, Claire Suksiri and Sophie Duffy* all spoke for us all when they looked forward to being able to go back into Church. *Vera Taggart* said that her granddaughter *Ophelia* had missed being confirmed at St Paul's Cathedral on Easter Eve; that is now postponed until November. *Miranda Jules* out in Witham in Essex said that our Mass had made her feel that she was in Church and congratulated *Sinead* on the technical side, ideas echoed in *Karensa Greenaway's* message. It was great to hear from *Tracey Byers* that she had enjoyed Palm Sunday's service and thought the current picture of St James' on Facebook looked really peaceful. *Sergio Villicana* said that he hoped that Easter would be full of the happiness that the Resurrection of Christ represents, even in these difficult times. There

were also lovely greetings from *Eva Kasella, Louise Ahmet, Nieve Goodwin, Isabel Nisbet, Paula Morrison, Rosemary Ross, Matt Jean-Baptiste, Kate Yeats, Toni Parker, Fr Stephen, Ken Thompson, Jill Hetherington* in Chiswick, *Maria Nistor* - and *Sam Seabrook* who wrote “we all had fun completing the Sunday School activities, it’s so nice that we can feel we have a little bit of St James’ in our home”. All these message were hugely appreciated and all help to make us feel part of a large and very supportive Church family. Thank you.



WELCOME CALLUM! This was not the easiest time to be pregnant but we are delighted that all was well for Amy Eldon-Richier as she, her partner Scott Kinch and older brother Freddie welcomed Callum into the world on Friday 3rd April. Freddie was baptised at St James’ and Amy and Scott made their First Holy Communion here on 13th October last year. They are both in hospitality and were lined up to help with the Lamb’s Feast in June. Because of the coronavirus they now have an extra year to get ready for that! Happy days all.



TABLE TENNIS IN THE GARAGE! As we announced last week, the Vicarage garage has a full sized table tennis table and we were delighted that - without breaking any of the social distancing rules - members of the Falcioni family came and tested out the facilities. Normally they have to use their dining room table which isn’t at all the same! Just give us a ring (020 7226 4108 | 07989 281123) if you would like to book a slot.

The garage was also in use on Monday lunchtime as the venue for the distribution of sandwiches, cakes and drinks for members of the street community. Local volunteers of Pack-Up led by Hilly Janes were on hand. Sadly there are few of these facilities open during the lockdown so we do hope to continue to provide at least a basic service for the next month until we can resume in the Church Hall with hot lunches.



ARC FOOD BANK We are delighted that the Arc staff are responding to the need for a local Food Bank. They are raising funds through a Friday virtual coffee morning at 10am. They are also looking for volunteers. They write:

We need volunteers to help us run the food bank. From delivering food packages to fundraising to sorting out the donations, there’s a role for everyone. No food bank experience necessary. Let us know about any skills you could possibly contribute as we’re sure we’ll be able to find a use for them!

BACK TO THE FUTURE One of the regular ways in which everyone can be involved in our services is by reading and leading the prayers. I cannot tell you how bored I am with the sound of my own voice in these streamed services! So as part of the steep learning curve I wonder if we can start inviting people to record the readings on their i-phones and sending these as attachments on Messenger? All you need to do is to use the small circular arrows on the camera tab to make sure you are filming yourself and then make sure the i-phone doesn’t move around while you are reading. The quality of the image and the sound is generally excellent and of course the reading time (for both readings and intercessions) is pretty short. Would you have a go at this please? Offers asap please! One reader and one interceder per week will do fine. This Sunday at 10am: the story of Doubting Thomas...



May God bless every £1 we give so that St James’ will be here, not just for today and for tomorrow, but for the future he wants to create.

Do keep in touch.

Best wishes as always, John