

SS. Joseph & Swithun Parish News

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Fifth Sunday of Lent Year A 22nd March 2026

Readings on Page 170 of the Parish Mass Book

The Gospel account of the raising of Lazarus (John 11:1–45) that we hear this weekend at Mass reveals not only the compassion of Jesus but the depth of His divine identity. This miracle takes place at a crucial moment in Jesus' ministry, just before his Passion, and it serves as a profound invitation to deepen our faith in Jesus. When Jesus receives word that Lazarus is ill, he intentionally delays going to Bethany. This delay is central to the meaning of the miracle for Jesus explains that Lazarus' illness "is for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it." His timing teaches us that God's plans are not always aligned with our expectations. Even in moments when God seems distant, God's purpose is unfolding in ways we cannot yet see.

Upon arriving, Jesus is greeted by Martha, whose faith shines even through her grief. She expresses her sorrow in saying, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died" yet she also professes her trust in him. Jesus meets her honesty with a profound revelation, "Whoever believes in me, even though they die, will live." In these words, Jesus shifts the focus from physical death to the promise of eternal life. Martha's journey mirrors our own disposition that faith is not the absence of sorrow, but the courage to hope in the midst of vulnerability or loss. Perhaps the most moving moment in the narrative is when Jesus weeps at Lazarus' tomb. His tears reveal the tenderness of his heart and his intimate solidarity with human suffering. Jesus does not dismiss grief rather he enters into it, sanctifying it with his presence. But the account does not end in sorrow. Standing before the tomb, Jesus commands, "Lazarus, come out!" And the dead man comes out, still bound in burial cloths. This unique moment prefigures Jesus' own resurrection and demonstrates his authority over death. It is a sign that no grave is too deep, no darkness too heavy, for the life giving power of Christ. The raising of Lazarus invites each of us to reflect on what may be "dead" within our own lives, hope, faith, relationships, or spiritual zeal. Jesus calls us out of whatever binds us, urging us to step into the freedom and light of new life. As we approach Holy Week, this Gospel reminds us to identify all that binds us or keeps us away from Christ and Church; and listen to the voice of Jesus, "unbind him, and let him go".

Fr Saju

Mass Intentions

Saturday 21st March

10.00am Ramona Nazareth RIP
6.00pm Andy Whitelaw RIP
(Bennett)

Sunday 22nd March

5th Sunday of Lent

8.00am People of the Parish
9.15am Vincenzina Grillo RIP
11.00am Jill Browning RIP (Doran)
5.00pm Kevin Quinn RIP (Bristow)
Third Scrutiny

Monday 23rd March

10.00am Mary Neelamkavil RIP

Tuesday 24th March

10.00am Mark Donlan RIP (Heys)
7.30pm Parish Reconciliation Service

Wednesday 25th March

The Annunciation of the Lord

10.00am Antonio Honorato Fernandes RIP

Thursday 26th March

10.00am Souls in Purgatory (Maguire)
11.30am **Funeral: John Dias RIP**

Friday 27th March

10.00am Diane Gascoine RIP

Saturday 28th March

10.00am Anthony Canavan RIP
6.00pm Peter Ward RIP (Adams)

Sunday 29th March Palm Sunday

8.00am Chris Kelly RIP (Sayer)
9.15am Francis Anthony Pillai RIP
11.00am Int. Benny Joseph (Bindu)
5.00pm Emily Sacmar RIP
(Kovalichin)

Our Parish Faith Formation

All those registering to attend one of our Sacramental Preparation Courses are requested to meet with Fr. Saju/ a member of the clergy team during surgery hours with the form duly filled.

Surgeries will be held from 4.30-6.30pm in Holy Trinity House:

Monday: Fr Saju & Deacon Barry/Deacon Garry

Wednesday by Appointment only:

Fr Patrick & Deacon Garry

First Holy Communion Parents Practical Planning Meeting will be held on Thursday 26th March at 7.30pm in Holy Trinity House.

Confirmation Session 4 will be held on Saturday 21st March at 3.45pm in Holy Trinity House.

Easter Offerings. Easter offerings are traditionally your personal gift to your priests in the Parish. The collection taken at our Easter Masses, together with anything placed in the White Easter Offering envelopes constitute your personal gift to Fr Saju and Fr Patrick. White envelopes are now available at the entrance and exit of our two churches. If you are in the Gift Aid Scheme please put your name and postcode on the envelope so that we can claim the tax refund. Envelopes can also be handed in at the Parish Office at any other time. If you wish to make your Easter offering via bank transfer to the parish bank account, please use the following Account:

Name: RCAS St. Swithun Gift Aid

Account Number: 27868508

Sort Code: 60 04 02 **Reference:** Easter
or pay by selecting 'Easter Offerings' on the cashless terminals at the entrances of St. Joseph's Church.

Cafod Lent Reflection:

"Aspire not to have more but to be more"
Saint Oscar Romero

Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) Kindly pray for our RCIA candidates as they prepare to be received into the Church at the Easter Vigil.

Peter Fortune, our local MP, will be attending the 9.15am Mass on Sunday 22nd March and joining for coffee/tea in the hall after the Mass served by our Cafod Group.

Bishop Gerard Bradley, new Auxiliary Bishop of the Southwark Diocese will be celebrating the 11.00am Mass on Palm Sunday 29th March.

Living our Lent

24th March Lent Talk and Parish Lent Reconciliation Service at 7.30pm led by Canon Victor Darlington. If you have not celebrated this sacrament for some time, do not worry about remembering set prayers as we say all our prayers together tonight and the priest will gently guide you through your confession to receive God's love and mercy.

During Lent, Stations of the Cross will be prayed in St. Joseph's Church at the following times:

Wednesdays after the 10.00am Mass and on Fridays at 7.30pm. Please visit the Parish website for information on our Holy Week services.

Confessions in Lent

Tuesday 24th March	7.30-9.00pm
Saturday 28th March	10.30am-12 noon and 5.00-5.45pm
Monday 30th March	10.30-11.30am
Tuesday 31st March	10.30-11.30am

If you would like one of our Pastoral Team to visit a sick or housebound relative please contact the parish office.

Please pray for all those who are sick in our Parish, in nursing homes, in hospitals and the housebound, remembering, Mike Heneghan, Maria Dillane, Paul Lowing, Maureen Webster, Alan O'Donnell, Teresa Cadogan, Gina Clark, John Ammundsen, Stella Ludlum, Catherine Rideout, Betty Byrne, Mary Edwards, Utz & Yoko Reiff, Veronica Alaneme, Bernadette Murray, Maria Lopes, Billie McPartlan, Fr Bob Mercer, Ann Hoolihan, Patricai Lefkaridi, Fr. David Peck and Gail Mortimer.

Please pray for our deceased relatives and friends, remembering, Jill Browning, John Dias, Josephine Farrugia, Robert Fitzpatrick, Lucia Holder, Graham Morton, Ramona Nazareth, Andy Whitelaw, Vencenzia Grillo, Kevin Quin, Mary Neelamkavil, Mark Donlan, Antonio Honorato Fernandes, Diane Gascoine, Anthony Canavan, Peter Ward, Chris Kelly, Francis Anthony Pillai & Emily Sacmar. **May they rest in peace.**

Jubilee Year of St. Francis.

As part of celebrating the Jubilee Year of St. Francis a Night Vigil will be held on 16th/17th October. The Night Vigil will commence with Mass at 7.00pm and conclude with Mass at 6.30am.

St Francis of Assisi is the patron saint of the animals and ecology. In the Jubilee Year, Blessing of Pets will be held on Sunday 4th October 2026 after 11.00am Mass in the Holy Trinity garden. Further details to follow.

Altar Server Sign-Up Sheet for the Easter Triduum is now available in the Altar Servers Sacristy.

The funeral of John Dias RIP will be held on Thursday 26th March at 11.30am in St. Joseph's Church. May he rest in peace.

Holy Week Choir Practice. The choir will meet in the church between 7.00-8.00pm on **Thursday 26th March and Tuesday 31st March.** New members are welcome to join.

Christian Meditation is held on Thursdays at 7.00pm in the Upper Room.

Parish Meditation Group. You are warmly invited to "A Journey of Remembrance" **Spiritual Retreat** led by Mariana Mazzaferri (07428212864) from the Parish Christian Meditation group. A day of guided meditation, stillness and prayer through the **ancient Aramaic teachings of Jesus**, will be held in the quiet beauty of The Friars, Aylesford on Saturday 20th June, from 10am to 4pm (lunch and drinks included). The Holy Mass will be celebrated by Fr Saju at 12 noon. If you wish to attend it, you may reserve your space to this intimate gathering immediately through the Parish office as there are only 12 more spaces available. For further info www.breathofspirit.co.uk

Sacrament of Reconciliation: Saturdays from 10.30-11.30am and 5.00-5.45pm and on request.

Rosary: The Rosary and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament will be prayed in Holy Trinity Chapel between 10.30-11.30am from Monday to Friday. On Saturday it will be in the Church and Confession will be available.

Baptism: You are invited to register for your child's baptism on line: https://www.stjosephsbromley.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Baptism-Registration-Form_July-2025.pdf Please complete and print the form and bring to one of the surgeries on Monday evening in the Parish to meet a deacon/priest in the Holy Trinity House for the completion of the application. The next Baptism Preparation Course will start on Saturday 6th June 2026.

Marriage: Please contact a priest or deacon. **Six Months notice is required.**

Supporting the Parish Parish Finances for last week

Thank you for your continued support and generosity.

Standing Orders:

Average weekly contributions: £1400.00.

Cashless contributions last week:

Mass offerings: £558.00 Building Fund: £35.00

Offertory Collection last week:

St. Joseph's: £ 881.96 St. Swithun's: £159.36

Gift Aid and Standing Order Enquiries:

Please email the Gift Aid Co-Ordinator at: bromleygac@rcaos.org.uk or call the Parish Office on 020 8402 0459.

Please see below the **Cashless Giving QR code.** Please scan the code with your smart phones to make cashless contributions.



Bank transfers for Offertory contributions can be made to the account below:

Short bank account name: **St Josephs Parish**

Bank sort code: **60-04-02**

Account number: **84093595**

Reference: **Please show your surname and initials (eg. Bond J)**

This weekend there will be a second collection for Poor Parishes.

St Joseph's Youth Group for ages 11-18 years of age to be held monthly in the church hall starting on Saturday 25th April from 7.00-9.00pm. Volunteers required to help out with this group. For further information please contact the parish office.

St Swithun's Church
9 Fashoda Road, BR2 9RE

Mass Intentions

Saturday 21st March

6.00pm Benjamin & Margaret Aloysius RIP

Sunday 22nd March

10.00am Antonia Miranda RIP

Monday 23rd March

10.00am Zam Boniface Thanksgiving

Saturday 28th March

6.00pm Francisco Rodrigues &
Juliet Pereira RIP

Sunday 29th March

10.00am People of the Parish

Monday 30th March

10.00am Mark Donlan RIP (Murray)

Stations of the Cross during Lent:

Fridays at 7.00pm

For Mass Intentions please see Nelson

Tea & Coffee will be served in the church hall on
Sundays after the 10.00am Mass.

Confession will be available in St. Swithun's
Church on Saturdays between 5.20-5.45pm.

St Swithun's Hall Bookings: 020 8402-0459

Parish Social

Cancer Café Group will meet again on
Tuesday 31st March from 1.30pm in the Upper
Room next door to the church.

The Dad's Group will meet for a board game
night on Wednesday 25 March at 19.30 in The
Crown, Plaistow Lane at 7.30pm. Please
contact: Richard Barrett on 07729 392936

The Seniors Lunch Group kindly donated
£200.00 to the charity Mary's Meals. The
next Seniors Lunch will be held on **Tuesday
14th April** from 12 noon to 1.30pm in Holy
Trinity House.

Couples Teams. Please join us for an inspiring
information meeting on **Wednesday 1 April at
7:00 pm** in the **Upper Room.** We are delighted
to welcome an experienced couple from **Teams
of Our Lady**, who will share the joys of being
part of a married couples community and
explain how they can guide us in starting our
very own Team. This is a wonderful opportunity
to grow together in faith and friendship, because
following this session, we will decide if we have
enough interest to officially launch this new
ministry. We can't wait to see you there!

Presbytery & Parish Office

Presbytery: 15 Marian Gardens, Bromley BR1 3FH Tel: 020 8402 0459

Parish Office is open from 8.30am to 12.30pm Monday to Friday

Parish Pastoral Team

Fr. Saju Thomas (Parish Priest)

Tel: 020 8402 0459

e: sajuthomas@rcaos.org.uk

Fr Patrick Essien (Asst. Priest)

Tel: 020 8402 0459

e: patrickessien@rcaos.org.uk

Deacon Barry

Tel: 07445 417335

e: barrymellish@rcaos.org.uk

Deacon Aidan

Tel: 07747 036253

e: aidanmcpartlan@rcaos.org.uk

Deacon Garry

Tel: 07766 557213

e: garrycullen@rcaos.org.uk

Parish Secretary: Susan Allatt Email: bromley@rcaos.org.uk

Follow us on **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/ssjosephandswithun/ and **Twitter:** [@SSJosephSwithun](https://twitter.com/SSJosephSwithun)

Surgery Times: 4.30-6.30pm in Holy Trinity House

Mondays: Fr Sau and Deacon Barry/Deacon Garry

Wednesday: Fr Patrick & Deacon Garry by appointment only

St Joseph's and St. Swithun's Hall Bookings: 020 8402 0459

St. Joseph's School: Tel: 020 8460 1976 | Website: www.st-josephs.bromley.sch.uk

Head Teacher: Mrs Cribben

St. Joseph's Playgroup Ltd: Monday-Friday. For enquiries ring: Caroline O'Brien on 07961 413694.