



1. This coming Sunday will be the **Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time**. The readings for Mass can be found on page 144 of the Parish Mass Books. **This coming Wednesday, 2nd March, is ASH WEDNESDAY**. All Catholics will make an effort to get to Mass this day, if possible, to mark the beginning of Lent. **There are 3 Masses at Holy Ghost – 6.45 am, 9.30 am and 8.00 pm**
2. **On the weekend of 26th/27th February**, there will be a retiring collection for the **CLERGY SUPPORT FUND**. The Clergy Support Fund of the Archdiocese of Southwark provides care for priests in their old age and retirement, and in time of ill health. A gift to this worthy fund will ensure a dignified retirement for our priests, after they have dedicated a lifetime of service to Christ, His Church and His people. In 2021, the Clergy Support Fund provided care to 71 retired priests, at a cost of £1.25 million. With the number of priests over the age of 65 steadily increasing, so too will the financial obligation to the Archdiocese. Please be generous with a gift to the Clergy Support Fund, and continue to keep our priests in your prayers. Thank you!
3. **During Lent, there will be a 12.30 lunchtime Mass on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays**. These begin on Friday 4th March and continue until the Wednesday of Holy Week (13th April).
4. **During Lent we will also celebrate the Stations of the Cross on Sundays at 5.15 pm**. This devotion replaces the usual Sunday evening Eucharistic Adoration during Lent. However, there will still be Adoration on Fridays from 10.00 – 11.00 as usual (with Confessions available). The Stations of the Cross are a wonderful way to enter into the spirit of Lent, and we encourage everyone who can to take part.
5. On Sunday 20th March (3rd Sunday of Lent) we will hold a special **Stations of the Cross for Children**, also at 5.15 pm. We invite children in school years 3 – 6 to volunteer as readers for this service (the volunteers must be able to attend a short rehearsal at 4.45 that day). If your child would like to volunteer, please fill in and complete one of the slips in the church porch).

6. **During Lent, we will be holding three LENTEN TALKS.** These respond to the request for more adult formation, which came out strongly from our recent parish consultation for the Synodal Process. All talks will take place in church, at 8.00 pm, and then there will be light refreshments (with the chance to meet the speaker and ask questions) in the crypt. The first talk will be on Wednesday 16th March and will be given by Fr Gerard Bradley, for many years Spiritual Director at St John's Seminary, Wonersh. His talk will be on '**Learning to Pray with Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane**'. The second talk will be on Tuesday 22nd March, and will be given by Catholic author and journalist, Joanna Bogle. She will speak on **Sister Riccarda Hambrough**, a saintly Catholic nun who hid Jews fleeing persecution during World War II. The final talk will be on Tuesday 5th April, just before Holy Week, and will be given by Fr. Marcus Holden, previously an assistant priest at Holy Ghost, and now Parish Priest of St Bede's Clapham Park. He is also Episcopal Vicar for Catechesis and Evangelisation in our diocese. He will speak on **the Passion and Crucifixion of Jesus**, drawing on his own experiences in the Holy Land, where he walked the original 'via dolorosa'. Do come along to inform and deepen your faith!

7. Fr Marcus Holden, one of our Lenten speakers, has also written **a new book of meditations for the Stations of the Cross** – **these are illustrated by photographs of our own Stations of the Cross here at Holy Ghost**, which are very beautiful and moving. This little book is on sale in the church porch, together with other suitable Lenten reading. You can watch a podcast of Fr Marcus discussing these meditations by following this link:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qg8XnuACw9g>

8. A request that arose from our recent discussions around the Synod, was that we should have welcomers to greet people arriving at Sunday Mass (building on the positive experience we had of the 'stewards' who assisted during the pandemic. **We are therefore looking for people who would be happy to volunteer as welcomers** – if you would be interested, please email the parish office – balham@rcaos.org.uk

9. Holy Ghost Primary School are holding a school tour for prospective parents on Tuesday 8th March – **see full details on the next post of this news page.**

With our prayers and blessing,

Fr. Richard and Fr. Giovanni