



Dear Parents,

Welcome to our Autumn Newsletter for Families at Saint Michael's.

## NEW BEGINNINGS

September always feels like a new beginning, but even more so this year as schools reopen, and with ongoing restrictions making everything rather different. As many of you prepare for children to return to education, I want to assure you of my prayers and tell you what we are doing at St Michael's over this term for children and families. May the Lord bless you and your family at this difficult time.

*Father Stephen, Vicar*

## WORSHIP at SAINT MICHAEL'S for FAMILIES

**The most important thing to say is children are welcome at every service.**

At the same time we are generally encouraging families, where possible, to attend the 11.30am Children's Mass so that we can spread the congregation across different services. The 11.30am service will take place every Sunday except the last Sunday of the month.

Unfortunately, for the time being, there will not be Sunday School at the 10am Sung Mass, but we hope to use this time to reimagine Sunday School and relaunch it in the near future.

We also won't be holding our monthly 10am Family Mass. Instead, we will keep Harvest, All Saints, and other special days at the 11.30am. However, older children will still be invited to do readings and lead the prayers at the 10am Sung Mass on these days.

Please take a look at the revised calendar overleaf for a full list of what's going on.

## BACK TO SCHOOL SERVICE

**Sunday 6th September 11.30am**

With this mailing you'll find an invite to our 'Back to School Service' this coming Sunday. I recognise that for some parents and children the return to school is something to be celebrated, whereas for others it is concerning. In this special service we will bring our joys and our anxieties before God for his help and blessing. Children are encouraged to bring a school item to be blessed (e.g. piece of uniform, pencil case, new bag etc).



## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY LEADER

**Clover Summers**

I'm delighted to introduce to you Clover Summers, who is taking on a volunteer role which we have called 'Children's Ministry Leader'. Clover's role will be to help us develop and support our ministry among children and families, especially at this challenging time and to further Saint Michael's mission as a church for all ages. Clover says: *"In normal times (whatever they are!), I am a civil servant working on climate change policies. At the moment I'm on a career break to look after our three children (aged 7, 5 and 3). I've been coming to Saint Michael's since around 2005 with my husband Bennet, and I'm really looking forward to getting more involved with church life."* Soon you'll be able to contact Clover by email on [children@stmichaelbarnes.org](mailto:children@stmichaelbarnes.org) and she will be 'launched' on 6th September!

## EVENTS for OLDER CHILDREN and TEENAGERS

We hope to continue our popular series of worship and socials for older children with an event on the evening of Sunday 11th October c.6pm – restrictions permitting. Further information about this to follow shortly, but please put the date in your diary if your child is in Year 7 or older.

## FEELING SAFE and CONFIDENT at CHURCH

Finally, I want all parents and children to feel confident about the safety of coming to church. We are taking every precaution in terms of social-distancing, face-coverings for adults, sanitising, cleaning, track-and-trace system, ventilation and so much more! As Christians, coming to worship at church is important for our faith, and although I recognise there will be special reasons why now isn't yet the right time to return for a small number of people, but for most church will perhaps be safer than many other activities taking place at this time. *If you have any questions or concerns please don't hesitate to get in touch.*

### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**Sundays at 11.30am - Children's Mass** (except the last Sunday of the month).

- 6th September            11.30am **'Back to School Service'** and welcome Clover Summers as Children's Ministry Leader. *Bring a school item to be blessed.*
- 27th September        **10am Michaelmas Patronal Festival**, children invited to dress as angels/knights. *N.B. No 11.30am Mass today as last Sunday in the month. It may be necessary to introduce advance 'booking' for this service.*
- 4th October             11.30am **Harvest Festival Children's Mass.**  
*Please bring non-perishable food items to donate to our local foodbank.*
- 11th October            c.6pm **Older children and teenagers service and social** TBC
- 18th October            10am **Fr Martin's First Mass** (following his ordination as a priest the day before).  
*It may be necessary to introduce advance 'booking' for this service.*  
*N.B. 11.30am Children's Mass will be at 12 Noon.*
- 25th October            6pm **Confirmation Mass** with the Bishop of Southwark (no 10am or 11.30am Masses). Come and support the children being confirmed.  
*It may be necessary to introduce advance booking for this service.*
- 1st November           11.30am **Children's Mass for All Saints**  
**6pm Bonfire Party.** *TBC, restrictions permitting.*
- 8th November          11.30am **Children's Mass for Remembrance Sunday**
- 22nd November        11.30am **Children's Mass for Christ the King**

*Services for Advent and Christmas will be advertised nearer the time.*

