

# NEWSLETTER

## CATHOLIC CHURCHES OF ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY, CANTERBURY & ST DUNSTAN'S, HERSDEN, KENT

ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY

59 Burgate, Canterbury, CT1 2HJ

Telephone: **01227 462896**

Email: **canterbury@rcaos.org.uk**

Web Site: **https://stthomasofcanterbury.com**

Facebook: **St Thomas of Canterbury**

ST DUNSTAN'S, HERSDEN

16 East View, Hersden, CT3 4HH

Telephone: **01227 462896**

Email: **hersden@rcaos.org.uk**



Parish Priest:

Assistant Priests:

Parish Administrator:

**Canon Anthony Charlton**

**Fr Giovanni Prandini**

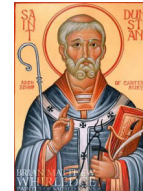
**Fr Mark Wharton**

**Miss Linda Scott (based at St Thomas)**

email: **anthonycharlton@rcaos.org.uk**

email: **giovanniprandini@rcaos.org.uk**

email: **markwharton@rcaos.org.uk**



**Parish Office** open **Mon, Tues, Thurs & Fri: 10am to 3.00pm (closed 1pm to 1.30pm)**

**St Thomas' Shop** (01227 462896): Open **Sundays from after 9.30 Mass until 12 noon**

**University of Kent Chaplaincy:** Chaplain: **Fr Mark Wharton** (**markwharton@rcaos.org.uk**)

**St Thomas' Catholic Primary School:** Head Teacher: **Miss Lisa D'Agostini** (01227 462539)

**St Anselm's Catholic Secondary School:** Executive Principal: **Mr M Walters**; Academy Principal: **Mr J Rowarth** (01227 826200)

### ST THOMAS' (All Masses are Livestreamed)

6.00pm (Vigil): Joel Pinto birthday wishes (*Brett Pereira*)  
 7.30pm: *Accompanying our Lady in Advent*  
**Sunday 17th Dec: 3rd Sunday of Advent (B)** Jn 1: 6-8, 19-28  
 8.00am: Fr Richard Hearne - RIP (*Fran Connellan*)  
 9.30am: Pat and John Ware - RIP (*Annie Judge*)  
 11.00am: Deceased members of the Paterson Family (*G&E Yates*)  
 12.30pm: *Baptism of Beauen Airey*  
 4.00pm: **NO Confirmation Classes in Hall until January 2024**  
 6.00pm: People of the Parish

#### Monday 18th Dec: Feria *Mt 1: 18-24*

7.30am: William Edwards - RIP  
 12 noon: Intentions of the SVP (*Monica Spratley*)  
 6.00pm: Live streamed Evening Prayer  
 7.30pm: *Parish Reconciliation Service*

#### Tuesday 19th Dec: Feria *Lk 1: 5-25*

7.30am: **NO EARLY MASS TODAY**  
 12 noon: Marcus Pinto (*Brett Pereira*)  
 7.00pm: *RCIA*  
 6.00pm: Live streamed Evening Prayer

#### Wednesday 20th Dec: Feria *Lk 1: 26-38*

7.30am: Norman Pereira (*Brett Pereira*)  
 10.30 - 11.30am: Reconciliation  
 12 noon: Welfare of the Archer Family (*Monica Spratley*)  
*Tea & Coffee in the hall after Mass*  
 6.00pm: Live streamed Evening Prayer

#### Thursday 21st Dec: Feria *Lk 1: 39 - 45*

7.30am: Bridie Filmour - RIP  
 12 noon: Mr & Mrs W Heyes (*Sheila Schlarmann*)

#### Friday 22nd Dec: Feria *Lk 1: 46-56*

12 noon: Funeral Mass of the late Judith Roser  
*Adoration and Benediction after Mass until 1.30pm*  
 7.30pm: Intentions of Ashley Marchington

#### Saturday 23rd Dec: Feria *Lk 1: 57-66*

10.30 - 11.30am: Reconciliation  
 12 noon: Mary and William Clancy - RIP  
 3.00 - 4.00pm: *Free Music Concert in the church*  
 4.30pm: *Legion of Mary meeting in Upper Room*  
 4.30 - 5.30pm: Reconciliation

6.00pm (Vigil): Sheila & Alan Lloyd - RIP (*Scott Family*)

#### Sunday 24th Dec: 4th Sunday of Advent (B) *Lk 1: 26-38*

8.00am: Philip & Charles Ryan - RIP (*Pauline Ryan*)  
 9.30am: Becky Judge - RIP  
 11.00am: All Souls (*Vinod Family*)

#### Christmas Eve

6.00pm: Vigil Mass of Christmas - Michael Reynolds - RIP (*Mary*)  
 11h30: Carols and First Mass of Christmas - People of the Parish

### ST DUNSTAN'S

Sunday Mass at 10am

#### Sunday 17th Dec: 3rd Sunday of Advent (B) *Jn 1:6-8, 19-28*

10.00am: People of the Parish  
*Second Collection for the St Vincent de Paul Society*

#### Sunday 24th Dec: 4th Sunday of Advent (B) *Lk 1: 26-38*

10.00am: People of the Parish

#### Please remember in your prayers:

Marie Strong, Angeline Frizell, Luisa Ward, Janette Hughes, Pat Gibson, Jenni Aldridge, Josie Price, Mary Reynolds, Brian Wicker, Joan Sutton, Audrey Martin, Elizabeth Gilhenny, Lucy Purbrick, Angela Nichols, Tom Carr, Mary Jeffries, Noreen Egan, Germaine Reid, Heather Dandison, Maria Krynicki, John Kieley, Richard Sexton, Frank Basquil, Judith Parsons, Therese Punnett, Andrew Burton, Pauline Ventress, Micheline Ambrosine, Jean Crane, Joyce Wharton, David Tully, Pat Andrews, Gerry Buckels, Patrick Lyons, Caine Libin and Matthew Young.

#### Please pray for the repose of the souls of:

Anthony Andrews, Barbara Brett, Pamela Scott, Canon Michael Bunce, Michael Mansbridge, Michael Hood-Cree, Ron Green, Veronica Troope, Peter Dunbar-Johnson OBE, Sr Rose Penter, Bruce Johnson, Anita Johnson, Mary Mariasy, Russell Thompson, Gabriel Mendes, William Edwards Jr, Sister Helen Reynolds, Betty Scott, Molly Kelly, Nan Weber, Gail Wharton, William Quinn, Barbara Markham, Sancho Vibal, Fr Kevin St Aubyn, Eva Lee, Nicholas Murphy, Cecilia Adekunle, Deirdre Mills, Janet Rogers, Judith Ross, Lewis Rising, Heinz Vogel, Bill Parker, Sr John Baptist and Judith Roser.

#### Please pray for those whose 1st anniversaries are in December 2023:

Cecilia De Medeiros, Susan Nolan, Barbara Brett, James Burleigh, Sr Stella Clifford and Mary Dittrich

#### ST THOMAS' SECOND AND OTHER COLLECTIONS:

This weekend: **16/17 December**. SVP - please give generously as usual.  
 Next weekend: **23/24 December**. No Second Collection this weekend.



**St Thomas' Baptism Preparation:** To all parents wishing to have their children Baptised...our next preparation meeting will be on **Saturday, 6 January, 2024** at 9.00 am in the Presbytery. Places are limited so call the office to book. Please fill in a Registration Form in advance (from office or online)

#### POPE'S PRAYER INTENTION FOR DECEMBER 2023

##### For persons with disabilities

We pray that people living with disabilities may be at the centre of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusive programs which value their active participation.

## From Fr Anthony...

There was a road in suburban South London where neighbours would vie at this time of the year to outdo one another in seeing who could have the most Christmas light decorations on the outside of their houses. People would come and drive down this street just to admire the spectacle. According to Homebase, the British will put up enough festive lights to go to the moon and back 15 times. Light is an essential element of the seasons of Advent and Christmas.

For us, it's only when the Christmas lights are up that it truly feels like the most wonderful time of the year. One of my favourite verses is from the book of Wisdom which reads, "For while gentle silence enveloped all things, and night in its swift course was now half gone, thy all-powerful word leaped from heaven, from the royal throne, into the midst of the land that was doomed." That word which leaped down was the Light. We hear in the Gospel today that John the Baptist was to be a witness to speak for the light. In Psalm 119 we find this declaration: "Thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." Jesus is the living word and he is the light that shines in the darkness. Our Christmas lights on the tree, outside the house and in our city centres, declare that in the midst of darkness there will be light.

We are aware of the darkness that covers our world, as seen in the death and destruction in Israel and Gaza and in Ukraine. There is also the darkness that many of us feel enveloping lives, the darkness of jealousy, greed, hatred and selfishness. In John 8:12 Jesus applies the title to himself while debating with the Jews and states: "I am the Light of the World. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

Whenever I visit the National Gallery in London I like to go and stand before a small devotional painting done by Geertgen tot Sint Jans ('little Gerard of the Brethren of Saint John'). It depicts the nativity scene. Jesus is not in traditional swaddling clothes. Instead, the tiny naked child exudes rays of supernatural light which illuminate the night-time scene - referred to as "one of the first realistically painted night scenes in Northern art." As the commentators say: It is so dark that you can barely make out Joseph standing behind to the right or the faces of the ox and ass as they too look into the manger at the unexpected contents. The light emanating from the Christ Child lights up the faces of the little angels and emphasises their wonderment at his miraculous birth.

Here is a wonderful image of Jesus the Light of the World.

Loving Lord, you are the light that banished the darkness in my heart, the darkness that envelopes our world. Come and shed the rays of your healing love on us all today.

## ST THOMAS' PARISH MATTERS

**PRIESTS' CHRISTMAS OFFERING** Our offerings on the Christmas weekend do not form part of our regular parish giving. They are wholly a thank you directly to our Priest's; so please give generously in the envelopes (in the benches) and return when convenient to any collection or the office before Fri, 12 January 2024

**PARISH FUNDRAISING:** Our Social Committee are delighted to report that your generosity this year has raised the following for our parish funds:

(1) the Auction of Promises £2,279.50

(2) the Quiz night £575.00

(3) the Christmas Fair £653.06

A Grand Total of **£3507.56**

At the request of Canon Anthony, this sum will go towards helping pay for the long needed repairs and cleaning of the beautiful stained glass window at the back of the sanctuary.

Thank you all for the funds and for your company that made these events such great parish occasions.

Watch *The Surprise*, a wonderful play by Catholic author GK Chesterton this Christmas, Sunday 24th December at 3.30pm online [www.ewtn.co.uk](http://www.ewtn.co.uk) or on sky 586. For GK Chesterton Prayers see: [www.CatholicGKChestertonSociety.co.uk](http://www.CatholicGKChestertonSociety.co.uk)

**Christmas Fair** thank you to all who supported our fair. It was a lovely festive atmosphere. We raised £653.06 for our parish. Raffle winners are #163 Nicole, #297 Sheldon, #418 Magalie, #710 Diana, #660 Sophie

**Pilates Classes with Jennifer Bintley will resume in January 2024:** Mat Classes on Wednesday the 3rd Jan and Seated & Standing Classes on Tuesday Jan 9th. Newcomers welcome

**Completed Craft Angels** to be returned to 930am Mass Sunday 17th December or to St Thomas Shop so they can be displayed in the Church over Christmas.

**ARCHDIOCESE OF SOUTHWARK CATHOLIC DIRECTORY 2024** available for purchase in the Shop: £6 plain and £6.75 spiral bound

St Gregory's Catholic School in Tunbridge Wells are recruiting for a Lay Chaplain. Details of the vacancy are on Kent Teach (<https://www.kent-teach.com/Recruitment/Vacancy/VacancyDetails.aspx?VacancyId=126521>). For queries: Kat Bargiel (HR), email ([hr@sgschool.org.uk](mailto:hr@sgschool.org.uk)) or ph. 01892 527444 Ext.1131

## CHRISTMAS MASSES. SUNDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER. 4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

As Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday this year, and as many parishes have a Sunday evening Mass, the question has been raised as to whether a Mass on the evening of Christmas Eve should be the Mass of the 4th Sunday of Advent or a Vigil Mass of Christmas. Given the fact that many parishes will have a Vigil Mass and a Mass During the Night on Christmas Eve, it would be practical that the arrangement would be for Masses to fulfil the obligation of the 4th Sunday of Advent to be celebrated on Saturday evening and on the morning of Sunday the 24<sup>th</sup> Dec, and that any Mass on the evening of the 24<sup>th</sup> Dec would be a Mass of Christmas. The Directory refers to the evening of 24<sup>th</sup> Dec as Christmas Eve, and therefore any Mass celebrated in the evening as being a Mass for the Feast of Christmas.

**PARISH OFFICE:** Please note that the Parish Office will be closed from 22 December until 29th December. It will reopen on Tuesday, 2nd January 2024.

## ST DUNSTAN'S PARISH MATTERS

We welcome Fr Robert McCulloch who will be saying Christmas Masses at St Dunstan's