NEWSLETTER

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

ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY
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ST DUNSTAN'S, HERSDEN
East View, Hersden, CT3 4HH
Telephone: ***01227 462896***
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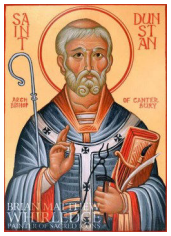
Parish Priest: **Canon Anthony Charlton** *email:* ***anthonycharlton@rcaos.org.uk***
Assistant Priest: **Fr Michael Etuka** *email:* ***michaeletuka@rcaos.org.uk***
Parish Administrator: **Miss Linda Scott** (*based at St Thomas'*)

Parish Office open **Mon, Tues & Fri: 10am to 3.00pm (closed 1pm to 1.30pm), Thurs 10am - 1pm**
St Thomas' Shop *(01227 462896): Open* ***Sundays*** *from* ***after 9.30 Mass until 12 noon***
University of Kent Chaplaincy: *Chaplain:* ***Fr James Yakubu (MSP)*** *(07885 795962)*
St Thomas' Catholic Primary School: Head Teacher: ***Mrs H Seager-Fleming*** *(01227 462539)*
St Anselm's Catholic Secondary School: Head Teacher: ***Mr J Rowarth*** *(01227 826200)*



ST THOMAS' (All Masses are Livestreamed)

6.00pm (Vigil): Irene Ratnam - RIP

Friends of the Holy Land Appeal

Sunday 29th Nov: 1st Sunday of Advent (B) *Mk 13: 33-37*
8.00am: People of the Parish
9.30am: Hannah Loughran - RIP
with Children's Liturgy
11.00am: Marcus Pinto - RIP
12:30pm: *Baptism of Finn Poile and Eliana Garcia*
4.00pm: *Confirmation Session in the Hall*
4.00pm: Youth Group meeting in the Church
6.00pm: Brown and Delaney Families - welfare

Monday 30th Nov: St Andrew *Mt 4: 18-22*
12 noon: Deceased Clergy of the Canterbury & Thanet Deaneries

Tuesday 1st December: Sts Edmund Campion, Ralph Sherwin and Alexander Briant *Lk 10: 21-24*
12 noon: Emma's welfare
7.00pm: RCIA in the Hall
7.30pm: Charismatic Prayer Group meets in the Upper Room

Wednesday 2nd Dec: Feria *Mt 15: 29-37*
10.30 - 11.30am: *Reconciliation and Adoration*
12 noon: Elizabeth - welfare
7pm-8pm Prayer (Adoration) and Pub

Thursday 3rd Dec: St Francis Xavier *Mt 7:21, 24-27*
7.30am: Paulina Munita - RIP
12 noon: Rebecca Ward and Family - wellbeing
Scripture Group in Upper Room after Mass (byo lunch)

Friday 4th Dec: St John Damascene *Mt 9: 27-31*
12 noon: Deceased membrs of the Evans & MacDonnell Families
Adoration after Mass

Saturday 5th Dec: St John Almond *Mt 9:35 - 10:1, 5-8*
9.00am: *Parents' Baptism Preparation Meeting*
9.00am: First Holy Communion Classes in the Hall
10.30 - 11.30am: *Reconciliation and Adoration*
12 noon: Sean Clancy's intentions
4.30 - 5.30pm: *Reconciliation*
4.30pm: Legion of Mary meet in the Upper Room

6.00pm (Vigil): Roy and Joan Olsen - welfare

Sunday 6th Dec: 2nd Sunday of Advent (B) *Mk 1: 1-8*
8.00am: People of the Parish
9.30am: Ofelia Salgado - RIP
with Children's Liturgy
11.00am: Michael Sunday Chukwuelue - RIP
4.00pm: *Confirmation Session in the Hall*
6.00pm: Maureen and Syd Pepper - RIP

Mary's Meals Appeal

ST DUNSTAN'S
Sunday Mass at 10am

Sunday 29th Nov: 1st Sunday of Advent (B) *Mt 13: 33-37*
10.00am: People of the Parish

Saturday, 5th Nov: *Hersden Christmas Party at 2.30pm - the Artroom, Euphrasia Barbier*

Sunday 6th Dec: 2nd Sunday of Advent (B) *Mk 1: 1-8*
10.00am: People of the Parish

PRAYER REMEMBRANCES

Please remember in your prayers:
St Thomas': Angeline Frizell, Janette Hughes, Jenni Aldridge, Josie Price, Brian Wicker, Richard Sexton, Therese Punnett, Andrew Burton, Pat Andrews, Patrick Lyons, Caine Libin, Arthur Noronha, Pauline Ryan, Juliet Nakabugo, Marie David Ambroisine, , Mary De Wolf, Brian Collins, Louis de Marigny, Augustine Barna, David Lewis, John Mathew, Jean Matthews, Tom Hill, Geraldine Ross, Anne Robinson, Antoinette Wilde, Mary Connolly, Jenny Todd, David Man-Cheung, Margaret Berry, Carol Cotton, Fermina Ortega, Alice Mathai, Paula Smith, David Evans, Gerry Buckles, Kathy Starnes, Patti Earl, Alexander Oligo, Jenny Jones, Ann Hill, Honor Blake, Tony Grace, Fr Mark White, Fr Peter Geldard, Jean Pegg, Catherine Lavelle, Helen Brazier, Anne Starnes and Archbishop John Wilson
St Dunstan's: Kay Gandon , Miguel Vazquez, Yveline Vereeche, Pete Covill, Eileen Brown, and Mo, Doug and Ryan Joyce

Please pray for the repose of the souls of:
St Thomas': Anne Thirkell, Angela Nichols, Ashton Harrington, Audrey Martin, Diane Fenn, Elodoro Evangelio, Danny Rikh, Pauline Ventress, Anne Queenan, Fr George Marsden, Canon Alan McLean, Marjery Craig, Una Harris, Peter Bruff , Paula Smith, Heather Dandison, Ann Pereira, MarK Witz, Fr Tom Scannell , Gerald Reilly, Peter Darling and Alan Everson
St Dunstan's: Marion Nash, Lorna Hazelwood, Irene Foster, Sr Marian McCouaig, Martina Morrissey and Lynette Dawn Reed, Sr Margaret Rose Hughes, Sr Bridgid Kennedy and Sr Bernadine Corcoran

Please pray for those with 1st anniversaries in November 2026:
There are no anniversaries in November 2026 - please remember all the dead of the parish.



St Thomas' Baptism Preparation: To all parents wishing to have their children Baptised; our next preparation meeting will be on **Saturday, 5th December** at 9.00 am in the Presbytery. Places are limited so call or email the office to book. Please fill in a Registration Form in advance (available from office, online or in the Narthex)

From Fr Anthony ...

Advent and the Hidden Life of Nazareth

In the special Advent edition of the magazine *The Ransomer*, there was a list of some of the special feasts we celebrate during Advent: St Nicholas on 6th December, the Immaculate Conception on 8th December, Our Lady of Guadalupe on 12th December and St Lucy on 13th December. I was disappointed, however, to see that the list did not include the feast of one of my favourite saints, Charles de Foucauld.

His feast falls on 1st December, the anniversary of his death. Born in 1858 into an aristocratic French family, Charles was orphaned at the age of six. As a teenager, he abandoned his Catholic faith and later joined the French army. Following a profound conversion, he returned to the faith and became a Trappist monk. Ordained a priest in 1901, at the age of 43, he travelled to North Africa, desiring to live among those he described as "the furthest removed, the most abandoned".

Living in the Sahara among the Tuareg people, he welcomed all who came to him, regardless of their religion. He wanted to become a universal brother, witnessing to the love of Christ through friendship, hospitality and service. He devoted himself to studying the language and culture of the Tuareg people. He was killed at Tamanrasset on 1st December 1916. He was beatified in 2005 and canonised by Pope Francis in 2022.

What is it that I find so attractive about him? It is his spirituality of the hidden life of Nazareth. He believed that he was called to imitate the ordinary, humble life of Jesus in Nazareth, proclaiming the Gospel not so much through words as through the witness of his life. This is a profoundly counter-cultural message in an age obsessed with noise, visibility and recognition.

In his final encyclical, *Dilexit Nos* (He Loved Us), Pope Francis presents Charles de Foucauld as a witness to the transforming power of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. He writes that Brother Charles: "sought to imitate Jesus by living and acting as he did, in a constant effort to do what Jesus would have done in his place. Only by being conformed to the sentiments of the heart of Christ could he fully achieve this goal."

In a world that prizes power, prestige and productivity, Brother Charles reminds us that holiness is often found in humility, hiddenness and love for the poor and forgotten. How fitting it is that we celebrate his feast at the beginning of Advent, a season of quiet preparation, patient expectation and watchful waiting. Brother Charles reminds us that we do not need to do extraordinary things to encounter Christ or to make him known to others. We can do so in the ordinary circumstances of our daily lives, through small acts of kindness, generosity and love.

Perhaps this Advent we might ask ourselves: where is God inviting me to embrace something of the hidden life of Nazareth? Can I serve others without seeking recognition, make more room for silence and prayer, and discover the presence of Christ in those whom society so easily overlooks?

ST THOMAS' PARISH MATTERS

POPE'S PRAYER INTENTION FOR DECEMBER 2026

For single-parent families.

Let us pray for families experiencing the absence of a mother or father, that they may find support and accompaniment in the Church, and help and strength in the Faith during difficult times.

ST THOMAS' SECOND AND OTHER COLLECTIONS:
This weekend: **28/29 November 2026**: Friends of the Holy Land Appeal
Next Weekend: **05/06 December 2026**: Mary's Meals Appeal

UCM Canterbury cake and book sale 29th November 10:30am in the church hall supporting HCPT Easter Children's Pilgrimage. Donations welcome on the day.

Christmas Fair 13th December 10:30-1pm A family friendly event
Raffle , Tombola, Preloved stalls, tea and cakes. Father Christmas and lots more. We would be grateful for donations Any contribution is appreciated. No donation is too small. Donations can be made up to Saturday, 12th December. These can be dropped off in the All-Saints Chapel in the church. Homemade cakes (on the day please) There will be lots more stalls and activities including Father Christmas. If you can help on the day or would like to book a stall to promote your business (limited availability) please contact socialstthomasrc@gmail.com
All monies raised go towards our church projects.

Advent Retreats
December 4th: 'Light in the Darkness.' A Retreat Day at Minster Abbey.
December 7th- 11th: Advent online Retreat with daily inspirational speakers.
Contact Eddie Gilmore: gileag@gmail.com www.eddiegilmore.org

OFFER YOUR LOVING SERVICE: On 5th December, CTC (Christians Together Canterbury) ***Shine Your Light*** event takes place in Rose Square. Please consider becoming involved, and if interested, contact Sophie at sophm@hotmail.com

AFRICAN COMMUNITY MASS: Please save the date in your diaries for our celebration on **20th December 2026 at 1pm** in the church and then in the hall.

SCRIPTURE GROUP CHRISTMAS BREAK: the Scripture Group's Christmas break will be from December 10th until January 7th.

Archbishop John Wilson underwent a successful surgical procedure earlier this week and is now recovering in hospital. We ask you to keep him in your prayers as he resets and recuperates before returning to his usual duties. There is a card in the Saints Chapel which parishioners can sign.

2ND COLLECTION: FRIENDS OF THE HOLY LAND APPEAL. This weekend, Chris Timmins of Friends of the Holy Land , will visit our parish and speak about the work of the Friends and the difference it makes to the small Christian population in Palestine, Israel, and Jordan. Leaflets/newsletters about the work of FHL will be available or for more information, visit www.friendsoftheholyland.org.uk

Daily Reflection for Advent: As an aid to personal prayer during Advent, the Spirituality Commission have produced a helpful daily reflection based on the readings for the day. Each is short, practical and calls us to action. All who register will receive an email each morning directly to their inbox! To sign up - here is the link http://eepurl.com/dcNmsv or you can take a look at their website www.southwarkdsc.org.uk and click on the box marked ADVENT REFLECTIONS.

HCPT Children's Easter Pilgrimage to Lourdes 28th March – 3rd April 2027
Would you like to join Group 87 as a volunteer helper?
Do you know, or could you sponsor, a child who could benefit from thisvery special experience? Find out more from:: anniejudge@hotmail.com,
mob: 07866515797. Leaflets in the narthex, www.hcpt.org.uk

SRI LANKAN LUNCH FUNDRAISER FOR MARY'S MEALS
Sunday 6 December, from 11.00am onwards
Come and enjoy a delicious Sri Lankan lunch while supporting the wonderful work of Mary's Meals. All proceeds will help provide school meals for hungry children around the world.

ST DUNSTAN'S PARISH MATTERS

SAVE THE DATE: The **Hersden Parish Christmas Party** takes place in The Art Room, Euphrasie Barbier on Saturday, 5th December 2026 from 2.30pm to 4.30pm. See the poster for details.