

PRAY FOR THE SICK

Anniversaries:

Christine Harris, Mary Wynne, Arthur Finch, Patrick White, Margaret Allcorn, Johanna (Judy) Gilmartin, Alicia Grover, Henry Hughes, Raymond Hynes, Eleanor O'Sullivan, Charles Kairis, Sr. Marie Murphy, Michael Smith, Victoria Thompson, Dorian Whitehead, John Mill, Ivy White, Rosalind Burton, May Tudisca, Oliver (Patrick) Carr, Ellen Coyle, Virginia Crook, Doris L'Estrange.

Christmas offering for the Friars

As you know it is the practice that the loose plate offerings made at the Christmas masses are your personal offerings for the Friars. For those of you who pay by standing order we will have envelopes available in which you can place your donation and this will enable that donation to be gift aided.
Thank you.

SATURDAY & SUNDAY MASSES

1st Mass: 6pm Saturday;
8.30am; 10am & 11.30am Sunday
(The 11.30am Mass is recorded)



Join us for tea/coffee after Sunday Mass in the Becket Centre
10.00am Chigwell Convent

WEEKDAY MASSES

10.00am St Thomas'
9.30am Chigwell Convent except on Saturday's when mass takes place at 10am

CONFESSIONS

Saturdays 10.30am to 11am
and
5.15pm to 5.45 pm

BAPTISMS

1st and 3rd Sundays
of the month

Thank you

The SVP would like to thank you for your kind donation of £1,261. This will be used to help families in our community.

St Vincent De Paul Society

Are you in urgent need –
financial or other?
Call us on 07547 491067 and
leave a message. We will call
you back



ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY

Woodford Green

A FAIRTRADE PARISH

Parish Office: 020 8504 1686

Friary: 020 8504 1688

Email: parishoffice@stthomaswoodford.org



Website: www.stthomaswoodford.org

Facebook: @STOCWoodford

Twitter: @STOCWoodford



Third Sunday of Advent (A) 14th December 2025

Please note the nearest Fire Exit to you whilst you are in the Church

This Third Sunday of Advent is traditionally called Gaudete Sunday. *Gaudete*, meaning "rejoice", is the first word of the Entrance Antiphon and sets a tone of joyful expectation for our celebration. The readings summon us to a joyful hope in the coming again of the Lord, who will turn our tears to joy as he enters our wilderness as the servant who saves

First Reading Isaiah 35:1-6 10

The wilderness and the dry land will rejoice and blossom at the Lord's coming.

Responsorial Psalm

Come, Lord, and save us.

Second Reading James 5:7-10

Be patient and do not grumble, for the Lord's coming is at hand.

Gospel Matthew 11:2-11

Jesus is the one who brings true hope in the midst of our wilderness, bringing healing to all and proclaiming the kingdom, especially to the poor.

Rejoice!

JOHN THE BAPTIST PREPARES FOR JESUS

We may have been by the contrast between John the Baptist's severe words to the Pharisees and Sadducees and the much milder tone of Jesus. John is the last of the Old Testament prophets and Jesus follows them and is schooled by them but also brings something new. This is what Pope Leo says about it.

Dear brothers and sisters, happy Sunday!

The Gospel for this second Sunday of Advent announces the coming of the Kingdom of God (cf. *Mt* 3:1-12). Before Jesus's public ministry, John the Baptist, his precursor, appears on the scene. John preached in the desert of Judea saying: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near!" (*Mt* 3:1). In the "Our Father" we pray each day: "Thy kingdom come", as Jesus himself taught us. With this invocation we turn towards the new thing that God has in store for us, recognizing that the course of history is not already written by the powerful people of this world. Let us, then, put our thoughts and energy at the service of God who came not to reign over us, but rather to free us. This is the "gospel", the truly good news that motivates and draws us in. Certainly, in his preaching, the Baptist's tone is severe. Nonetheless, the people listen attentively because they hear resounding in his words God's plea to take life seriously, to take advantage of the present moment in order to prepare themselves for the encounter with him who judges, not by appearance, but by the deeds and intentions of the heart.

This same John will be surprised at the manner in which the Kingdom of God manifests itself in Jesus Christ, in meekness and in mercy.

The prophet Isaiah compared Jesus to a sprout: an image not of power or destruction, but of birth and newness. Upon the shoot, which sprouts forth from a seemingly dead tree trunk, the Holy Spirit begins gently to blow its gifts (cf. *Is* 11:1-10). Each one of us can think of a similar surprise that has happened to us in life.

This, too, is what the Church experienced in the Second Vatican Council, which concluded exactly sixty years ago. It is an experience that is renewed when we journey together toward the Kingdom of God with everyone eager to welcome and serve it. When the Kingdom comes to fruition, not only will those things which seem weak or marginal bud forth, but even those things which humanly speaking would be impossible will also be brought to fulfillment. In the images given by the prophet: "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them" (*Is* 11:6).

Sisters and brothers, how much the world needs this hope! Nothing is impossible to God. Let us prepare ourselves for his Kingdom, let us welcome it. The little child, Jesus of Nazareth will lead us! He who placed himself in our hands, from the night of his birth to the dark hour of his death on the cross, shines upon our history as the rising Sun. A new day has begun: let us arise and walk in his light! This is the spirituality of Advent, very luminous and concrete. The streetlights remind us that each of us can be a little light, if we welcome Jesus, the shoot of a new world. Let us learn how to do this from Mary, our Mother, a woman of hope who remains faithful in waiting.



Mass Intentions

Sunday 14th December

8.30 am Luciano & Rita Pesci RIP
10.00am Stanislav RIP
11.30am Bishop Thomas McMahon RIP
Chigwell Monica Dias RIP

Monday 15th December

Jean Ferguson RIP
Chigwell Douglas Bradley RIP

Tuesday 16th December

Alice & James Harris
Maria Durcan RIP

Wednesday 17th December

Ann McShea very ill
Michael Smith anniversary
Dorian Whitehead RIP

Thursday 18th December

Helen Hollands' family
Delia Martin 100 years old Chigwell
Sr Maire Galvin—intention

Friday 19th December

Hugh Patrick Stanford RIP
Michael Barrett RIP

Saturday 20th December

10.00am Stephen Ahearne RIP
6.00pm Julia & Matthew Ives

Sunday 21st December

8.30am Nary Loughran
10.00am Jane Brandon poor health
11.30am Howard Bennett anniversary
Chigwell Joseph Dias RIP

Church Cleaning - Thursday 18th December at 9.00am

Sue Mansbridge, Jackie John, Mary
Charter, Srimathie Crusz, Margaret
Parkinson, Chelsea Chaplin

Bishop Thomas's funeral

on 16th December at 11.30am will be
livestreamed from the Cathedral:
at: [https://www.shealolin.co.uk/bishop-
thomas](https://www.shealolin.co.uk/bishop-thomas)

Available

Free medical/adjustable bed used only
once. All functions controlled by hand
control. If interested, please contact
Mrs Davies via text on : 07813 070003

Christmas Fayre

We are delighted to report the
Christmas fayre raised **£3,345.51**. It
was a great day enjoyed by all. Thank
you once again to everyone who made
it possible.

Christmas Masses at St Thomas'

Calling all Readers, Ministers of
Communion, Ushers & Sacristans

If you will be attending Mass at St
Thomas' on either Christmas Eve or
Christmas Day, please indicate your
availability by adding your name to the
lists located at the back of the church.
We are also looking for young Readers
(Year 4 and above) to help with the
Readings at the 3pm mass on
Christmas Eve and the 10am mass on
Christmas Day, if you would like to be
considered for this mass, please add
you name to the separate list.