

PRAY FOR THE SICK

Lately dead:
Mary Pamplin RIP

Funeral Notice:
The funeral mass for Maria Grant will take place on 2nd January at 11.00am

May they rest in peace

Anniversaries:

Michael Murphy, Reginald Allen, Howard Courtney-Bennett, Augustinho DeFreitas, Edmund Jarman, Gemma McManus, Arthur Bailey, John (Jack) Kenny, Riccardo Marcantonio, Sister Marian Dewhirst, Margaret Waites, Damiana D'Costa, Mary Whelan, Leslie Graham, Paul Shipperlee, Albert Currie, Margaret McHugh, George Cowan, Romei Guisto, Michael Linnane, Ellen Mahoney, Annie O'Brien, Mary Atwell, James Martin, John Moore, John Newman, Narishta Ratnanather, Michael Carrig, Colin Correya, Anne Driscoll, Patrick Grant, Chevonne Lobo, Paul Tyler, Mary Deima, Andrew Jeffreys, Margaret Mason, Malachy Seymour, John Bailey, Anne Connolly, Annie Galligan, Fredrick Hayes, Rose Neville, Pauline Goodsman, Derek Blogg, Angelo de Cesare, Frank Dewey, Francis Fitzpatrick, Sylvia Hawkins, Doris Skelt.

Christmas Masses

24th December
10am St Thomas
9.30am Chigwell

3pm, 6pm, 10pm at St Thomas
The Mass in Chigwell will be at
9.30am and 7pm.

25th December
8.30am, 10am & 11.30am St Thomas
10am Chigwell

Epiphany

Monday 5th 7.30pm at St Thomas'
Tuesday 6th 10am at St Thomas'
Chigwell 10am on 6th January

May we wish you all a joyous
Christmas
and a Happy New Year



Parish office

The office will be closed on the 24th, 25th, 26th December and 1st of January.

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



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Friary: 020 8504 1688 Facebook: [@STOCWoodford](https://www.facebook.com/STOCWoodford)
Email: parishoffice@stthomaswoodford.org Twitter: [@STOCWoodford](https://twitter.com/STOCWoodford)

Fourth Sunday of Advent (A) 21st December 2025

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

As we continue our Advent preparations, we gather today to prepare our hearts and minds for the coming of Christ at Christmas, giving thanks for all that we have received, and committing ourselves to pass on the Gospel message to all we meet.

First Reading Isaiah 7:10-14

The birth of Jesus is prophesied in the Old Testament: a child will be born to a young woman, and he will be called Emmanuel.

Responsorial Psalm

Let the Lord enter; he is the king of glory

Second Reading Romans 1:1-7

Paul tells us that Jesus is both a son of David and a Son of God. He is God incarnate, God made man.



The next newsletter will be produced for Sunday 4th January

JOSEPH: THE MODEL FOR FATHERS.

On this the last Sunday of Advent, St Joseph who had the worry of looking after Mary and finding a place for her to have her child is at the centre of the Gospel. After the birth, he was the model for Jesus to develop as a man dedicated to God. This is the role of fathers for their children and it is an immensely important role. Pope Francis reflects on this role:-

Joseph saw Jesus grow daily “in wisdom and in years and in divine and human favour” (*Lk* 2:52). As the Lord had done with Israel, so Joseph did with Jesus: he taught him to walk, taking him by the hand; he was for him like a father who raises an infant to his cheeks, bending down to him and feeding him (cf. *Hos* 11:3-4).

In Joseph, Jesus saw the tender love of God: “As a father has compassion for his children, so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him” (*Ps* 103:13).

In the synagogue, during the praying of the Psalms, Joseph would surely have heard again and again that the God of Israel is a God of tender love,^[11] who is good to all, whose “compassion is over all that he has made” (*Ps* 145:9).

The history of salvation is worked out “in hope against hope” (*Rom* 4:18), through our weaknesses. All too often, we think that God works only through our better parts, yet most of his plans are realized in and despite our frailty. Thus Saint Paul could say: “To keep me from being too elated, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me, to keep me from being too elated. Three times I appealed to the Lord about this, that it would leave me, but he said to me: ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness’” (2 *Cor* 12:7-9). Since this is part of the entire economy of salvation, we must learn to look upon our weaknesses with tender mercy.^[12]

The evil one makes us see and condemn our frailty, whereas the Spirit brings it to light with tender love. Tenderness is the best way to touch the frailty within us. Pointing fingers and judging others are frequently signs of an inability to accept our own weaknesses, our own frailty. Only tender love “This my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found” (v. 24). will save us from the snares of the accuser (cf. *Rev* 12:10). That is why it is so important to encounter God’s mercy, especially in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, where we experience his truth and tenderness. Paradoxically, the evil one can also speak the truth to us, yet he does so only to condemn us. We know that God’s truth does not condemn, but instead welcomes, embraces, sustains and forgives us. That truth always presents itself to us like the merciful father in Jesus’ parable (cf. *Lk* 15:11-32).

TROUBADOUR

A winter copy of Troubadour is available at the back of the church, please feel free to take a copy

HAPPY CHRISTMAS

An image of the might and majesty of God that appeals to me, is that of a drill sergeant who created the stars and puts them in order in the skies. The stars are like his toys whom He plays with to create wonder in us. In the light of His great power the things that threaten us in our lives melt into insignificance. However, when God became man, Jesus experienced and understood the threat of illness, human cruelty and death that we have to deal with. The event of Christmas means that God is not a stranger to human life but One who is deeply involved with us. May this truth of our faith give you the understanding and joy that God is with us. This is the basis of our wishing “Happy Christmas” to each other.

Mass Intentions

Sunday 21st December

8.30am Mary Loughran
10am Jane Brandon sick
11.30am Howard Bennett anniversary
Chigwell Joseph Dias RIP

Monday 22nd December

Brian Correya in memory
Ricardo Marcantonio RIP

Tuesday 23rd December

Mrs Jean Faulstich RIP
Patrick Bell RIP
Birthday

Wednesday 24th December

3pm Charles Fitzpatrick & Burke families
6pm Michael Murphy RIP
10pm Community & benefactors

Thursday 25th December

8.30am Allen Charles RIP
10am Wellbeing O’Flaherty family
11.30 Patricia & Lorenz Koenen RIP
Chigwell The SHJM sisters

Friday 26th December

The O’Connell family
Mary McCarthy

Saturday 27th December

10am Ronnie McCartney RIP
6pm Theresa Riordan RIP

Sunday 28th December

8.30am Michael Joe Linnane anniversary
10am Oliver Carr anniversary
11.30am Louise Khazali

Monday 29th December

Noel D’Arcy RIP
Maureen Dalton RIP

Tuesday 30th December

Pat Grant anniversary
Keeran Selvakumar RIP
Eddie & Maureen Gorman & family

Wednesday 31st December

Mary & John Sheehan RIP
Chevonne Lobo anniversary

Thursday 1st January

Dee Baruch sick

Friday 2nd January

Intentions of Lea & Nish

Saturday 3rd January

10am Frank Fitzpatrick anniversary
6pm Colin & Trevor Correya anniversary

Sunday 4th January

8.30am Carol Bastie for strength
10am People of the parish

Church Cleaning

Saturday, 27th December at 10.30am

Kathleen Mahoney, Bernie Siggins,
Riannon Blackwell

Alpha

Alpha launch very soon now! - First session Friday 9th January from 7.15pm. Very encouraging response to the invitations after the weekend Masses. Please help us to organise groups and food by returning your completed forms to the office as soon as 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.

Medjugorje Pilgrimages 11-18 May and 8-15 September 2026

The total cost for the May pilgrimage is £770 and the September pilgrimage is £789. The package includes flights, luggage, transfers, half board at the hotel, plus our own guide for the week. To book and for further information please phone Gail on 07989 879148 or email gail.hewett@hotmail.com. Thank you.