

PRAY FOR THE SICK

Lately dead: Joseph Dionysius

May he rest in peace

Anniversaries:

Charles Kairis, Sr. Marie Murphy, Victoria Thompson, John Mill, Ivy White, Rosalind Burton, May Tudisca, Ellen Coyle, Virginia Crook, Doris L'Estrange, Reginald Allen, Augustinho De Freitas, Edmund Jarman, Gemma McManus, Arthur Bailey, John (Jack) Kenny, Sister Marian Dewhirst, Margaret Waites, Joseph Dias.

Franciscan life: Invitation

The Franciscan Community invite single Catholic people aged 18-40 years to join vocation in the religious and/or priestly life, and Franciscan life; (website: www.friar.org). If interested please talk to one of the Friars or contact *Br Dónal ofm* via email - brdonalofm@yahoo.co.uk

Becket Centre—Hire

Our Centre is available for hire. The booking form can be found on our website at www.stthomaswoodford.org/becket-centre

Mass Timetable

The masses on Saturday evening and Sunday at St Thomas' are live streamed

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

10am Chigwell Convent

WEEKDAY MASSES

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

St Thomas' Prayer Group

Saturday mornings
10.30 to 11.30am

CONFESSIONS

Saturdays 10.30 to 11am
and
5.15 to 5.45 pm

BAPTISMS

1st and 3rd Sundays
of the month.

Gift Aid

If you are a UK taxpayer, the government can add 25 pence on every £1 you donate to the St Thomas of Canterbury parish. If you would like to join the scheme, please fill in the Gift aid form and return it to the parish office. Available on our website or at the back of the church.

If you have joined the Gift Aid scheme and your situation has changed, (you do not pay taxes), please inform the parish office immediately as we may still claim on your behalf.



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 2023 (B) 17th December 2023

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

Today's readings tell us that God's saving power reveals itself as naturally and as inevitably as the changing of the seasons. It unfolds through the faith of human beings who put their whole trust in God's will to redeem us.

First Reading Isaiah 61:1-2. 10-11

This radiant song of praise reminds us that our experience of human love is a foretaste of the joy promised to those who open their hearts to God.

Second Reading 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

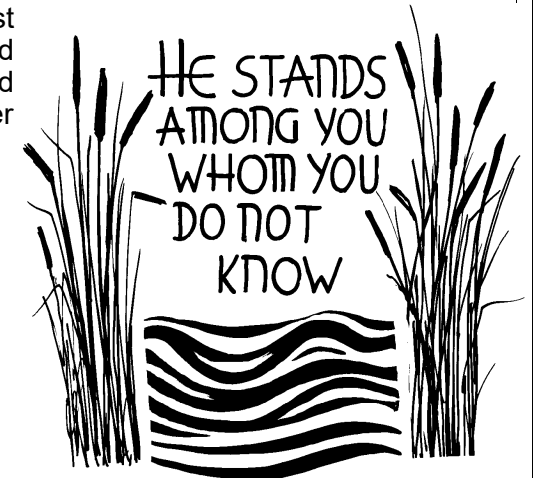
We are reminded that we can trust God to be alive and active in our world and in our lives, come what may.

Gospel John 1:6-8. 19-28

The story of John the Baptist reminds us that we also are called to give witness to Jesus and prepare a way for him wherever we are.

Responsorial Psalm

My soul rejoices in my
God.



Are you bored with your catholic life?

The people hearing John the Baptist's call to conversion asked him what they should do. We might well in hearing John's call to repent, wonder whether in our Christian life, "Am I tiredly using the same form of prayer and carrying the same routine," and getting little satisfaction from it. We need a spark to renew us and Pope Francis addresses this:-

Creativity, to proclaim Jesus with joy, to everyone and today. In this age of ours, which does not help us have a religious outlook on life, and in which the proclamation has become in various places more difficult, arduous, apparently fruitless, the temptation to desist from pastoral service may arise. Perhaps one takes refuge in safety zones, like the habitual repetition of things one always does, or in the alluring calls of an "intimist" spirituality, or even in a misunderstood sense of the centrality of the liturgy. They are temptations that disguise themselves as fidelity to tradition, but often, rather than responses to the Spirit, they are reactions to personal dissatisfactions. Instead, pastoral creativity, being bold in the Spirit, ardent in his missionary zeal, is the proof of fidelity to him. Therefore, I wrote that "Jesus can also break through the dull categories with which we would enclose him, and he constantly amazes us by his divine creativity. Whenever we make the effort to return to the source and to recover the original freshness of the Gospel, new avenues arise, new paths of creativity open up, with different forms of expression, more eloquent signs and words with new meaning for today's world."

Creativity, therefore; and then *simplicity*, precisely because the Spirit takes us to the source, to the "first proclamation". Indeed, it is "the fire of the Spirit [... that] leads us to believe in Jesus Christ who, by his death and resurrection, reveals and communicates to us the Father's infinite mercy.

This is the *first proclamation*, which must "be the centre of all evangelizing activity and all efforts at Church renewal"; to say over and over, "Jesus Christ loves you; he gave his life to save you; and now he is living at your side every day to enlighten, strengthen and free you".

Christmas Masses:

Christmas Eve 24th December
Masses at St Thomas:
3pm, 6pm and 10pm

Christmas Day 25th December
Masses at St Thomas:
8.30am, 10am and 11.30am
Mass at Chigwell: 10am

Chigwell Convent

We have some upsetting news from Chigwell. An electrical survey has discovered that the ring circuit in the Chapel is unsafe and the chapel should not be used. With different arrangements, we can have Mass there this Sunday, next Sunday and Christmas Day. After that the Chapel cannot be used. A Carol Service for Christmas Eve was planned but has had to be cancelled. The Sisters have offered us the use of a dining room for Mass on Sunday once the Chapel is closed. Our sympathies go out to the sisters because their Chapel is the place they celebrate liturgy, pray the office and pray personally and thus it is central to their way of life as religious. Also to our people who use the chapel and have had family celebrations there with memories that they bring. It is through bearing such setbacks that our faith triumphs.



Mass Intentions

Sunday 17th December

8.30 Tina Kerr RIP
10 Frankie Lannon RIP
11.30 Peter McDermott RIP

Monday 18th December

Marie Hampshire Edgeley
Alexander & Maureen Armstrong

Tuesday 19th December

Agnes Dorrie Catania anniversary
Maura Clark intentions

Wednesday 20th December

Stephen Ahearn RIP
Joe Malone intentions
Trinity intentions

Thursday 21st December

Libby Maskell RIP
Moss A Hoy

Friday 22nd December

O'Flaherty family anniversary
Eamonn Cunningham sick

Saturday 23rd December

10am Natalie Cosgrove intentions
6 pm Frankie Maunsell RIP

Sunday 24th December

10am Michael Murphy RIP

Christmas Eve

3 pm Maggie Rubello RIP
6 pm People of the parish
10pm Community & benefactors

Christmas Day

8.30 Allen Charles RIP
10 Deceased of Fitzpatrick & Burke families
11.30 Patricia & Lorenz Koenen RIP

Church Cleaning

Saturday 23rd Decemeber at 10.30am

Rosie O'Connor & Charmaine Turrell

Volunteers wanted

15th Woodford Brownies are now operating with the fewest number of volunteers in the past decade. Can you help on Tuesdays during term time 6.30pm till 8.00pm?
Contact Diane 07795 220142.

Christmas Masses

We're nearly there! Many thanks to all who offered their services last weekend, especially those who changed their masses and those who offered to attend two masses. This week's appeal is for Ushers (an extremely important role, especially when we have large numbers attending); together with one additional Minister of Communion for the 11:30 mass on Christmas Day. If you can help, please add your name and phone number to the list at the back of the church.

Parish office opening times

Parish office will be shut from 23rd December 2023 and will reopen on the 2nd January 2024.
Mass request envelopes can be posted via the letter box. Repository will be shut for the Christmas and New year weekends.

Certificates of practice

There will be days offered in the first weeks of January. We shall publish them in the next newsletter.