

ST. FRANCIS CATHOLIC PARISH NEWSLETTER

28th November 2021 First Sunday of Advent (C)

126 Week Street, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1RH Tel. 01622 756217

Email: maidstone@rcaos.org.uk Website: www.stfrancisparish.org.uk

Parish Priest: Fr. Liam Gallagher

Assistant Priests: Fr. Damian Esene, Fr Simon Peter Lubuulwa

Deacon: Rev. Ian Black

Parish Office hours: 10am – 12 noon Tuesday and Friday (email or telephone only)

Catholic Schools

St Francis Primary School: Queen's Road, Maidstone, ME16 0LB 01622 771540

St Simon Stock Secondary School: Oakwood Park, Maidstone, ME16 0JP 01622 754551

HONOURING SUNDAY

As people begin returning to more regular patterns of parish life and following the first face to face meeting of the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales in Leeds, the bishops have issued the following statement about the importance of honouring Sunday:

At this time, we recognise that for some people there may be certain factors which hinder attendance at Sunday Mass. The pandemic is clearly not over. The risk of infection is still present. For some, there is legitimate fear in gathering together. As your bishops, we recognise that these prevailing circumstances suggest that not everyone is yet in the position to fulfil the absolute duty to attend freely Sunday Mass. We now encourage all Catholics to look again at the patterns which they have formed in recent months with regard to going to Mass on Sundays. This would include consideration and reflection about what we might do on Sundays, such as sports or shopping, or other leisure and social activities. This review, and the decisions which arise from it, fall to every Catholic and we trust this will be done with honesty, motivated by a real love for the Lord whom we encounter in the Mass. The Sunday Mass is the very heartbeat of the Church and of our personal life of faith. We gather on the "first day of the week," and devote ourselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers (Acts 2:42). The Eucharist sustains us and spurs us on, renewing our gratitude and our hope. When we say "Amen" to Christ in receiving his Body and Blood, we express the love of God which is deep within us, and at the end of Mass, when we are sent forth, we express our love for our neighbour, especially those in need. These two dimensions reveal the full meaning of our faith. We are gathered together and sent out, we pray and are fed, we worship and we adore; these are intrinsic to our lives as those baptised into Christ

BRING IT BACK: As we arrive into a new year of the Church with the Season of Advent, we are hoping to reintroduce certain ministries and resources that have been missing for the past 18 months.

Therefore, we are looking to bring back; Hymn Books, Newsletters (we would appreciate if you could still download your own at home), Mass Sheets, Collection, (we wish to take away the bowls at the back of the Church and start to use the Collection bags again. Please can we ask for people who would be willing to volunteer and coordinate this for each Mass, ideally having four collectors for each Mass), offertory (we are looking to bring back an offertory procession of bread, wine and water being brought up to the altar from the back of the Church at the usual time of Mass. It would be helpful to have a regular coordinator to organise this at each Mass), Altar Servers (we now gladly welcome back any of our altar servers to come back at whatever Mass they attend. We will wait until the new year before we start looking to recruit and train new servers), readers (needing more volunteers to read).

ADVENT COURSE: An invitation to all parishioners who would like to prepare for Christmas in these challenging times!

Just one hour per week for 4 weeks on Zoom is all it takes!

The [Advent Course \(4 weeks\) - Sycamore](#) online course **begins on Wednesday 1st December at 8pm.**

Week 1 (December 1) '**The Search for Happiness**'.

The impossibility of sitting still. What is happiness? How to press the pause button.

Week 2 (December 8) **A God who Speaks**

The hiddenness of God. When God broke the silence. Discovering the face of God

Week 3 (December 15) **The Bible**

What is the bible? Can we trust the bible? How the bible can change your life.

Week 4 (December 22) **The Power of prayer**

What is prayer? Does prayer make a difference? How to pray.

For further details please email Carole & Pete on mflkent@rcaos.org.uk and you will be sent a Zoom link to the meetings.

God bless us all as we prepare to celebrate Christ's birth.

SAFEGUARDING AT ST FRANCIS: Keeping all children and adults safe is a priority for our parish. This is a reminder to all who minister to children or vulnerable adults in the parish that their **DBS (disclosure and barring service) checks** are due for renewal. *The following are some of the groups who need to have an updated check: Children's Liturgists, First Holy Communion and Confirmation Catechists, Leaders of Choirs or Music groups which include children, Sacristans, Adult Altar Servers /Coordinators, Mass Coordinators, Pastoral Assistants, Eucharistic Ministers, Parish visitors of the sick /elderly, Parish Transport to Mass volunteers, Parish Outreach to vulnerable adults (e.g. homeless), Bereavement Counsellors, St*

Vincent de Paul members. **Please collect the appropriate packs from the parish office.** If you have any concerns about a child or adult at risk, or if you have any further queries, please contact Mary Ryan, Parish Safeguarding Representative - 07495 624384.

ST FRANCIS RC PRIMARY SCHOOL: For entry in September 2022. If you would like to visit the school for a tour please contact the school office on 01622 771540 to make an appointment. For more information about the school including a virtual tour, visit www.st-francis.kent.sch.uk. Applications close on Monday 17th January 2022

REQUIEM MASS: The Requiem Mass for Biagio Zita will take place on Thursday 2nd December. Please note that it is at the slightly earlier time of 10.00am

RESPOSITORY: Advent and Christmas items are now in stock: 'Walk With Me' and 'Day by Day' booklets for Advent. Calendars, books, candles, cards, cribs and much more.

ADVENT WREATHS: The wreaths will be available at the morning Masses this weekend at a cost of £5. Many thanks. Please note that if you light the candles the greenery is flammable and can be very dangerous.

CHRISTMAS FAIR: Many thanks to all those who supported the Christmas Fair held last week - it is much appreciated, especially by Flame and Fledglings groups who ran it. The amount raised was a magnificent £826.30, half of which will go to the needy families at St Francis Family Centre, Poplar, London and half of which will be saved for youth group retreats in the new year.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES:

Flame Advent presentation- Saturday 27th November in St Francis Church at 3pm. Refreshments available afterwards.

Christmas Appeal – Our annual appeal for toys, gifts and food for hampers for families in our parish and for the families visiting the St Francis Centre in Poplar.

Donations can be brought anytime from now, but will be collected especially at all Masses of 27th/28th November and 4th/5th December.

Children's Nativity – Led by Fledglings with a special visitor for all children!

2.30pm in St Francis Church

Parish Carol Service – Sunday 19th December

MASS TIMES AND INTENTIONS

Sunday 28th November	6.00pm/Sat	Sirpa Edwardes RIP
	8.30am	People of the Parish
	10.00am	James and Mary Hurson RIP
	11.30am	Dennis Coatsworth RIP
	6.00pm	Bernard Burns RIP
Monday 29th November	10.30am	Holy Souls
Tuesday 30th November	10.30am	In reparation for abortions from Brewer Street
Wednesday 1st December	10.30am	Mary Kenward RIP
Thursday 2nd December	10.30am	Requiem Mass
Friday 3rd December	10.30am	Private Intention
Saturday 4th December	10.00	Holy Souls
Sunday 5th December	6.00pm/Sat	Holy Souls
	8.30am	Elizabeth Frost RIP
	10.00am	Kathleen and Bob Lenzie RIP
	11.30am	Angela Hunter RIP
	6.00pm	People of the Parish

We remember in our prayers those whose anniversaries occur at this time:

Frederick Franks, Margaret Moorkite, Nora Blunden, Mary Hurson, Charles Butler, Francis Percy, Herbert Paine, Albert Clark, Mary Harkin, Roland Philp, Charles Hamilton, Roger Hill, Andrew Kwiatkowski, George Silvester, Ellen Startup, Mary Kenward, John Booth, Elizabeth Cott, Mary Morling, Moira Hughes, Barbara Power, Anastasia Agnes, Aileen Baynton, John Devitt, Mary Bishop, Alice Lay, Victoria Flynn, James McKinley, Teresa Harding, Tina Gilloway, Hannah Newman, Patrick Kearney, Marie Potter.

COLLECTION:

First Collection last Sunday £ 1,075.59
 Second Collection last Sunday, Catholic Youth Work £ 212.94
 Second collection this Sunday: DEW Association
 Second Collection next Sunday: Parish Development Fund
 Standing Order for October £3,825.56

PARISH LOTTERY: Week: 22 - Lottery Number 238 - Amount: £15