

# ST. FRANCIS CATHOLIC PARISH NEWSLETTER

1<sup>st</sup> December 2024 First Sunday of Advent (C)

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Parish Priest: Canon Liam Gallagher

Assistant Priest: Fr Simon Peter Lubuulwa

Also Resident: Fr Peter Norris (Retired)

Deacon: Rev. Ian Black

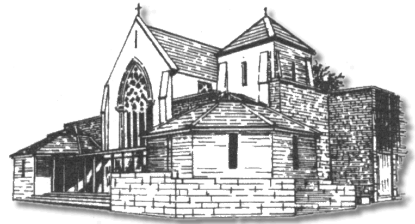
Parish Office hours: 10am – 12 noon Tuesday and

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 75455



**NEW BEGINNING.** So, we have arrived at a brand-new year of the Church. Every blessing for a holy New Year. Blessings will be abundant during the 10.00am Mass this Sunday as we will start with the traditional blessing of our Advent Wreath. After which we will ask for God's blessing to Ann during our Rite of Acceptance who is preparing to be Baptised next Easter. Ann will then be joined by the other five candidates, Hanna, Jade, Paul, Dhalyla and Francis who are also preparing for full reception into the Church. On that, Canon Liam celebrated Mass at the prison last Sunday. There is one who attends Mass and is preparing for Baptism there too so we celebrated the Rite of Acceptance there. We can keep him as well as our parishioners here in our prayers. As we had mentioned the past two weeks, our readings from now on will be taken from our new lectionary – the same throughout the whole of England and Wales. Just before we have our first reading, we shall carry out a blessing on our New Lectionaries. So much to enjoy and look forward to in our new liturgical year.

**EXTRA HELP IN THE SEASON OF ADVENT:** For the three Fridays in Advent during the Season of Advent we shall be celebrating an extra Mass every Friday 6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30pm. We shall also be holding additional Confessions 6.15pm – 7.15pm before the Mass. A visiting priest will be coming to hear Confession at that time.

**CHILL IN THE AIR:** We apologise for the cold air that is filling the church the past couple of weeks and will be with us for a few more days. Thankfully the boiler itself is in working order but the flue for the ventilator shaft in the boiler room needs replacing, which will be taking place during the coming week. Thank you for your patience and understanding with this and we promise that coats, hats and scarves worn in the church will soon be no longer be necessary.

Speaking of which..... our lost property box is starting to gain weight. Please remember to wear back home what you wore when you come to Church.

**A CHANGE OF TIME:** As from Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2025, the 11.30am Mass will start at 11.45am. The reason is that 10.00am is so full that people at 10.00am Mass leave the Church by 11.20am. People are arriving in their cars for 11.30am Mass but no space is available as the 10.00am crowd have not had a chance to leave yet; people are arriving in the Church for 11.03am Mass but with very little time for them to spend time in prayer, light their candle, look in the shop or whatever it is they wish to do; welcomers, music, servers and priests getting ready for Mass are under an awful lot of strain in getting things ready for Mass when the people of 10.00am are still tidying up. It is for this reason that we have decided it would be a better idea to move the start of 11.30am Mass to 11.45am This will come into operation from Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2025. We trust that you will find this change of great benefit to many of you and thank you for your understanding.

**REPOSITORY:** New stock for Advent and Christmas in the church shop: "Walk with me" and "Day by Day" booklets, Advent calendars and candles, 2025 diaries and calendars, Christmas cards, children's books, nativity sets and much more...

**ADVENT WREATHS:** If you have pre-ordered these, they will be ready after all Masses this weekend and can be collected from the pod at the back of the church.

**RAFFLE TICKETS:** These will be available, to win some great prizes, at all Masses at the back of the church and also at the organ at the 10am and 11.30am Masses only.

**FEED THE HUNGRY AT CHRISTMAS:** Many thanks to our generous donors of food, throughout the year. Last year, St Francis parishioners were extremely generous in donating food and gifts to the parish Christmas appeal. Your generosity made a massive difference to local families in difficulty, to the homeless, the clients of the day centre. Please, if you are able, donate a gift for a child or adult, preferably unwrapped and new. Collections of gifts will be taken until Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December, and then distributed over that week. Also, we will be making up Christmas hampers for families, and donations may be brought to the musicians at Mass on the weekends of 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> December. Anytime before that, they may be dropped at the presbytery during office hours. Please, no mince pies, as we get a

bulk donation for free! If anyone wants to donate meat (esp turkey) and/or vegetables and fruit, between 16th and 21st December to help make up the turkey dinners, please let one of the choir members know or one of the clergy. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

**CLEAN CHURCH:** We are very grateful for the team of people who clean our church but would really appreciate some help. If you can give time after Wednesday morning Mass every week, or whatever amount of weeks, then please come and see the team and they will be delighted to see you.

**FLAME BAKE SALE:** Many thanks to all who supported the Bake Sale a couple of weeks ago. It was so successful that we will be repeating it with more Christmas gifts and extra offerings from the repository, on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> December. Please be prepared to purchase some great baking and other goods.

**ST. FRANCIS SCHOOL APPLICATION:** If you have made an application for your child to attend St. Francis Catholic Primary School for September 2025 and you wish to receive a reference from Canon Liam on your reference form, then please come to see Canon Liam on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December anytime between 5pm – 7pm. Canon Liam will not sign any forms before then.

**BIBLE AND BEVERAGE:** If you are in you're 20's and 30's and you would like to have some prayer time and fun time then please do join the Bible and Beverage on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December. We will gather in the Church 7.30pm of praying with the Gospel for an hour followed by drinks, eats, music and games and getting to know others in the priest house next door.

**COLLECTION:**

First Collection last week (cash)	£1057.25
Second Collection last Sunday	£176.80
Second Collection this Sunday: Parish Development Fund	
Second Collection next Sunday: Christmas Flowers	
Direct Debits – October 2024	
Standing Order Gift Aid	£3,136
Standing Order Non-Gift Aid	£2,093.96
Collection Card	£2,109.68
Collection On-Line	£190.07
TOTAL	£7,529.71

**LOTTERY:** Week Number 22    Lottery Number 298    Prize £15

## MASS TIMES AND INTENTIONS

<b>Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December</b>	6.00pm (Sat)	Sirpa Edwards RIP
	8.30am	People of the Parish
	9.00am (PH)	Winifred Joan Ryan RIP
	10.00am	Family
	11.30am	Luis & Rosario D'Silva RIP
	6.00pm	Private Intention
<b>Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> December</b>	10.30am	Health and Wellbeing
<b>Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December</b> St. Francis Xavier	10.30am	Private Intention
<b>Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December</b>	10.30am	Alice Joseph RIP
<b>Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> December</b>	10.30am	Elizabeth Frost RIP
<b>Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December</b>	10.30am 7.30pm	Joseph Frost RIP Holy Souls
<b>Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December</b> St. Ambrose	10.00am	Terry Ruaux RIP
<b>Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> December</b>	6.00pm (Sat)	People of the Parish
	8.30am	Private Intention
	9.00am (PH)	Charles & Doris Shepherd & David Cole RIP
	10.00am	Rose Joanna Brook RIP
	11.30am	Holy Souls
	6.00pm	Dorothy Brady RIP

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

Ellen Startup, Mary Kenward, John Booth, Elizabeth Cott, Briony Malling, Moira Hughes, Barbara Power, Anastasia Agnes, Aileen Baynton, John Devitt, Carol Maguire, Mary Bishop, Alice Lay, Victoria Flynn, James McKinley, Teresa Harding, Tina Gilloway, Hannah Newman, Patrick Kearney, Marie Potter, Ethel Thomas, Teodor Klekot, Rosellin Gallagher, Baby Archie Morris, Aleksander Grochowski, Maude Springett, Mary Weston, Carmena Summut and Andrew, Kathleen Waters, Elaine George, Bunty Nolan, Joan Carr, Christopher Brewer, Mary Dray, Kathleen Sturla, Cavan Buckley, Derek Jones, Juliana Banyard, Franziska Butt.

**CONFESSIONS:** Friday 11.00am – 11.30am; Saturday 10.45am - 11.30am

**ADORATION:** 9.30am – 10.15am every Friday morning.

### **Parish Carol Service/Nativity/Mulled Wine - December 14th at 2pm.**

All parishioners, young and old, are strongly encouraged to join in this parish event where traditional carols will be part of a Nativity play. If you have a child of primary age with you, there may be a surprise for them at the end! There will be drinks and mulled wine along with mince pies for anyone who comes to the presbytery afterwards. This is a parish social event in the busy run-up to Christmas, so please make the most of it.