

# ST. FRANCIS CATHOLIC PARISH NEWSLETTER

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT (A) SUNDAY 8<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2026

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**Parish Priest:** Canon John Diver [johndiver@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:johndiver@rcaos.org.uk)

**Assistant Priest:** Fr Stephen Trafford [stephentrafford@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:stephentrafford@rcaos.org.uk)

Also Resident: Fr Peter Norris (Retired)

**Deacon:** Rev. Ian Black

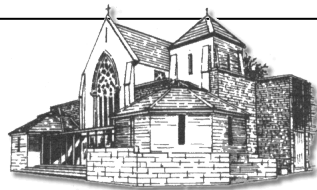
**Parish Office hours:** 9am-1pm (Mon, Tues, Fri) and 12pm-4pm (Wednesdays only).

**Church Shop:** Open Sundays 9am – 11.30am and 30 mins before and after Sunday 6pm Mass.

## Catholic Schools

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

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



## “LIVING WATER”



*“Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again.”  
(John 4:13-14)*

*First reading: A Reading from the Book of Exodus.*

*Response to the Psalm: O that today you would listen to his voice! Harden not your hearts.*

*Second reading: A Reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans.*

*Gospel: John 4:5-15, 19b-26, 39a, 40-42 'A spring of water welling up to eternal life.'*

**RENEWAL WORKS:** Renewal works to the side chapel for the replacement of the new glass roof begins work this month. Once the work starts, there will be restricted access to the chapel. Thank you for your patience. *Canon John.*

**SECOND COLLECTION FOR ORPHANED CHILDREN IN ZAMBIA ON 8<sup>th</sup> MARCH.**

A staggering 60% of the population of Zambia are living below the poverty line, and in rural areas, the figure is even higher, at nearly 80%. Given this backdrop, Fr Samuel of the Kiltegan Mission in Zambia, is dedicated in helping orphaned children in the local community. May we thank you for your continued generosity during these challenging times. May God bless you. *The Dew Association.*

**BIBLE & BEVERAGE:** Our Young Adults Group is hosting a guest speaker at its next meeting on Thursday 12 March 2026. The speaker is a seminarian and will cover topics of Vocation and Marian Devotion. We meet in the church at 7.30pm for the talk, followed by a Q&A, and ending with a social in a nearby pub afterwards. All young adults (ages 18-35) are warmly invited to attend. Our group is growing in fellowship each month - currently standing at 15+ regular attendees - and always welcomes new members. For details and enquiries, please contact [youngadults@stfrancisparish.org.uk](mailto:youngadults@stfrancisparish.org.uk), or visit the link to complete a contact form: <https://www.stfrancisparish.org.uk/young-adults-group/>.

**CARETAKER POSITION AT ST FRANCIS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL:** Do you have a "handy" set of skills and a bit of time to help keep our local school in peak condition? St Francis is looking for a caretaker for approximately 3 hours a day to support our site manager in helping keep our school environment safe and thriving! If you're the kind of person who enjoys fixing things, staying active, and being part of the community, this could be the perfect fit for you. Please get in touch with St Francis school office on 01622 771540 to express your interest and ask for further details.

**FEED THE HUNGRY AT EASTER:** Thank you for your very kind ongoing donations of food which are much appreciated by recipients. Please continue to send regular donations. For Easter, we are collecting Easter eggs, biscuits, cakes and luxury items to give to the families we support locally. There will be a special collection of these items on the weekend of 21st /22nd March at all Masses.

**LIGHTFEVER:** This event, when we encourage anyone passing the church to come in, light a candle and pray with us will take place on FRIDAY 13th MARCH, from 8pm to 10pm, following the 7.30pm Mass. We all have a lot to pray about and it will only be a success if there are parishioners in the church, praying alongside

visitors. There will be meditations and singing and there is no obligation to stay for the whole time, but please support it.

**LIVING STATIONS:** This prayerful enactment will be led by our Fledglings Group on Saturday 21st March in the church at 2pm. All are encouraged to attend.

**GIFT AID SCHEME:** Thank you to all parishioners who are part of the St Francis parish Gift Aid scheme. If you contribute by weekly enveloped cash donations, please take your new box of numbered envelopes from the porch. If you donate using a standing order, please take your small bundle of numbered envelopes for use in special collections i.e. Christmas, Priest's Training Fund etc. If you donate using the card machines new machines are being tested and will be installed in the coming few weeks. If you would like to know more about being part of the Gift Aid scheme, then please talk to one of the helpers in the church porch or email [maidstonegac@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:maidstonegac@rcaos.org.uk).

There are application forms and leaflets available. Gift Aid costs you nothing and for every £1 donated to the parish, 25 pence can be claimed from HMRC and last year St Francis parish reclaimed approximately £20k. *Margaret Emerson, Gift Aid Coordinator.*

**PARISH PILGRIMAGE TO ROME AND ASSISI:** Tangney Tours have been in contact and have informed us that places are now full.

CONFESSIONS: Friday 11.00am – 11.30am  
Saturday 10.45am – 11.30am

ADORATION: Every Friday 9.15am – 10.15am

**COLLECTION:**

First Collection last week (cash)	£ 1,465.46
Second Collection last Sunday CAFOD Family Fast Day (Lent)	£ 478.91
Second Collection this Sunday Zambia. Orphaned Children.	
Second collection next Sunday Easter Flowers	

Standing Orders for *February*

Direct Debits	£3,526
Collection Card	£2,476.06
On-Line	£399.99
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£6,402.05</b>

**Parish Lottery Winner**      **Week: 10**      **Number: 107**      **Prize: £25**

**PARISH PENITENTIAL SERVICE:** Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March at 7pm. A Polish Priest will be available.

## MASS TIMES AND INTENTIONS

<b>Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> March</b> <i>Third Sunday of Lent</i>	6.00pm (Sat)	Private Intention
	8.30am	All pregnant mothers for a safe birth
	9.00am (PH)	June Wood RIP
	10.00am	Jean Jermy RIP
	11.45am	Luis & Rosario D'Silva RIP
	4.00pm	<i>Stations of the Cross</i>
	6.00pm	People of the Parish
<b>Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March</b>	10.30am	Joseph & Elizabeth Frost RIP
<b>Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March</b>	10.30am	Maria Huxter RIP
<b>Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March</b>	10.30am	Annie & John Fitzgibbon RIP
	7.00pm	<i>Penitential Service</i>
<b>Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March</b>	10.30am	Paddy Egan RIP
<b>Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March</b>	10.30am	Wellbeing and Return to the Church
	7.30pm	Shanti de Zoysa RIP
<b>Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March</b>	10.00am	In Reparation for Abortions in Brewer Street
<b>Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> March</b> <i>Fourth Sunday of Lent</i>	6.00pm (Sat)	Janet Norfolk RIP
	8.30am	Holy Souls
	9.00am (PH)	David Tyler RIP
	10.00am	Dulcie D'Costa RIP
	11.45am	Ayorinde Oladega Gbenga ona fow Okan RIP
	4.00pm	<i>Stations of the Cross</i>
	6.00pm	People of the Parish

**We remember in our prayers those whose anniversaries occur at this time, and for those who have died recently:**

*John Turner*

*Janet Norfolk, Mary Docker, David Godding, Doris Thompson, Anna Bingham, David Everden, Ernest Morgan, Mary Whooley, Kathleen Mooney, Margaret Baker, James Dignan, Raymond Bennett, Mary Arrow, Josephine Baldock, Nina Driver, Bridget Banham, Gerald McMorro, Gerard Ryan, Thomas Malone, John Fitzgibbon, Jane Bates, Patrick Hogan, Christina Hyatt, Maria Huxster, Doreen Whooley, Walter Downe, Elvera Fyne, Frances Whitehead, Michael Mackie, Margaret Kehoe, Christina Jeyes, George Kersey, Oonagh Porter, Margaret Browne, Mariannina Buschini, Sydney Mendes, Monica Dorod*

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**LENTEN LITURGICAL SCHEDULE:** Every Friday during Lent, there will be Adoration and Confessions from 6.15pm followed by Mass at 7.30pm. Stations of the Cross will be held weekly from 4pm ever Sunday. If you are unable to attend the Penitential Service here at St Francis on the 11<sup>th</sup>, you are welcome to attend in West Malling on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March at 7.30pm. On Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March, extended hours of exposition will begin from 11am-7pm. After Mass this day, there will also be light fever until 10.00am.