

# PARISH -OF OUR LADY IMMACULATE, WHITSTABLE CT5 2EY

with St. Joseph's, Chestfield CT5 3LD

[www.rcourladywhitstable.org.uk](http://www.rcourladywhitstable.org.uk)



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Parish Office:

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*For the duty priest, for urgent emergency sick calls only: 07599 908633*

Parish Priest:

**Rev. Canon Philip Glandfield** whitstablepp@rcaos.org.uk

Parish Secretary:

**Mrs Bernadette Martin:** Tues./Wed./Fri. 9 am to 4.30 pm

Parish Social Centre:

15a, Castle Road, Whitstable. CT5 2DY

**Enquiries & Bookings**

**Safeguarding Representative:**

**Mrs Lesley Wiles:** lesleysh@aol.com

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**Gift Aid Co-Ordinator:**

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**Health & Safety Representative:**

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**SVP Group:**

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**Parish School:**

**St Mary's School, Northwood Road**

01227 272692

**Parish Website:**

**[www.rcourladywhitstable.org.uk](http://www.rcourladywhitstable.org.uk)**

**Notices for the Bulletin:**

**To be submitted please by 7.30 pm on Wednesday**

**SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME:** (Yr A) Mass Book page 125

**18<sup>th</sup> January 2026**

**SATURDAY: 17<sup>th</sup> Jan:**

Confessions: 11.30am to 12noon; 5.15pm to 5.45pm

6.00 pm: Jacqueline Szabados, RIP (C Conway)

**SUNDAY: 18<sup>th</sup> Jan: 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**Peace Sunday**

**Start of Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity**

8.30 am: All Our Parishioners

9.30 am: **Communion Group: Children & parents**

10.30 am: Jill Bedells, RIP (C Bedells)

*Refreshments after 10.30am Mass*

**TUESDAY: 20<sup>th</sup> Jan:**

**St Sebastian**

12.30 pm: Patrick Cassells, RIP

**WEDNESDAY: 21<sup>st</sup> Jan:**

**St Agnes**

12.30 pm: Holy Souls, RIP

**THURSDAY: 22<sup>nd</sup> Jan:**

**St Vincent**

10.00 am: Philip & Elizabeth Halliday, RIP

*Followed by Adoration and Benediction*

**FRIDAY: 23<sup>rd</sup> Jan:**

10.00 am: Jacqueline Szabados, RIP (Ahern family)

**SATURDAY: 24<sup>th</sup> Jan:**

**St Francis de Sales**

Confessions: 11.30am to 12noon; 5.15pm to 5.45pm

6.00 pm: Intentions of Paul Regan (P Regan)

7.15 pm: **“Burns Night” (Supper & Quiz)**

**SUNDAY: 25<sup>th</sup> Jan: 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**Sunday of the Word of God:**

8.30 am: For Peace (M Bishop)

10.30 am: All Our Parishioners

*Conclusion of Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity*

**PEACE SUNDAY:** “*Peace be with you all: Towards an ‘unarmed and disarming’ peace*” is the theme chosen by Pope Leo for today’s World Peace Sunday. He has continued the exhortation of Pope Francis that the call to live non-violent ‘disarmed’ lives is core to Catholic Social Teaching and is the key to peace, in a world scarred by violent conflict. Let us pray for peoples afflicted by conflict and for those nations involved, praying especially that world leaders will strive to bring peace on earth. Retiring collection for “*Pax Christi*”.

**THANK YOU:** On behalf of the parish I express our grateful thanks to Mrs Lesley Wiles as she steps down from role as volunteer ‘Health & Safety Representative’ for the parish. A significant part of the role, which she has carried out over many years, has been to keep the church and our other buildings safe for use. Lesley undertook her role effectively, with patience, diligence and caring firmness.

*“Lesley, the parish and I are extremely grateful for all your efforts to keep us safe over many years, and are glad that you are willing to support us by continuing to manage the Parish Social Centre”.*

**HEALTH & SAFETY:** With Lesley hanging up her H&S hat, I would be delighted if someone would volunteer to take on this responsibility. So, if someone could help the parish, especially if you have some experience in the area of Health and Safety, please let me know.

**Wishing you, your families & friends, a week ahead.** *Canon Philip*

**OCTAVE OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY** starts this weekend and lasts until 25<sup>th</sup> January.

2026 Theme: “One hope, one calling” (cf Eph 4): *Let us embrace this divine calling to unity, not as an abstract ideal but as a vital expression of our faith*”. We pray for Christian Unity, and the spread the Gospel.

**SUNDAY OF THE WORD OF GOD** is marked next weekend, when we celebrate the power of Scripture. The 2026 theme is: “The word of Christ dwells among you” (Col 3:16). It is a Sunday “*devoted to the celebration, study & dissemination of the word of God*”. God, through his Word, desires to reveal himself and dwell in us.

**FIRST HOLY COMMUNION 2026:** The first session is this Sunday, 18<sup>th</sup> January, for children and **parents** at 9.30 am in the Parish Social Centre. Families can also ‘register’ at the session – there is still time to join!

**CALLED TO BEAR FRUIT (C2BF):** Over the coming weeks Canon Philip intends to include one of the 15 C2BF ‘action points’ in the newsletter, joining with those in other parishes in reflection; we started last week! Number Two: **“Provide a new vision and a study guide on the purpose of a parish”**. In due course we hope to get a ‘study guide’, but as we wait perhaps, as a parish, we can think about what we see as the many strands of ‘purpose’ for our own Parish. PLEASE share them with Canon Philip and /or your fellow parishioners. Using the language of the garden: this will help us to build on what is already fruitful, look to see what might need tender care, and also to plant new spiritual seeds which can bear fruit in the future.

**BURNS NIGHT: Parish Supper & Quiz: Next Saturday** (24<sup>th</sup> Jan), 7.15 pm (after the 6pm Mass). A quiz & poems night from the great man himself! With our take on ‘Neeps & Tatties’. Please do come along & join in for a warming meal & make it a fun parish evening. Tickets at £10 now available.

**BANNERS FOR LENT:** The Banner group are planning to create Lent displays for the church. They will meet on Thursdays from 22<sup>nd</sup> January in the hall 2-4 pm. *“Please join us if you can help”*. Susan Eatock

**ST GEORGE’S CATHEDRAL COLLECTION 25<sup>th</sup> Jan:** Next weekend there is a second collection to support the maintenance of our Diocesan Cathedral of St George, in Southwark. This is usually near the feast of St George but the Diocese has changed the date this year. **GIFT AIDERS:** Please note that your pink envelope is dated “12<sup>th</sup> May”. If possible, please find and use this envelope; we will amend the date.

**CHILDREN’S LITURGY:** an opportunity for young children to participate in the Children’s Liturgy during the 10.30am Mass, led by Theresa Rowlstone, on the following Sundays: 25<sup>th</sup> January, 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb.

**CAMINO WALK FOR SVP:** Joan Foley, one of our parishioners, is undertaking the Camino walk (the Portuguese coastal route) as part of a UK SVP fundraising project. Her target is £1,500 to be raised by May. ALL donations go direct to the work of SVP, with 50% going direct to the local SVP group in our parish. If you would like to find out more & consider contributing visit: [www.justgiving.com/page/joan-foley-4](http://www.justgiving.com/page/joan-foley-4) A sponsorship form will also be available at the back of church if you prefer. *“Thanks in advance”*, Joan.

**RECENTLY DECEASED:** Please pray for Paddy Conroy RIP who passed away recently. Prior to COVID he had been a regular member of the 8.30am Mass in Chestfield. His Funeral will take place at Herne Bay Crematorium, 3 pm, 30<sup>th</sup> January. Arrangements of the Funeral of Marian Ahern are now in place: Reception into church, 4.30 pm, Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> Jan, and 11am Funeral Mass, Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January, followed by burial.

**ANNIVERSARIES:** Please remember in your prayers those whose anniversaries occur about this time: Paul Recton, Frederick Bartherope, Jacqueline Ridley, Margaret James, Margaret Ellis, Mary Collins, Patrick Fitzgerald, Josephine Byrne, Mary Smith, Jenny Findeis, Purina Alston, Maria Christodoulou, Nick Furlong, Brian Kirby, Beryl Hadlow, Margaret Aitchinson, Philip O’ Neil, Maria Leszcynca, Norah Dooley, Josephine Rosser, Thomas Shepherd, Frances Welch, Mary Choher, Eileen Botrill, Margaret Gallagher, Nellie Williams, Bert Stacy, Steve Gallagher, Eileen Crowder, Marguerita Hancock, Tony de Luzy, Oliver McShane, Sarah Given, Patricia Pankhurst and Leonard Manz.

*Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord, & let perpetual light shine upon them; may they rest in peace. Amen.*

**SICK:** Your prayers are asked for: Claire Christie, Duncan Forrester, Suzie Fowler, Katherine Harris, Amanda Maclean, Diarmuid O’Sullivan, Oscar O’Sullivan, Dominic Punch, Pauline Summers, David Rose, Nicholas Watson, Margaret Webb, Leah Sheehan, Roman Sheehan, Colin Henson, Catherine Richardson, Reita Mugford, Jack Murphy, Gillian & David Black, Teresa Way, Nigel Bates, James Shepherd, Tina Bezer, Margaret Morgan, Gillian Lampard, Neil Lawson, Pamela Bavington-Brown, Shelia Slater, Les Hill, Graham Hill, Paul Regan, Christopher McDonnell, Terry & Ellie Kemp, Julliete Beaumont, Karenza Craven, Dave Chambers, Nora Vaz, Jennifer Austin, Collette MacDonald, May Dengate, Rose Link, Shirley Mayhew, & Maureen Saddleton. We pray for all who are sick or in hospital, their carers and all staff.

<i>Collections</i>	<i>Gift Aid</i>	<i>Non-Gift Aid</i>	<i>Total</i>
10 <sup>th</sup> & 11 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	£291.00	£212.63	£503.63
Standing Order and other regular giving:			
Weekly average for December 2025*	£381.38	£18.46	£399.85

***Thank you for your continued support of our parish.***

*This week retiring collection for Catholic Charity Pax Christi. Second collection next week for the Cathedral.*

\*This is the calculated ‘weekly equivalent’ of contributions received direct to the Parish account from parishioners for December.

The Catholic Parish of Our Lady Immaculate, Whitstable, is part of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark CIO Registered Incorporated Charity No.: 1173050

## ONLINE NEWSLETTER EXTRA...

Some items that we receive or find won't fit on two sides of A4 but we can still share them with you here on the e-edition of the newsletter on the website. This can be information we have been asked to share, but that may not be of immediate import to the parish; it might be interesting information, or it may be items that can be useful to look up. Additionally, some items can be repeated.

**PARISH WEBSITE:** In my email of 10<sup>th</sup> Jan I mentioned that... 'Some while ago I started to work on a revised parish website; if anyone would like to join in the process please do let me know – especially if you have an eye for design or skills in 'WordPress' (the web system I have chosen).'

No volunteers have come forward so far – but it isn't too late ☺! Please do consider helping me, *Cn Philip*

**NEW TO THE PARISH?** If you have moved to the parish since 2019 (when the last parish census took place) please let us know via email. We can email our 'new parishioner form' and add you onto our parish database; information provided only used for Church purposes.

**Weekly Parish Email:** Canon Philip sends an email each week to let parishioners know the Newsletter is on the website. If you would like to be added to the list please email [whitstable@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:whitstable@rcaos.org.uk)

**POPE LEO'S JANUARY PRAYER INTENTION:** that praying with the Word of God may be nourishment for our lives & a source of hope in our communities, helping us to build a more fraternal & missionary Church.

**CRIB OFFERINGS:** The Nativity scene was made popular by St Francis of Assisi. We are encouraged to visit the crib to spend a moment in prayer, reflecting on the humble birth of Jesus. Donations by the Crib will go equally to the Friends of the Holy Land & the Southwark Fund run by the Catholic Children's Society.

**My thanks...** to everyone who so kindly contributed to the Christmas offering, those who gave gifts and cards. I am very grateful to you, and realise how blessed I am to be part of this wonderful Parish! Particular thanks to all who helped the Parish by Christmas church cleaning, church decoration, and the flower arranging, and also to those who supporting the Christmas Liturgies in many different ways.

**SUNDAY BREAKFAST AFTER 8.30 am Mass:** For your diary: Come and join us for a social gathering with warm croissants and a nice cup of tea / coffee with the parish community on 22<sup>nd</sup> February and 12<sup>th</sup> April. The breakfast is held during school holidays (when hall is free) so it would be nice to see many join us.

**2026:** The Church started its new Liturgical year on the 30<sup>th</sup> November, the start of Advent, however the calendar new year does mark a significant moment in our own personal and cultural mindset. How many of us have set "New Year" resolutions? How many of these (if any) specifically included God and a spiritual element? It's not too late! As well as individuals, our Parish community *should* pause & reflect on 2026. What is the Lord calling us to, as a local community of believers, as missionary disciples? Read on...

**CALLED TO BEAR FRUIT:** The consultation that the Archbishop commissioned in 2025 has had a response published. The Archdiocese gives thanks to thousands of people who took part: "*We are grateful to you all for sharing so openly your hopes for the life of the Church in our Archdiocese.*" The response, which includes 15 actions points for renewal, is available at [rcaos.org.uk/calledtobearfruit](http://rcaos.org.uk/calledtobearfruit) and a small number of hardcopies have been sent to the parish. "*The consultation revealed a burning desire within our parishes to be missionary and evangelising disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, who work together to help people encounter His love. So, as we move forward on the next steps together, let's build up the Body of Christ in Southwark with faith and confidence, becoming ever more a community of missionary disciples filled with joy and hope for the future. As an Archdiocese, we will continue to discern the process of renewal, and further updates will be provided in due course.*"

The 'Consultation Response' is a step on a journey, not an end in itself. It is a document for the Parish as well as for the Diocese; a 'gift' (and a challenge) from the Lord Jesus to each of us, not only to me as Parish Priest. I would ask you to read this with an open heart and an open mind, to talk about it in the family and with other parishioners... and to share that which the Holy Spirit inspires you, with me and others.

Over the coming weeks I will try and include one of the 'action points' in the newsletter, so that we can join with others in the Diocese in reflecting.

**FIRST FRIDAY ROSARY:** Pupils from St Mary's School will lead the rosary on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> February at 9.30am. The prayers are offered particularly for the children and staff of the school, & their families.

**WEDNESDAY TEA CLUB:** meet most Wednesdays (*September to July*) 2pm to 4pm in the church hall. £1 entry gets you a raffle ticket, refreshments and cakes, plus frequent bingo, games, music, and lots more!!!!

**CHURCH CLEANING:** A number of our volunteers have had to hang up their dusters, as they are unable to continue with church cleaning; *thank you for all you have done for our community!* Now is the time for new volunteers: Your Parish needs **YOU!** If you are able to spare an hour to clean sometime during the week or on a Saturday morning please email the Parish Office. There is a rota & you will be paired with someone else.

**MISSION ‘RED BOXES’:** In England and Wales, Missio & the Mill Hill Missionaries work together through the Red Box partnership. For over 80 years now the ‘Red Box’ has been a symbol of faith, hope and love in people’s homes. The income from the Red Box is shared 60/40 between Missio and the Mill Hill Missionaries. Missio supports faith communities in dioceses where the Church is still young or poor overseas. The Mill Hill Missionaries’ share supports formation and training of its future missionaries. In England & Wales there are Red Boxes in over 200,000 homes; together we have collected millions of pounds for the missionary Church. Do you remember a ‘Red Box’ in your home? Do you still have one? Canon Philip would like to reenergise in our parish this way of helping the missions. On World Mission Sunday, please pray that we may be inspired to help pray for those missions evangelising overseas and to support them financially. Many parishes have a ‘red box coordinator’ – would you be willing to do this for our parish?

**GIFT AID:** If you a UK Tax payer and are able to ‘Gift Aid’ donations, please let us know as for every £1 donated, the parish can claim 25p at no extra cost to the donor. Standing orders can be gift aided. If you need help or more information email: [whitstablegac@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:whitstablegac@rcaos.org.uk) or the parish office.

#### **CATHOLIC APOLOGETICS PROJECT FOR PARISHES & SCHOOLS LAUNCHES:**

**Ambassadors for Christ** is a year-long video series aimed at building witnesses for Jesus and His Church. As the number of people joining the Catholic Church in England and Wales [continues to rise](#), the Archdiocese of Southwark has launched a landmark apologetics project to provide evidence-based answers to the burning questions of both new and practicing Catholics. The project, named “*Ambassadors for Christ*”, is the first of its kind in a Catholic diocese in England and Wales and is designed to equip the faithful with a deeper understanding of their faith. While the journey to faith of each person is unique, they often grapple with similar questions and doubts, and find themselves searching for answers. As more people become interested in the faith, practicing Catholics are experiencing more questions from their family, friends, and colleagues but often remain unsure where to look for evidence-based answers. These can range from fundamental questions like “Is Jesus really God?” or “How do we know God is real?” to more practical questions about the Catholic faith, such as “Why do Catholics make the Sign of the Cross?” or “What is happening during Mass?”. This project aims to not only help people find answers to their burning questions, but also to provide a reliable resource that can be relied upon when teaching about the Catholic faith. The project will consist of 52 videos, posted every Monday on YouTube in 2026. To provide assurances for the viewer that the information is from a trusted source, each video will feature a Catholic priest. To ensure doctrinal accuracy, each script draws from a foundation of Scripture, primary Church Father documents, the Catechism of the Catholic Church and official papal and Church teachings. All have been robustly checked by expert theologians prior to publication. The video format has been chosen to respond to reality that young people increasingly turn to social media for answers, including matters of faith.

Each video will follow a similar format:

- **Objection/Question:** It begins with a common objection, question, or myth
- **Scripture:** The issue is first looked at through Scripture, drawing on solid biblical teaching
- **Church Fathers:** To provide a historical understanding and demonstrate the Church’s link to the apostles, each video will then draw on the teaching of the Church Fathers
- **Church Teaching:** The final part of the video will highlight Church teaching on the subject, drawing on papal and Church documents, as well as quotes from Saints.

To find out more about this project at [rcaos.org.uk/AmbassadorsforChrist](http://rcaos.org.uk/AmbassadorsforChrist).

**“PARISH MASS BOOKS”:** There is an opportunity to arrange a prayer ‘dedication’ in a copy of the Parish Mass books while also donating towards their cost, enabling prayer for our families, departed family or friends. Forms for dedications & donations are available, from the back of the church.

## *Volunteers welcome for roles in the parish...*

*Canon Philip writes:* I am sure many of you help in many different ways of outreach; may God bless you for all that you do! However, it would be wonderful to see even more parishioners getting involved in various parish ministries and activities. There are so many things that happen to keep the Parish flourishing, and we need volunteers (existing **and new**) to keep everything going. Rather than give a long list here, there is a sheet (in church) listing (most) of the various roles, ministries & tasks of our volunteers.

*“God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts.  
Use them well to serve one another” 1 Peter 4:10.*

### *Volunteer roles include:*

**READING AT MASS:** If you would like to join the teams of readers at our weekend Masses, speak to Canon Philip and also contact the parish office via [whitstable@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:whitstable@rcaos.org.uk)

**CHURCH FLOWERS:** Our teams of arrangers help us by looking after church flowers on a rota about once a month. Thank you for all you do! We are looking for new volunteers to join the rota – help and direction provided, no experience required. Also, the parish needs help with collecting flowers (twice a week) from the Whitstable High Street branch of Sainsbury's; a group willing to make a rota would be ideal; let us know!

**EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION:** They assist by helping to distribute the Sacred Host or the Precious Blood. This will often be during Mass but may also be taking Holy Communion to those in the wider parish community who are housebound due to health, age or disability. If you know a parishioner who might be able help with this work (or if you might like to offer) please let Canon Philip know. There is preparation, first in the parish (including safeguarding clearance) and commissioning at the Cathedral.

**ALTAR SERVERS:** Our altar servers assist during Mass and at other liturgies. It is a role open to young & old, normally after making First Holy Communion. Altar Servers help prepare the church before Mass, have particular tasks during Mass, and finally assist with clearing the altar afterwards. If you would like to join in please speak to Canon Philip.

**BIDDING PRAYER Writers:** Volunteers kindly help by writing bidding prayers for weekend Masses. Some new members have joined the rota and so the workload is now spread out further, but we would still be very grateful if more people would join the rota. Please contact the office if you are interested (guidance given).

**CHURCH CLEANING:** With so many people coming to Mass each weekend, plus visitors praying during the week, it is important for the church to be spruced up each week. Volunteers give time, an hour or two, once every four weeks to help with the church cleaning. Thank you to all involved in keeping the church so smart. Could you spare some time to help & join the rota? Volunteers are usually paired up with someone else.

**SUNDAY TEA & COFFEE:** Volunteers help to 'host', (on a rota basis) the T&C's after 10.30am Mass. If you are interested in helping or want to know more, contact Sarah Hinchliffe after Sunday 10.30 Mass, or by email [sarahhinchliffe1610@gmail.com](mailto:sarahhinchliffe1610@gmail.com), or phone 07788 671213. Additionally, a different group of volunteers arrange an "occasional breakfast" after the 8.30am Mass; they too would welcome any offers of help – contact the Parish Office.

### *Items from past newsletters*

**LISTENING TO THE READINGS AT MASS:** When we read or listen to the bible it is almost always in a translation – unless you are gifted enough to understand Hebrew, Aramaic and ancient Greek! We rely on the gifts and talents of translators and scholars to bring us a more widely understood text. It was been decided by our Bishops that the 'translation' we listen to during Mass would change and we will use a new version of the Lectionary (the book used to read from in Mass). This started on the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2024, the First Sunday of Advent. The Parish has received its ordered copies of the books to be used in the Sanctuary by the Readers and Clergy. Described as "*Exquisitely bound... adorned with gold-blocking, gilded edges and multiple ribbon markers, these [4] volumes are both sturdy & worthy for the proclamation of the Word of God.*" Additionally, the "Parish Mass Book" we use has been replaced. In our parish we deferred replacement of these books at the end of 2010 when the Mass prayers changed, presumably anticipating the future change of the Lectionary, and so Advent was the time to replace these books. Other options exist but, although having a significant up-front cost, the weekend 'Parish Mass Book' seem to be more environmentally friendly and financially cost effective over the long term. (updated 15<sup>th</sup> Nov '25)

**ORDINATIONS, of parishioners or people associated with Whitstable:** Fr Chris Benynon, a priest of the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton (retired), visited the parish as he is an ‘old boy’ of the parish. In the course of a conversation he was asked how many priests had come from the parish, and he thought, including himself, about fifteen. This is an impressive number and Canon Philip would like to draw a list up of all Ordinations with connections to Whitstable. If you can supplement the list below please get in touch:

Bishop Michael Evans,	Fr Hatchard ( <i>Christian name?</i> )	Fr John Slater
Mgr Pat Wall,	Fr Bruce Keller,	Deacon Dan Mulcahy
Fr Chris Benynon,	Fr Anthony Pile	<i>also: Fr Richard Calcutt MHM</i>
Fr Tim Forbes-Turner,	Fr Jack Pledger,	<i>whose mother lived in the parish.</i>
Fr Barry Grant,	Fr Maurice Pledger,	<i>possibly also: Fr Tony Hughes?</i>

**ANNUAL MASS COUNT:** Thank you to all who helped with during the 4 weeks of the official Mass count, and also for the work of counting during the Summer. The figures show an average of 209 attending Mass this year, slightly smaller than the 216 average in 2024.

Date	6pm	8.30am	10.30am	Total	Date	6pm	8.30am	10.30am	Total
20/21 Sept	52	52	116	220	4/5 Oct	48	38	114	200
27/28 Sept	49	48	110	207	11/12 Oct	44	58	108	210

**CATHOLIC SCHOOL GOVERNANCE:** One of the early ‘missions’ the Church in this country engaged in, when Catholicism began to re-establish, was the provision of education to young people, often supported by Religious Sisters and Brothers; in our Parish the Mercy Sisters. As the State began to make more provision for education, the Church worked in partnership: State funding was provided and the Church maintained influence through its involvement in school governance. This is still the case today. The Archbishop is able to appoint Governors to Diocesan schools, and has the right to maintain a majority of ‘Foundation Governors’. He can only do this if parishioners are willing to volunteer their time for this highly important role. Our own local Catholic School, St Mary’s, has vacancies for appointments to its Local Governance Committee (LGC), as does the Ursuline College in Westgate. Would you be willing to aid the Archbishop, the Parish, the Schools, and especially the pupils by being a member of a LGC? Governors meet usually six times a year, make a few formal visits to the school each year and endeavour to keep abreast of the life of the School community. Their role is strategic – not day to day management of the School (the role of the Headteacher) – and one that has been described as being a “critical friend” to the school, with a particular focus on maintaining & developing the Catholic life and ethos. Is this something you could help with? Speak to Canon Philip in the first instance.

**VOCATIONS TO THE DIACONATE:** Is God calling you to become a Deacon? If you are considering a vocation to serve at the altar & profess God’s gospel ministry as a Deacon, visit [rcaos.org.uk/TheDiaconate](http://rcaos.org.uk/TheDiaconate). Let us pray for all Deacons and those in formation.

### ***Long Term Parish Items – for information***

**A LEGACY IN YOUR WILL:** If you are kind enough to be considering making a legacy donation through your will to the parish please contact Canon Philip or the Parish Office. The Parish community is very grateful and acknowledges such kind donations which can help develop the Parish, assist with its running and support the practice of our Catholic Faith for future generations. *Thank you*

**BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE:** The Parish has a Book of Remembrance in the church, found in the display case in the St Mary’s Transept. If you would like names of your loved ones displayed in it then please complete our parish form, available at the back of the church, or contact the parish office for a form. These are gathered and the book updated by a parish volunteer from time to time.

**REQUESTING MASS FOR A PARTICULAR INTENTION:** A laudable Catholic custom is to have a Mass said for a specific intention. All Masses, of course, are offered to the glory of God and for the salvation of the whole world, but often there is also a specific intention; here in the Parish the intentions are usually printed in the newsletter. Anyone may request a Mass to be said for their particular intention and these can be offered for a variety of intentions. We often see Masses offered for the welfare of an individual or family, or for the repose of a soul; It is customary, when requesting a Mass, to make an offering as a way of being especially associated with that Mass. However, it is not necessary to make an offering. The suggested donation is £10; some give less, some give more, some give nothing. Please never feel that you cannot have a Mass said for your intentions due to lack of funds. A Mass costs nothing – except, of course, the life-saving death and resurrection of Jesus. Mass Intention envelopes and forms are available by the entrance of the church.

**PARISHIONERS IN HOSPITAL:** It is important to let Canon Philip and the Parish know if you or any parishioner is admitted to Hospital, or due for a stay in hospital. Due to Data Protection rules most hospitals will not pass on information about religious practice... sometimes even to an official chaplain. If you would like a visit from a priest in hospital you need to specifically ask the staff to arrange this for you. In some circumstances it may be appropriate to receive the Sacrament of the Sick before going into hospital. Please get in touch if you would like to receive this Sacrament, often appropriate before significant surgery.

**SAFEGUARDING:** *The Diocesan Safeguarding Team include the following in every email they send:*

If you are concerned about the welfare of a child or adult at risk, do not delay in contacting the police, using 999 if a child or adult is believed to be in immediate danger. It is the policy of the Catholic Church in England and Wales to report all allegations of abuse to statutory authorities, regardless of whether the abuse occurred recently or in the past, or whether the accused person is living or deceased. If you are in any role within the Catholic Church in England and Wales, you must refer allegations directly to the safeguarding office for your diocese or religious congregation, or directly to the Police. If you are a member of the public, please refer allegations directly to the police and also to the safeguarding office in your diocese. You can contact the Southwark Safeguarding Office by phone 020 7261 1606 or email [safeguardingoffice@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:safeguardingoffice@rcaos.org.uk)

**CALLED TO BEAR FRUIT (C2BF) – Consultation Report: Report in 60 seconds**

Thousands of parishioners across the Archdiocese took part in the Called to Bear Fruit consultation, offering honest, hopeful and practical reflections on the life and mission of our Church in Southwark. People spoke with gratitude for their parish communities, where welcome, prayer and sacramental preparation are often sources of real strength, while also expressing a desire for deeper formation and ongoing opportunities to grow in faith. It is clear there is a profound love of the Lord Jesus in our parishes, along with a burning desire to lead people to him. That is why it was so heartening to see a strong recognition that evangelisation is central to parish life, though many asked for clarity and practical tools to help move from words to action.

Youth emerged as the most urgent priority, with a widespread call to invest in engaging and supporting young people at the heart of our mission. Across the board, parishioners highlighted the real need for collaboration - with neighbouring parishes, with clergy and among volunteers - as well as the need to value and invite new people to share their gifts. Looking ahead, people acknowledged the reality of fewer priests, but also expressed confidence that laity and clergy together can take up the challenge of renewal. The consultation revealed a Church that cares deeply for its future, ready to grow in faith, hope and love, and eager to continue to build vibrant parish communities that witness joyfully to the Gospel.

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**15 action points have been identified from the themes.** Canon Philip intends weekly (where possible) to include one of them in the newsletter during the early part of 2026. The list of the points has been added in below. As they are published any extra thoughts will be added in... plus a summary of any feedback.

1. **Celebrate existing signs of growth**

11/01/26

There is hope in and for the Church, including our Parish. Locally we thank God for recent (Dec 2025) Confirmation of 18 young people and the baptism of two adults. Let me know other things we can celebrate, and how we might share the news.

2. **Provide a new vision and a study guide on the purpose of a parish**

18/01/26

3. Encourage inter-parish collaboration

4. Give clarity about what mission looks like today

5. Encourage parishes to move from welcome to invitation

6. Share good practice from across the Archdiocese

7. Celebrate and equip catechists and parents

8. Build on the foundation of sacramental preparation by offering ongoing formation

9. Promote resources on prayer

10. Strengthen our culture of hospitality

11. Celebrate and thank volunteers more visibly

12. Encourage personal invitations into service

13. Invest in youth ministry

14. Launch a Parish Renewal Course for laity and clergy

15. Pray for renewal