PARISH OF OUR LADY IMMACULATE, WHITSTABLE CT5 2EY
with St. Joseph's, Chestfield CT5 3LD

www.rcourladywhitstable.org.uk



Parish email address:	**whitstable@rcaos.org.uk**	
Parish Office:	**15a Castle Road, Whitstable. CT5 2DY**	**01227 272758**
	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	**Contact Bernadette via the Parish Office** *(see above)*	
Safeguarding Representative:	**Mr John Flower whitstablesg2@safeguardrcaos.org.uk**	**07738 370528**
Gift Aid Co-Ordinator:	**whitstablegac@rcaos.org.uk**	
Health & Safety Representative:	***Awaiting appointment*** **whitstable@rcaos.org.uk**	
SVP Group:	**Mrs Jane Hill**	**07842 550998**
Parish School:	**St Mary's School, Northwood Road**	01227 272692
Parish Website:	**www.rcourladywhitstable.org.uk**	
Notices for the Bulletin:	**To be submitted please by 7.30 pm on Wednesday**	

TWENTY SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME: Mass Book page 137 **4th October 2026**

SATURDAY: 3rd Oct:
Confessions: 11.30am to 12noon & 5.15pm to 5.45pm
6.00 pm: Aili Uibu, RIP (K Goke)

SUNDAY 4th Oct: 27th Sunday in Ordinary time:
Rosary Sunday
8.10 am: *Rosary (led by parishioners)*
8.30 am: All Our Parishioners
10.30 am: Patrick MacNally, RIP (M Rowe)
Followed by Refreshments in the hall

MONDAY 5th Oct to FRIDAY 9th Oct
Canon Philip away with the Diocese this week.
No weekday Mass 7th Oct to 9th October.

Wednesday: 7th Oct: Our Lady of the Rosary
Friday:8th Oct: **St John Henry Newman**

SATURDAY: 10th Oct: *St Paulinus of York*
Confessions: 11.30am to 12noon & 5.15pm to 5.45pm
6.00 pm: John O' Shea, RIP (M'Ohea)

SUNDAY 11th Oct: 28th Sunday in Ordinary time:
Prisons Week (11th to 17th Oct)
8.10 am: *Rosary (led by parishioners)*
8.30 am: All Our Parishioners
10.30 am: David & Lesley Wiles, RIP (A Willey)
Followed by Refreshments in the hall

ROSARY SUNDAY: It is a long-held tradition that October is designated as the month of the Holy Rosary, in which we give particular focus on praying the rosary; a way of meditating on the life of the Lord Jesus. The focus of the month relates to the liturgical celebration of Our Lady of the Rosary falling on 7th October; it was instituted to honour the Blessed Virgin Mary, in gratitude for the protection given to the Church in answer to the faithful praying of the rosary. Pope Leo has made an appeal urging Catholics around the world to pray the Rosary this month for World Peace. There will be a group praying the rosary on Sunday's at 8.10am, just before the 8.30 am Mass. Some explanation sheets are available to help with praying the rosary. Would you be willing in October to help lead the Rosary before/after, other weekend Masses?

PRISONERS SUNDAY next weekend 11th October, and is the national Catholic day of prayer and action for prisoners and their families. It is a moment to reflect on the lives of those affected by imprisonment — those in prison, their children and families, and all who struggle with the lasting impact of justice system involvement. It is an invitation to respond with compassion, prayer and practical support.Last year our parish raised £314.51 for PACT, the Catholic charity that provides help to prisoners and their families. There will be a collection to assist PACT again this year. Please support them generously.

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

CANON PHILIP is away Monday to Friday this week, participating in a Diocesan Clergy Formation gathering in Merville, France. While he is away there will be no weekday Mass. However, the church will be open 9 am to 4.30 pm, and the office will remain open Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 9 am to 4.30 pm

QUIZ NIGHT: A big thank you to all involved in organising a wonderful evening last Saturday, especially Sarah Hinchliffe and Susan Eatock. It was a fun and an enjoyable evening! Thank you also to parishioners who donated raffle prizes. The total raised was £237.00.

PAPAL PRAYER INTENTION: **OCTOBER:** For mental health ministry, that this be established throughout the Church, helping to overcome the stigma & discrimination of persons with mental illnesses.

MASS COUNT: The annual count continues until 11th Oct. Thank you to all helping with the count.

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN WHITSTABLE: The Annual joint prayer service for our Churches Together takes place this Sunday, 4th Oct, 6pm at St Alphege Church (on Whitstable High Street). An opportunity to gather and celebrate our partnership in faith across the Christian communities in Whitstable. All welcome

SVP AUTUMN TOUR: 11th Oct. Any older parishioners who would like to join this afternoon out, with a drive around the countryside & afternoon tea in the parish Social Centre, please speak to a member of the SVP at Mass or contact the SVP mobile number 07842 550998. A great afternoon, enjoyed by all, rain or shine.

CHILDREN'S LITURGY: Meets this Sunday 4th October, then12th & 18th Oct. We are seeking extra helpers!

CURRY WORKSHOP: Saturday 31st October. (24 places) 7.15 for 7.30 pm start. Join the parish for a flavour packed evening. Learn to prepare mouth-watering Indian dishes with Karen Franzak demonstrating how to prepare them. Cost £20: covers ingredients and spices & a three course meal to enjoy with fellow participants. Tickets on sale from this weekend. ***Contact Winston Waller*** on 07941 345821 or email winston.waller@btinternet.com. Please let Winston know about allergies when booking.

ST MARY'S SCHOOL OPEN DAYS: Is your child (or someone you know) due to start school in 2027? St Mary's Catholic Primary school are holding a series of open days and tours, offering parents the opportunity to have a look around. Dates for the open days & tours: 6th Oct 9.30 am, Saturday 10th Oct 10 am to 12 noon, 13th Oct 9.30 am, 20th Oct 9.30 am, 5th Nov 2 pm & 10th Nov 9.30 am. Contact the school on 01227 272692 or email office@st-marys-whitstable.kcsp.org.uk to book places.

OCTOBER MONTH FOR MISSIONS: Pope Leo XIV has set the theme for World Missions Day (18th Oct) as "*One in Christ, united in mission*." In a message Pope Leo emphasised that it is a privileged occasion for the entire Church to pray for missionaries and for the fruitfulness of their apostolic work. The Pope, recalling his personal experience as a priest and later as a missionary bishop in Peru, stated: "*I saw first-hand how the faith, the prayer, and the generosity shown on World Mission Sunday can transform entire communities*".

CAFOD FAST DAY, was last Friday (2nd Oct), and gave us the opportunity to 'Turn faith into action', praying and fasting to support people around the world who are living in poverty. CAFOD is the Catholic charity in England & Wales helping and supporting communities worldwide. There is a retiring collection this weekend to support their work. Special donation envelopes (helpful for UK tax payers) are at the back of church.

RECENTLY DECEASED: Please pray for the repose of the souls of May Dengate and Claire Christie who passed away this week. Both May and Claire were active parishioners and well known in the parish. We pass on our prayers and condolences to their families and friends. May's Funeral Mass has been arranged and will take place on Monday 19th October at 10 am. Details of Claire's arrangements to follow, when in place.

ANNIVERSARIES: Please remember in your prayers those whose anniversaries occur about this time: Mary Howell, Audrey Steer, David Upcropt, Joan Corr, June Barron, Patrick Connolly, Kathleen Priest, Maud Gann, Ronald Keam, Stan Tucker, Paul Hughes, Canon Richard Hearn, "Sissie" Parke, Eileen Wallsgrove & John Wallsgrove, Michael Shaw, Harry Clarke, Archbishop Cyril Cowderoy, Agnes Edwards, Lilith Statter, Michael Christodoulou, Graham Jones, Hilda Foster and Josephine Newton.

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: 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, Reita Mugford, Gillian & David Black, Jack Murphy, Teresa Way, Nigel Bates, James Shepherd, Tina Bezer, Nora Vaz, Margaret Morgan, Gillian Lampard, Neil Lawson, Pamela Bavington-Brown, Shelia Slater, Graham Hill, Paul Regan, Ellie Kemp, Karenza Craven, Dave Chambers, Rose Link, Shirley Mayhew, David Amis, Fr Mark White, Joan Locke, Kathleen Swabey and Gerry Allen. We pray for all who are sick or in hospital.

Collections	***Gift Aid***	***Non-gift aid***	***Total***
26th Sept & 27th Sept	£284.55	£220.16	£504.71
Other regular giving: Weekly average for August 2026*	£490.85	£23.54	£514.39
Weekly average for donations via Card machine, August 2026*	£54.23	£21.92	£76.15

Thank you for your continued support of our parish. *Retiring collection this weekend for CAFOD.*

*This is the calculated 'weekly equivalent' of contributions received direct to the Parish account from parishioners for August and offerings made via the Card Machine for August.

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 are useful to look up. Additionally, some items can be repeated.

***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

NEW TO THE PARISH? If you are new to the parish 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. If you would like to be also added to the weekly parish newsletter list please email whitstable@rcaos.org.uk

ST MARY'S SCHOOL OPEN DAYS: Is your child (or someone you know) due to start school in September 2027. St Mary's Catholic Primary school are holding a series of open days and tours, offering parents the opportunity to have a look around. Dates for the open days and tours: 6th October 9.30 am, Saturday 10th Oct 10 am to 12 noon, 13th Oct 9.30 am, 20th Oct 9.30 am, 5th Nov 2 pm & 10th Nov 9.30 am.
Contact the school on 01227 272692 or email office@st-marys-whitstable.kcsp.org.uk to book a place.

PAPAL PRAYER INTENTION: **OCTOBER:** For mental health ministry, that this be established throughout the Church, helping to overcome the stigma & discrimination of persons with mental illnesses.

"Save the Date" ***make a note in your diary or on your calendar:***

- **Christmas Fayre: Saturday 28th November 10 am to 1 pm.** Various Christmas themed stalls to browse and pick up some good bargains for Christmas presents. More details to follow
- **Christmas Wreath Workshop: Saturday 5th Dec from 2 pm to 4 pm.** Create your own Advent Wreath. Tickets £25. Includes seasonal refreshments. More details to follow.

OCTOBER MONTH FOR MISSIONS: October is also the month for Missions. Pope Leo XIV has chosen the theme for World Missions Day 2026, which falls on 18 October, as "One in Christ, united in mission." In his message for World Mission Sunday, Pope Leo emphasized that it is a privileged occasion for the entire Church to join in prayer for missionaries and for the fruitfulness of their apostolic work. The Pope, recalling his personal experience as a priest and later as a missionary bishop in Peru, stated: "*I saw first-hand how the faith, the prayer, and the generosity shown on World Mission Sunday can transform entire communities*". Let us pray for missions and for the spread of the Gospels throughout the world.

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION: Some months ago, Canon Philip thanked all those who help with the Parish by assisting with Holy Communion, both in church and for home visits. There is a need to expand the team for all weekend Masses and for making home visits. Please do make suggestions of parishioners who you think might be asked to join the volunteer team.

WEDNESDAY TEA CLUB restarted after the summer break. They meet most Wednesdays (Term time *September - July*) 2pm to 4pm in the Parish Social Centre. £1 entry gets you a raffle ticket, refreshments & cakes, plus frequent bingo, games, music, & lots more!!!! Everyone is invited to join us.

CHILDREN'S LITURGY: The liturgy group has restarted and meets: 4th, 12th and 18th October. Canon Philip is keen to build a team to work with Theresa following her return after her recent surgery. Would all parishioners reflect on who may be able to help, pass names on to the Parish and perhaps pass on a few words of encouragement to possible volunteers.

FIRST FRIDAY ROSARY: 6th Nov at 9.30 am. Pupils from St Mary's School, lead the Rosary before Mass. Prayers are offered for the children & staff of the school, & their families. Please join them if you can.

GARDENING GROUP: Last meeting for 2026 Saturday 7th Nov. *Hope to see you there, Winston Waller.*

PARISH EVENTS GROUP: The next meeting is on Wednesday 11th November at 5 pm.

SVP Appeal: The SVP are currently running low on several food and cupboard items; they would be particularly grateful for donations of the following: tea, coffee, cereal, long life milk, tinned meats, tinned tomatoes, baked beans, personal hygiene products, dish detergent, and laundry detergents. Donations of strong carrier bags would also be very much appreciated. The SVP thank you in advance for your generosity.

FLOWERS FOR ALTAR: If anyone would like to donate flowers/foliage for the altar, please bring them to the church before Friday 10 am & leave them in a bucket at St Vincent's side transept. Our Flower arrangers usually prepare flowers for the altar on a Friday or Saturday. To join the rota, please email the parish office.

PARISH WEBSITE: Thank you to the several offers of help with getting a revamp of the website ready. If anyone else could like to join in the process please do let Canon Philip know – especially if you have an eye for design. More heads can lead to more opportunities for inspiration!

HEALTH & SAFETY: There is a vacancy for a Health & Safety Representative volunteer for the parish. Please speak to Canon Philip if you, or someone you know, could help the parish, especially someone with experience in the area of Health and Safety. A couple of offers gratefully received... perhaps a small team?

"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.

Events taking place in or with the Diocese

HOW DO WE PRAY? How do we build a better, more fulfilling relationship with God?
You are warmly invited to join an experiential programme called ***Teach Me to Pray*** facilitated by *Southwark Diocesan Spirituality Commission*. The programme will be ***online*** on Tuesdays, starting **6th October from 7pm to 8.15pm**. Following 4 online sessions there is an invitation to conclude the programme with an in-person Reflection Day in a diocesan Retreat Centre on 5th or 12th December. There is no commitment to attend all sessions – join us whenever you can.
For details/ to sign up see https://aecsouthwark.churchsuite.com/events/tnpn4hqd or email for further information spirituality@rcaos.org.uk

YOUNG ADULT EVENTS: St George's Cathedral hosts a monthly Young Adult Mass at 6:00 pm on the first Sunday, followed by a social gathering (for those aged 18+). There are also weekly events and socials on Thurs day evenings. Details can be found on the RCAOS website, Facebook, and Instagram @stgeorgesya.

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:
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.

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

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.

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!

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).

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, 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.

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.

Items from past newsletters

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?

SYNOD ON SYNODALITY: The late Pope Francis said that "*Synodality is a style, it is a walk together, and it is what the Lord expects from the Church of the third millennium*". The Synodal Process is now in its third Phase: 'the Implementation For a Synodal Church'. Each diocese has been invited to share how our understanding of synodality has changed and how synodal practices have been, or might be, implemented in the life of our parishes. Archbishop John has started this in our area of the Church, and is preparing to help us to have Parish conversations on the Final Document, using a small group discussion resource. Canon Philip and some parishioners recently joined with other people from around the Diocese to reflect on the journey so far and to learn about the next steps. The **Called to Bear Fruit (C2BF)** process is a timely gift, as it dove tails very much into many of the reflections during the Synod. Let us ask the Lord to fill us with understanding and a willingness to listen to His voice, so often presented to us through the words and examples of other followers of the Lord Jesus. Let us pray for a generous spirit so that we can engage with God's plan.

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.

DEACONS IN THE DIOCESE: Is God calling you? The 3rd Archdiocesan Diaconal Day was celebrated on 12th July 2026, and was an opportunity to pray for the Permanent Deacons serving our diocese, as well as for the new vocations to this ministry. If you are a man between 21 to 58 years, prayerful, with the desire to love & serve God, and His people, involved in services within your parish & community, have tried many things & still feel drawn to a closer relationship with Christ and His Church. you might possibly be called to be a Permanent Deacon. For further information about the Permanent Diaconate, e-mail: ianblack@rcaos.org.uk You can also visit: rcaos.org.uk/vocations/is-god-calling-me/the-diaconate/

Prayer for those discerning a vocation to the Permanent Diaconate: Lord, Jesus Christ, you have asked us to pray for more labourers to be sent into your harvest. I ask you to make those you have called to diaconal ministry, ready to hear and act upon your invitation. Make them at all times sensitive to your guidance, willing to learn and eager to obey. I ask this in your name, Lord Jesus, who came not to be served but to serve. **Amen.**

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.

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 1st 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 2024 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 15th 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,
Mgr Pat Wall,
Fr Chris Benynon,
Fr Tim Forbes-Turner,
Fr Barry Grant,
Fr Hatchard (*Christian name?)*
Fr Bruce Keller,
Fr Anthony Pile
Fr Jack Pledger,
Fr Maurice Pledger,
Fr John Slater
Deacon Dan Mulcahy
also: Fr Richard Calcutt MHM
whose mother lived in the parish.
possibly also: Fr Tony Hughes?

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*

GIFT AID: Would you like your collection offerings to go further? The UK 'Gift Aid' scheme boosts the overall value of any offering you make to the parish or the diocese. How does it work? It is a UK government scheme allowing charities to reclaim basic rate tax (20%) on donations from taxpayers, boosting the gift's value by 25% at no extra cost to the donor. Donors must pay UK Income or Capital Gains Tax equal to the tax reclaimed. Which means every £1 you give to the parish is worth £1.25 and helps further the mission of the parish and the diocese. Forms are at the back of the church. If you need help please email the parish.

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.

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.

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

2025 ANNUAL MASS COUNT: Thank you to all who helped with the 2025 official Mass count, and also for the work of counting during Summer 2025. 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
20/21 Sept	52	52	116	220
27/28 Sept	49	48	110	207

Date	6pm	8.30am	10.30am	Total
4/5 Oct	48	38	114	200
11/12 Oct	44	58	108	210

Archdiocesan Prayer:

God our Loving Father, pour out on us afresh the gifts of your Holy Spirit.
Open our ears to hear your Word, open our eyes to see your presence,
open our minds to understand your Wisdom
and open our hearts to be more available for your mission
so that strengthened by your grace we can truly be
a sign and instrument of your presence in our world today.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***

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 "*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.

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.

15 action points have been identified from the themes. Canon Philip set a challenge of including a reflection of one point regularly in the newsletter during the first half of 2026. The now full list of reflections on the points can be read below: As they are published any extra thoughts will be added in… plus a summary of any feedback.

18th July 2026: An update… *All fifteen Action Points and the reflections have now been 'published'. Many of the reflections included questions or invitations for feedback to me. In our busy lives it can be difficult to find time to think and then time to feedback. Perhaps, you shared thoughts among yourselves in conversations? Alas, very few thoughts or reflections made it back to me here in the Parish Office* 😳. *However, you can still pass your thoughts on. Perhaps have a ponder on the Points over the summer? The recent teaching of Pope Leo and the late Pope Francis, reminds us that we are* **called** *to work together. Let us ask the Holy Spirit to help us respond with eager Faith.* ***Canon Philip***

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
   In due course we hope to get a 'study guide' from the Diocese, 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.

3. **Encourage inter-parish collaboration** 01/02/26
   This seems easy at one level, but can be more complex in reality. If we do things together, of course it must be better and easier? But our nearest parishes are Herne Bay (4 miles), Canterbury (8 miles) with Hersden (11 miles), and Faversham (11 miles), so travel is an issue for joint ventures/events etc. Which Parish should host? '*if it isn't here I probably wouldn't go*'. Perhaps technology might help. Please think about what our parishes "should" do together, and also what we might do together; perhaps thinking at first about our links with Herne Bay? Don't keep your thoughts to yourself – share! Talk with other parishioners and pass on thoughts to Canon Philip via the Parish Office. "Subsidiarity" is a principle in Catholic Social Teaching stating that matters should be handled by the smallest, lowest, or most local competent authority, rather than a central power. Sometime two parishes are better than one.

4. **Give clarity about what mission looks like today** 08/02/26
   We are called by the Lord Jesus to be Missionary Disciples. However, it is quite important that, as a parish community, we have a shared understanding about what we mean when we talk about "***mission***". Using the term Missionary can make us think of courageous people heading overseas to spread the Gospel to other nations; this is comfortable… because it is then up to someone else to do. "***Mission***" is the task of all Christians, taking a form that is unique to each person. Christ asks us to listen to Him and allow Him to use our gifts, talents, treasures, yes even our very selves, to allow His Gospel to spread. Let us ask the Lord Jesus to give our parish clarity about what mission looks for us like today in Whitstable.

5. **Encourage parishes to move from welcome to invitation** 15/02/26
   AP4 reflected on "***Mission***". Part of this is being a welcoming community… but the challenge is not just to wait for "them" to walk through the door, but actively reach out. How do we and how can we, as a Parish 'invite'. We are asked by the Lord Jesus to extend **His** invitation on His behalf: to newcomers, to the lapsed, to those who may not know Jesus is calling them. The Holy Spirit is entrusting YOU with ideas of how we as a Parish can do this. Don't ignore His inspiration, share them with each other & with Canon Philip. Who do you know that needs a personal invite to come to meet Jesus?

6. **Share good practice from across the Archdiocese** 22/02/26
   We are challenged to have "***Mission***" & "***Invitation***" at the heart of who we are as a Parish community. Sometimes the 'how' of this does not need *reinventing* but to be learned from the success of others… or us sharing our successes! The Diocese have offered examples, and will continue to do so, but have you heard or experienced something our Parish can take up? May the Holy Spirit guide us!

7. **Celebrate and equip catechists and parents** 01/03/26

One of the blessings in the 'Rite of Baptism of Children' speaks of how parents "*…will be the first teachers of their child in the ways of faith.*" Then asks God to help them "*…be also the best of teachers, bearing witness to the faith by what they say and do in Christ Jesus our Lord.*" As a faith community it is important that we support parents in the calling to pass on the gift of Faith, as C2BF asks that we 'equip' them, provide help, support and the necessary 'tools' to teach the faith. Catechists are volunteers "*who echo the teachings of Jesus Christ and the Catholic Church, facilitating religious education and formation for children, young people, and adults*". **Thank you** to our Catechist and the parents of the parish – how could the parish better support and equip you for the beautiful task the Lord Jesus has entrusted to you?

8. **Build on the foundation of sacramental preparation by offering ongoing formation** 08/03/26

Our parish, and the Church as a whole, rightly puts a focus of time and energy into preparing people to receive the Sacraments; our Holy Communion group is meeting at the moment, and our Confirmation Group recently had their 'going forth' Mass. This action point is encouraging us as a parish, and a diocese, to recognise that there is a *need* for a process of 'ongoing' faith development. Something that is very appropriate for those who have recently 'finished' preparation… but also for all those who finished some while ago – that includes us all! What areas of faith development are *you* interested in focusing on? When could this be done? How could it be done so that large numbers of parishioners could benefit? How do we best share the answers to these questions?

9. **Promote resources on prayer** 15/03/26

The consultation report speaks of there being "…lots of excellent resources on prayer available today. The Archdiocese of Southwark Spirituality Commission offers information and resources on ways into prayer via its website: www.southwarkdsc.org.uk". The report also mentions that "Smartphone apps have become increasingly popular, such as Universalis, Hallow and 'Pray As You Go'. Christian Art offers a daily Gospel reading and art reflection." It concludes its reflection on AP9 by stating "The need for prayer must also be articulated often and with love." What areas of prayer might you interested in focusing on? How and when could this be done with other parishioners? How do we best communicate with one another (and Canon Philip) what help we would like?

10. **Strengthen our culture of hospitality** 22/03/26

'*Hospitality is one of the simplest and most powerful ways we share God's love. A warm smile at the door, coffee after Mass or introducing a newcomer to others can make all the difference.*' Our parish has a firm foundation of welcome to build upon. However, it is important that each parishioner think about what we currently do together and how that can be strengthened. Then EVERYONE should consider "how can I help our parish to be more hospitable". The Holy Spirit wants YOU to play your part. How can we best share ideas with one another (and Canon Philip) to *strengthen our culture of hospitality*?

11. **Celebrate and thank volunteers more visibly** 25/01/26

The Parish is blessed with many volunteers, getting involved in many aspects of Parish life and volunteering in the wider community. In September we hold a Parish Volunteer gathering; one way of 'celebrating'. How can we build on this? Share your thoughts. Canon Philip intends on highlighting different groups of volunteers over the course of the year.

12. **Encourage personal invitations into service** 24/05/26

'*Personal invitation matters. Many people don't step forward because they feel unsure or unworthy, yet when encouraged, they often discover new gifts and a deeper relationship with God...*' This 'action' is not simply a task for me as the Parish Priest, but one that is given to all member of the parish, particularly those already involved in the wide variety of ministries in the parish. Inviting someone to volunteer is not only a help to the parish, it can also be the way God draws them closer to himself.

13. **Invest in youth ministry** 31/05/26

In reply to the C2BF consultation, across the Archdiocese, the renewal of youth ministry was named more than any other area of parish life, with 57% of groups highlighting it as essential. This reflects both concern for the future and real hope that young people will be central in the revitalisation of our Church.

The Archdiocese has been investing greatly in the Southwark Catholic Youth Service (SCYS), visit the webpage rcaos.org.uk/mission/southwark-catholic-youth-service – but this does not mean that our Parish can sit back and relax. We too are challenged by the Lord to 'invest', whether this is by our time, our talents or our 'treasure' (put our money where our hearts are challenged to be), or indeed all three. The "real hope" mentioned above needs to be, and indeed must be, nurtured and encouraged. What are we called to do?

14. **Launch a Parish Renewal Course for laity and clergy** 07/06/26

Over several months I have included the titles of the series of "action points" published following the C2BF consultation. This week we reach the penultimate point for our newsletter reflections… although this is one that we will have to patiently wait for. The Diocese has said that it is preparing "*…a new study guide - which will be published in due course - on the purpose of a parish. It is a guide to Pope Francis'* 2020 document 'The Pastoral Conversion of the Parish Community'." I am sure we all have our own idea of the purpose of a parish, however, let us be open to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, to broaden our understanding and to set new challenges. The Spirit invites us to be open to ***relearning*** how we can & should live the Gospel the Lord Jesus gave us, including the duty to share this great gift with others. As we await the launch of the course, let us pray for a listening ear and for an enthusiasm for Parish Renewal.

15. **Pray for renewal** 14/06/26

The final stop on the "action point" reflection journey is 'prayer': prayer for our parish, prayer for the local Church in Kent & South London, prayer for renewal, prayer for the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. "*Archbishop John would like to invite everyone into a time of deeper prayer and personal renewal, by committing to one or more of the following for the intention of renewal in the Archdiocese: 1) A Holy Hour before the Blessed Sacrament; 2) Praying the rosary; 3) Seeking the Lord's mercy through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.*" How can and should our Parish deepen our prayer in response to this invite?

"Let us ask the Holy Spirit
to illumine our hearts and minds
with fresh possibilities."