

NEWSLETTER

PARISH OFFICE: Mrs Ingrid La Trobe 01732 741693
 Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9am - 12pm
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 Website: www.sevrparish.org.uk

PARISH PRIEST
 Fr. David Gibbons
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 Fr. Gregory Ackron
 01732 454177

Today's Mass: The EPIPHANY of the LORD

The Feast of the Epiphany is one of the most important in the Church's year. It doesn't just recall the visit of the wise men to the baby Jesus: the real significance is the manifestation – the appearance - of Jesus to the world (the Gentiles); it also references the Baptism of Jesus and the first miracle at Cana.

First Reading: the prophet Isaiah pictures salvation coming to the nations like light in the darkness but – and this is the important point – only by way of Israel, the people of God. The reference to camels and gold and incense is inevitably seen as a prediction of the visit of the magi as recounted in the *Gospel*.

Psalm: again this 'royal psalm' is seen as a prediction of, and celebration in song of, the visit of the wise men.

Second Reading: the Church has selected this extract from the letter to the Ephesians to underline the main significance of the Epiphany, that is the revelation of Jesus Christ as the Saviour of the Gentiles (or 'pagans') as well as the Jews.

Gospel: Matthew wonderfully relates the visit of the magi (or 'wise men') to Jesus in Bethlehem, bringing their three gifts: gold for a king, frankincense for God, and myrrh for the Anointed One, the Messiah. *We Three Kings of Orient Are* - the famous hymn by John H Hopkins Jr - well brings out the deeper meaning of the gifts.

Fr David

Today (Sunday) First Holy Communion Mass

We begin this year's programme with a Celebratory Mass at 3:00pm for the children and their families.

Monday: RCIA Introductory Meeting, 8pm

A meeting to explain and outline the parish RCIA programme for 2017 will take place in the upstairs room of the parish centre at St Thomas' Church. RCIA is a programme designed for adults who wish to be Baptised in the Catholic Church or (if already Baptised) Received into full communion with the Catholic Church. If you have any questions before the meeting, please contact Andrew La Trobe (andrew.latrobe@gmail.com; 07775 738485).

If you are interested in becoming a Catholic please come along to the meeting. If you know somebody who is interested in becoming a Catholic please pass on a personal invitation to them to attend.

Next Sunday Unity Service

At 3:30pm on Sunday 15th January it is our turn to host the annual Unity Service. Please make a special effort to come and welcome our visitors from other Christian communities and to pray for the unity of all Christians. The theme is Crossing Barriers: Reconciliation - 'the love of Christ compels us'. The service will last about an hour and there will be tea for all afterwards. **Please see Ecumenical Noticeboard for further details** or contact Pat Harman (01732 453902, bobandpat.harman@gmail.com) or Isobel White (01732 461694, ctsdadmin@sevmail.co.uk).



Please remember the sick who have been commended to our prayers

Hazel Pilorz,
 Ana Pilar Santos

Anniversaries

Gertrude Firmin, Mary Hall, Clare Undy, Ida Stapleton, Esther Reekie, Winifred Chinnery, Erna Schwarz, Terence Beaumont, Maria Bowditch, Mary Salt, Margaret Ashdown, Jim Coles, Gerald Caruana, Sara Gallagher, Helen Cheshire, Claire Lund, Mary Blake, Monica Casey, Genevieve O'Donovan, Agnes Goodman, Vicky Parker, Joseph Doris, Patricia Winkley, David Crook, Jane Regan

PARISH OF ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY, SEVENOAKS - NEWSLETTER

Volunteers wanted

Please read the following carefully, and see whether YOU could volunteer to help the parish in one of the following ways. Remember, Fr David may be the person given responsibility for oversight of the parish, but it is your parish. We rely on lay members playing a full part in the good running of the parish, to further its mission of praising God and proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ.

1. Parish Finance Committee

Church law requires there to be a Finance Committee in every parish, to assist the Parish Priest. Canon 537 of the Code of Canon Law says: "in each parish there is to be a finance council which is governed, in addition to universal law, by norms issued by the diocesan bishop and in which the Christian faithful, selected according to these same norms, are to assist the pastor in the administration of the goods of the parish". I therefore propose to create such a Finance Committee.

Members must be active parishioners in good standing. If you have previously served on such a committee, or have any of the following skills, please email or phone me directly by the end of the month:

- knowledge of banking (accounts etc)
- accountancy
- financial management or utilities brokering
- fundraising or Gift Aid
- professional IT systems
- project management or building maintenance
- charity or finance law.

It is planned to hold meetings about six times a year, and the Committee needs to represent all four churches in the parish. The diocesan guidelines can be found in *Parish Financial Administration for Parish Priests*, which can be viewed at www.rcsouthwark.co.uk/finance.html.

Fr David

2. Parish collection counters

Diocesan procedures require at least two counters to check and bag the Sunday collection each time, and that there should be a rota of counters. Having a rota protects the parish from individuals pilfering money and also protects the counters from false allegations of theft.

Accordingly we need to establish four teams – of two or three people each – to come to the Presbytery on a Monday once a month, to count the collections and prepare them for banking. This would suit those who are retired and looking for something to do, and who can count!

3. Sacristans at St Thomas's

Sacristans are those who prepare for Mass (by putting out the correct number of chalices, for example) and clear away afterwards. Although often the priests do this, because we rely on visiting priests and because our priests may be busy with other duties we need lay people to take responsibility for this.

We require

1. one or more Co-ordinating Sacristans, to supervise rotas, to maintain the Sacristy, and to liaise with the Parish Secretary in ordering sacristy supplies;
2. volunteers to be the regular duty sacristan(s) at the 9:15am Mass on Sundays and Saturday 6:00pm Mass. Training will be given. Please contact Fr David or Ingrid in the Parish Office for more information or to offer your help. Thank you.

Primary School form signing

This is the last week for form signing, if you want Fr David to countersign a school form, please email him and make an appointment for this week. Remember that you must bring the child concerned with you, along with the child's Baptism certificate.

Loaves and Fishes Food Bank

Many thanks for the recent plentiful donations of mincepies. The next food collection is on 14/15 January, non-perishable foods and toiletries only, please. No baked beans, soups, pasta or tea this time please.

Queries: 07487 652846. Thank you.

Apprenticeship in Discipleship: From Programme to Proclamation - Saturday 20th January at Ealing Abbey

A course focused on kick-starting parish Evangelisation teams based on Sherry Weddell's book *Forming Intentional Disciples* led by Fr Jon Bielawski, Episcopal Vicar for Evangelisation and Michele Thompson, Fieldworker for Evangelisation in the Diocese of Plymouth. Please see This Week's noticeboard for further details and contact Ingrid in the Parish Office if you are interested in attending.

Catechists

Will all catechists and Children's Liturgy of the Word leaders please return their *Catechist Registration Form* to Ingrid La Trobe at the Parish Office (along with DBS application forms where needed)? They are available in the porch if you have mislaid yours. Many thanks.

Southwark Catholic Directory 2017

Copies are available for sale at the Repository for £3.

FOR YOUR DIARY:

MOTHERS' PRAYERS: Mondays, 11.00am at Star House, Star Hill Road, Sevenoaks. Tel: 01959 532505

RCIA: Monday, 8pm upstairs room of Parish Centre.

PARENTS & TODDLERS: Tuesdays 9.30am - 11.30am, Parish Centre (Contacts: Emma McGovern 07786 219742, Lourdes Marinetto-Travers 07900 591527)

SEVENOAKS CATENIAN CIRCLE: The Catenians are a social club for Catholic men and we welcome visitors to our meetings at Sevenoaks Bowls Centre, Hollybush. Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of every month at 7.30pm followed by dinner at 8.30pm. For further information, pls contact [ai-dan.omahony@btinternet.com](mailto:dan.omahony@btinternet.com) or 07834 259 229

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION PROGRAMME: Children's session Thursday 12th January, 4-5pm St Thomas's.

BOROUGH GREEN UCM : First Thursday of each month, 7.30pm, St. Joseph's Borough Green

WEST KINGSDOWN UCM: Third Thursday of each month, 7.30pm at St Bernadette's West Kingsdown

YOUNG DISCIPLES: Informal catechesis school years 4-6, Sundays after 9.15am Mass, Big Angels' Room upstairs. Term time only. Contact: youngdisciples@sevrcparish.org.uk

Offerings

Christmas Offering

£11,505.41

31st Dec/1st Jan

St Thomas's	980.31
Otford	138.58
B Green	134.75
TOTAL	£1,253.64

Thank you
for your generosity.