

MASS INTENTIONS

ALL MASSES ARE AT ST THOMAS'S CHURCH UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED

Sunday 31st January

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

6:00pm (Sat)	Gizela Golda (Birthday)
8:00am	People of the Parish
9:15am	Donor's good Intentions
11:15am	Stefenia & Jan Ociepa RIP, Stanislaw Czaja RIP
6:00pm	Deacon Jim Hayes RIP
9:30am <i>Oxford</i>	Holy Souls
9:30am <i>Borough Green</i>	Jo Bonser RIP
11:00am <i>West Kingsdown</i>	David Bunton RIP

Monday 1st February *Feria (CONSECRATION ANNIV at S Joseph's)*

8:00am	Wellbeing of Vicky Lepore
(6:00pm)	Holy Souls

Tuesday 2nd *The PRESENTATION of the LORD (Candlemas)*

9:30am	Donor's family
(6:00pm)	Holy Souls

Wednesday 3rd *S Blaise, B M*

8:00am	Better health of David Lockyer
10:00am <i>Oxford</i>	Donor's Family

Thursday 4th *Feria*

10:00am <i>Borough Green</i>	Holy Souls
12:00noon	Holy Souls

Friday 5th *S Agatha, V M*

8:00am	Better health of David Lockyer
10:00am <i>West Kingsdown</i>	Holy Souls

Saturday 6th *SS Paul Miki & Comp, MM*

9:30am	Holy Souls
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Sunday 7th February

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

6:00pm (Sat)	Christopher La Trobe RIP
8:00am	Holy Souls
9:15am	People of the Parish
11:15am	Holy Souls
6:00pm	Fr George Webster
9:30am <i>Oxford</i>	Edmund Thomas Watts RIP
9:30am <i>Borough Green</i>	A parents' good health
11:00am <i>West Kingsdown</i>	Viktor Johnson RIP

Notices:

Denise Hafford RIP

Funeral at the Bluebell Cemetery on Wednesday.

Patricia McCoy RIP

Funeral at the West Kingsdown Burial Ground on Thursday at 10:00am.

Zoom Quiz

Parish Zoom Quiz today (Sunday) at 7:00pm. The quiz will be hosted by Ed Grobel and we encourage both children and adults to join. It will be a lot of fun. The quiz will be followed by a talk by Isabelle Mercer about our Sevenoaks Food Bank (Loaves N Fishes) which operates out of St John's Church Hall. Our Food Bank has seen a significant increase in demand in these times. The Parish SVP group supports this Food Bank.

To join the Parish quiz email ben.andradi@icloud.com and he will send you the Zoom link and the SVP Bank Account details for your donation. The event will last about 1 hour.

Standing Orders

and online donations

If you do not do so, please consider making your donations to the parish by Standing Order. You can download the form from the website or receive a form by ringing the Parish Office.

Bank Account details for Standing Orders and bank transfers:

Bank: NatWest
A/c name: RCAS ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY SEVENOAKS
Sort Code: 60 19 02
A/c No: 25782002

Mass Intentions

To book Mass Intentions

- use a Mass Intention envelope, put your donation inside, and hand it to a priest or pop it through the Presbytery letterbox, or
- use any envelope in the same way, or
- email Magda at sevenoaks@rcaos.org.uk, or
- ring her on a Wednesday morning.

See above for the bank account details if you want to make a donation by bank transfer; please put 'Mass Int' in the reference. If using an envelope please give your name or Gift Aid number if you have signed a Gift Aid form, so we can reclaim the tax.

PARISH OF ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY, SEVENOAKS

www.sevtrparish.org.uk 01732 454177

Today's Mass Readings: Fourth Sunday of the Year

Deuteronomy 18: 15-20; Psalm 94; 1 Corinthians 7: 32-35; Mark 1: 21-28

First Reading: the prophet Moses foretells of a prophet who will be the authoritative voice of God. For Christians, of course, that is Jesus Christ.

Today's **Psalm** warns us not to forget the disobedience of our ancestors (see *Exodus 17*). 'Meribah' means 'strife', 'dispute', while 'Massah' means 'testing'.

Second Reading: in answer to the Corinthians' suggestion that a disciple of Christ should abstain from all sexual relationships and should not get married, St Paul (amongst other points) says that the important thing, rather, is to give one's "undivided attention to the Lord".

Gospel: the main significance of today's *Gospel* is Jesus' authority in word and in deed. Jesus taught with authority and confirmed His words with His actions. How can we in the church be channels for the living, authoritative word of Jesus Christ?

Fr David

Notices

Racial Justice Sunday: 'A Time to Act'

In his Encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* the Holy Father speaks of the need to actively oppose racism and pursue racial justice, while Bishop Paul McAleenan, the Lead Bishop for Racial Justice at the Bishops' Conference, recently highlighted the fact that racism is 'a sin and violation of human dignity'. In a recent letter (<https://www.cbcew.org.uk/home/events/racial-justice-sunday-2021/bishops-message-for-racial-justice-sunday-2021/>) he highlights how we might recognise the dignity of each person by valuing diversity and looking for new ways to support others.

The Bishops' Conference has prepared a number of resources to help you observe Racial Justice Sunday, including a reflection based on the Gospel for the Day, prayers and a video reflection by a Zimbabwean Catholic Youth group produced for Racial Justice Sunday. Visit: <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/home/events/racial-justice-sunday-2021/>.

Second Collection

The second collection this Sunday will be for the Catholic Association for Racial Justice; this supports the work of the Catholic Church in promoting racial justice in our schools, parishes, and in wider society.

The Presentation of the Lord

This Feast - more commonly called 'Candlemas' - is on Tuesday. Holy Mass at St Thomas's at 9:30am, including the blessing of candles. You can bring your own candles to be blessed: simply hold them up at the appropriate time.

Blessing of throats

On Wednesday (memorial of S Blaise) at the Masses in St Thomas's and Holy Trinity the traditional Blessing of Throats will take place, but in a COVID secure way.

Holy Trinity, Oxford

Concern has been expressed about the difficulty of maintaining the 'social distancing' at Sunday Mass at Holy Trinity. If you are worried about this consider attending instead the 9:15am Mass at St Thomas's or the 9:30am Mass at Borough Green, where there is plenty of space.

Confessions

The priests can hear Confessions as long as precautions are taken, and this may well mean outside. You can approach the priest if there is plenty of time before Mass but more likely after Mass. Alternatively, contact either me or Fr Paul to make an appointment.

Parish Office

Magda, the Parish Secretary, will for the time being only be in the Office on Wednesday, 9:30am - 12:30pm, for all routine matters.

Keeping churches open

A question has been asked why the Catholic Church insists on keeping its churches open wherever possible, despite the pandemic. There are multiple reasons:

1. the Sacraments (especially the Eucharist) are the life blood of the Christian's life. There are those who are unable to attend public Mass at the moment and so will watch a livestreamed Mass, but it is vital and essential to maintain access to the Sacraments. There is nothing the Devil would like more than churches to close and disciples of Christ be unable to attend Holy Mass.
2. it is only when we gather to offer Mass on a Sunday that we become the people of God in this parish; no Mass (albeit that not everyone can attend) no People of God in Sevenoaks parish.
3. there is no evidence that Catholic churches are particularly responsible for spreading the virus; we take the precautions very seriously.
4. for many people attendance at Mass is the only time they get out of the house and the only time they can interact with other people; it is thus essential for people's mental health, as well as their spiritual and moral health.
5. if we voluntarily close our churches and deny parishioners the Sacraments, we are yielding to the secularists; it would be difficult to resist a future government which wanted to close churches and restrict the right to freedom of religion if we voluntarily renounce this right during the pandemic.