

Classified Ads
Advertise here
and be seen by
more than
800 local families
every week.

email:
sevenoaks@rcaos.org.uk

Max. 50 signs
 in black and white



Translator
 and Copywriter

Contact:
transfulness@gmail.com



Looking for:
 a two bedroomed house
 or apartment
 in Sevenoaks,
 preferably in Eynsford

Contact:
michaelrphardy@gmail.com



Excellent monthly
 lectures on art,
 guests welcome
www.theartssocietysevenoaks.org.uk

How do I advertise my
 business or
 get my ads
 in the Newsletter?

Please email:
sevenoaks@rcaos.org.uk
 for further details.



Archdiocese of
 Southwark

PARISH OF
 ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY
 SEVENOAKS

CHURCHES IN SEVENOAKS, OTFORD,
 BOROUGH GREEN AND WEST KINGSDOWN



Parish Newsletter

19th December 2021



Today's Mass: **FOURTH SUNDAY of ADVENT (C)**

First Reading: this contains the eighth century BC prophecy that the future ruler of Israel would be born in the humblest place, Bethlehem Ephrath; this is where King David was anointed (see *1 Samuel* 16). We don't need to be Sherlock Holmes to see the relevance of this prophecy to the birth of Jesus Christ!

Psalm: "the man you have chosen" in verse 3 inevitably for Christians refers to Jesus Christ.

Second Reading: the epistle reading invites us to hear the quoted verses from psalm 39 as if Christ himself were speaking them. *Hebrews* is saying that Christ became man in order to replace the men who served as priests in the Temple: His self-sacrifice on the cross replaces once and for all their Temple sacrifices. It is, of course, Christ's sacrifice that we offer at every Mass, not some new sacrifice each time.

Gospel: the Gospel and hence the Liturgy of this Fourth Sunday of Advent focusses on Mary. Mary visits Elizabeth when both are pregnant, Mary with Jesus and Elizabeth with John, part of *Luke's* account of Christ's nativity. Elizabeth's words form the basis of our prayer the *Hail Mary*.

Fr David

ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY SEVENOAKS

Sunday Mass times:

Saturday
6:00pm

Sunday
8:00am (Latin)
9:15am (Children's Liturgy of Word)
11:15am
6:00pm

Weekday Mass times:

Monday 8:00am
Tuesday 9:30am
Wednesday 8:00am
Thursday 12:00noon
Friday 8:00am
Saturday 9:30am

Adoration:

Monday 8:30am - 9:30am
Tuesday 6:00pm - 7:00pm

Sacrament of Reconciliation:

Saturday
10:00am - 10:30am,
5:15pm - 5:45pm



Granville Road,
Sevenoaks TN13 1ER

Parish Office: Magdalena Wiacek
Monday - Friday
9:30am - 12:30pm
Tel: 01732 454177
sevenoaks@rcaos.org.uk
www.sevrcparish.org.uk



High Street, Otford
TN14 5PH

MOST HOLY TRINITY OTFORD

Mass times: Sunday 9:30am
(with Children's Liturgy of the Word)
Wed 10:00am
Holy Days of Obligation 10:00am
Adoration: Thursday 7:30pm - 8:30pm
Friday 11:00am - 12:00noon

Church contact:
Barry Authers
Tel: 01959 524362
sevenoaksmht@rcaos.org.uk



Western Rd, Borough Green
TN15 8AG

ST JOSEPH'S BOROUGH GREEN

Mass times: Sunday 9:30am
(with Children's Liturgy of the Word)
Thurs 10:00am
Holy Days of Obligation 6:00pm

Church contact:
Antoni Offert
Tel: 07513 041075
sevenoaks@rcaos.org.uk



Fawkham Rd, West Kingsdown
TN15 6JP

ST BERNADETTE'S WEST KINGSDOWN

Mass times: Sunday 11:00am, Friday
10:00am
Holy Days of Obligation 11:00am
Rosary: 1st Wed every month at 7:00pm
Adoration: Wed 12:00noon- 1:00pm

Church contacts:
Jill & John Gobel
Tel: 01474 853676
sevenoaks@rcaos.org.uk



ST THOMAS' CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

South Park,
Sevenoaks, TN13 1EH
www.saintthomas.co.uk

Executive Head :
Mrs Annemarie Whittle
Academy Principal :
Ms Geraldine Leahy
Tel: 01732 453921

GOD LOVES HIS CHILDREN MASS ACTIVITY FOR CHILDREN



Jump for Joy

Arthur is really happy and is jumping for joy! What makes you really happy? Draw yourself jumping for joy next to Arthur.



Mary rushes to meet her cousin, Elizabeth. They are both expecting babies and are really happy to see each other.

Mary and Elizabeth

Here is a picture of Mary meeting Elizabeth. They are really excited and pleased to see each other. Put a big smile on their faces to show how happy they are.

Elizabeth knew that Mary's baby was very special. Even the baby in Elizabeth's womb knew the baby Jesus was very special. He jumped for joy!



Hail Mary

Elizabeth's words to Mary have become part of a special prayer. We know this prayer as the Hail Mary. Can you fill in the missing words?



I want to jump for joy when...

.....
.....
.....
.....

Hail, full of, the Lord is with thee.
art thou among women and blessed is the of thy
womb, Holy Mary, of God, for us
sinners now and at the hour of our death.

A PRAYER TO SAY

Mary, you are very special. You said "yes" to God and showed us how to love. Help me to say "yes" to God so that I can bring love into the world and spread joy too! Amen.

Welcoming Heart

Elizabeth welcomed Mary when she came to visit. Is my heart ready to welcome Jesus?

How many hearts can you find on this page?



Answers: 9 Hearts.

CONTACTS & ORGANISATIONS

Parish of St Thomas of Canterbury, Sevenoaks

Presbytery and Parish Office: 12 Granville Road, Sevenoaks, TN13 1ER
Website: www.sevrparish.org.uk **Tel:** 01732 454177

Parish Priest: Fr David Gibbons, KHS davidgibbons@rcaos.org.uk

Assistant Priest: Fr Peter Littleton peterlittleton@rcaos.org.uk

Parish Deacon: Rev'd Neil Philipson neilphilipson@rcaos.org.uk

Parish Secretary: Mrs Magdalena Wiacek sevenoaks@rcaos.org.uk

Parish Office hours: Monday - Friday 9:30am - 12:30pm

Safeguarding Rep: Ken Baines sevenoakssgl@safeguardrcaos.org.uk

The Diocesan Safeguarding Coordinator can be contacted on 020 7261 1606; in an emergency dial 999

Adoration

Barry Authers adoration@sevrparish.org.uk

Altar Servers (St Thomas's)

Catherine Ingram Ingramfamily15@yahoo.com

Bereavement Support

Third Monday, 10:30am in Parish Room

Ronnie Campbell 01732 452988, Sarah Harrison 01959 522357 or Kate Travers katetravers521@hotmail.com.

Catenians

Social club for Catholic men

Aiden O'Mahony aidan.omahony@btinternet.com

Children's Liturgy of the Word, Sunday Mass

Sevenoaks, 9:15am Mass:

Mark O'Prey sevenoakslow@rcaos.org.uk

Oxford, 9:30am Mass:

Magdalena Wiacek sevenoaks@rcaos.org.uk

Borough Green, 9:30am Mass:

Fiona Newton - fionanewton321@btinternet.com

Choirs

Music Group:

Lonnie Christophers lonniechr@hotmail.com

Traditional Choir: Barbara Page 01732 454726

Borough Green: Chris Hurl chris.hurl@outlook.com

Church Cleaning (St Thomas's)

Jim McSharry jamesmcsharry@hotmail.com

Confirmation Programme

Gabrielle Ellis seveoaksconfirmation@rcaos.org.uk

Parish Finance Committee

Secretary: Mary Scott 3maryscott@gmail.com

First Holy Communion & Reconciliation Programme

Ingrid La Trobe sevenoaksfhc@rcaos.org.uk

Flowers (St Thomas's)

Jan Gordon janice.gordon47@hotmail.com

Gift Aid:

Sean Corrigan sevenoaksgac@rcaos.org.uk

Holy Trinity Committee

Secretary: Barry Authers sevenoaksmht@rcaos.org.uk

Lectio Divina

Kathie Gonzalez 01732 761253

Mothers' Prayers

Mondays, 11:30am at Star House, Star Hill Road
01959 532505

Baby & Toddlers Group

Thursdays 9:30am - 11:30am, Parish Centre
Mary Hunt 07890 229794

Parish Evangelization Team

David Cooper dpcoop1963@gmail.com

RACET (Rural Africa Children's Education Trust)

MaryAnn Perasso 01959 522337, www.racet.org

Readers, Ministers & Welcomers Rota (St Thomas's)

Andrew Pembroke st.thomas.rota@gmail.com

Repository

Christine Landon christinedlandon@gmail.com

RCIA

For adults becoming Catholic

Andrew La Trobe andrew.latrobe@gmail.com

Retreats

Catherine Roger c.rodger@btinternet.com

St Bernadette's Committee

Secretary: Jill Gobel jill.gobel@btinternet.com

St Joseph's Committee

Secretary: John Foley johnandmariefoley@gmail.com

The Pilgrims

For retired parishioners

Jackie Pembroke ac.jbpembroke@gmail.com

or 01732 450197

Scripture Fellowship

Reading a Gospel together

Andrew Wilkinson 07847 652846

St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP)

Kathie Gonzalez sevenoakssvp@gmail.com

Union of Catholic Mothers (UCM)

Borough Green UCM: Mary Ringham 01732 672602

West Kingsdown UCM: Monica Biggs

[mddbigs@hotmail.com](mailto:mmddbigs@hotmail.com)

Webmaster

Barry Authers sevenoakswebmaster@rcaos.org.uk

PARISH NOTICES

Contents this Week

Pages 3-4	Parish Notices
Page 5	Mass Intentions
Page 6	Mass Readings
Page 7	Sunday Message
Page 8	Advent Meditation
Page 9	Advent Customs
Page 10	Contacts & Organisations
Page 11	Mass Activity for Children

Day of Prayer

In the Bishops' Cycle of Prayer today is a Day of Prayer for expectant mothers.

Supply priests

Welcome to Fr Bryan Wells, offering the 9:15am Mass at St Thomas's, and to Canon Luke Smith, celebrating at Borough Green and West Kingsdown.

At Christmas we shall be joined by Fr Ola Craig, taking a brief break from his studies in Rome, as well as by Fr Bryan.

Parish Office

Magda will be on holiday from Monday for a couple of weeks, and so the Parish Office will not be open. It will reopen on Wednesday 5th January 2022. Emails to the Office will be still be monitored, but you may not get as swift a response as normal.

First Holy Communion

Dolly Anderson will receive Holy Communion for the first time on Wednesday at the 10:00am Mass at Otford.

Adoration

There will be no Adoration on Thursday or Friday at Otford this week. It will resume the following week at the usual times (Thursday 7:30pm - 8:30pm and Friday 11:00am - 12:00 noon).

Friday morning

There will be the usual 8:00am Mass at St Thomas's, but there will not be a 10:00am Mass at St Bernadette's.

Christmas Eve

Please note that because of COVID concerns we are unable to have our customary Christmas Eve services for children, at either St Thomas's or Most Holy Trinity.

Christmas Masses at St Thomas's, Sevenoaks

~ Christmas Eve (Friday 24th)

Vigil Mass 6:00pm

Midnight Mass 11:30pm

~ Christmas Day (Saturday 25th)

Mass of the Dawn 8:00am (Latin)

Mass of the Day 9:15am, 11:15am

There is no evening Mass.

~ Feast of the Holy Family (Sunday 26th)

Holy Mass 8:00am (Latin),

9:15am, 11:15am, 6:00pm

Christmas Masses at Most Holy Trinity, Otford

~ Christmas Eve (Friday 24th)

Mass of the Night 8:00pm

~ Christmas Day (Saturday 25th)

Mass of the Day 9:30am

~ Feast of the Holy Family (Sunday 26th)

Holy Mass 9:30am

Christmas Masses at St Joseph's, Borough Green

~ Christmas Eve (Friday 24th)

Vigil Mass 6:00pm

~ Christmas Day (Saturday 25th)

Mass of the Day 9:30am

~ Feast of the Holy Family (Sunday 26th)

Holy Mass 9:30am

Christmas Masses at St Bernadette's, West Kingsdown

~ Christmas Eve (Friday 24th)

Mass of the Night 7:30pm

~ Christmas Day (Saturday 25th)

Mass of the Day 11:00am

~ Feast of the Holy Family (Sunday 26th)

Holy Mass 11:00am

PARISH AND OTHER NOTICES

Christmas Offering

Along with the Easter Offering this is your offering to the priests of the parish. The Archbishop has ruled that all collections received on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and Sunday 26th (the Feast of the Holy Family) will form part of the Christmas Offering; this includes all donations made by the card reader in St Thomas's.

In addition all donations given electronically by bank transfer and identified as 'Christmas Offering' will "constitute the annual personal Christmas offering of the faithful for their priests". You can make a bank transfer (put 'Christmas Offering' as the reference) to

Bank: NatWest

Sort code: 60 19 02

A/c name: RCAS ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY SEVENOAKS

A/c number: 25782002

You can, of course, use this for any donation, to the parish (First Collection), to Second Collections (please make the intended recipient clear), or for Mass Intentions.

Christmas Week

Monday (27th) and Tuesday (28th) are Bank Holidays, and so Holy Mass at St Thomas's will be at 12:00 noon. There will not be Adoration on the Monday.

Wednesday (29th) is the Solemnity of St Thomas of Canterbury. In addition to the normal 10:00am Mass at Otford, Holy Mass at St Thomas's will be at 12:00 noon, followed by refreshments, COVID permitting.

Friday (31st) is in the Octave of Christmas and therefore will not be a day of abstinence; you may therefore eat meat that day (although you might be fed up of turkey by then!).

Come Home - We miss you

With the Newsletters is a card headed WE MISS YOU. Please take one or more and give one to, or pop one through the letterbox of, a Catholic you know who isn't currently coming to Mass. You can put your contact details on it or the parish details if you prefer. Don't be shy: seize this initiative to win people back to the practice of the faith.

Another Newsletter blooper

The eighth-graders will be presenting Shakespeare's Hamlet in the Church basement Friday at 7 PM. The congregation is invited to attend this tragedy.

Thank you

The Pilgrims would like to thank the choir and Fr Bryan, who accompanied them, for the pleasure it gave us. We keep in mind those unable to come or those who were ill. At the end of the service a collection was taken which will be sent to The Passage, a charity for the homeless.

Cribs around Sevenoaks & District

This year we have nine or ten Cribs or figurines, of various shapes and sizes. We hope you will see them in shops before Christmas; if appropriate please use the place and thank the proprietor. See the back page for some examples.

We are keeping alive, in a small way, a world-wide tradition begun by St Francis of Assisi in 1223. In 2019 Pope Francis wrote in an Apostolic Letter "it seems impossible, yet it is true: in Jesus God was a child, and in this way he wished to reveal the greatness of his love: by smiling and opening his arms to all" (*Admirabile Signum* 8) and "from our wonderment a humble prayer may arise: a prayer of thanksgiving to God, who wished to share with us his all, and thus never to leave us alone" (AS 10).

May the Holy Child Jesus bring you joy this year.

Pat Harman & Isobel White



Please pray

- for expectant mothers;
- for those whose Christmas is marred by loneliness or illness;
- in thanksgiving for the Incarnation of Our Blessed Lord.

St Roch, pray for us.

St Joseph, pray for us.

St Thomas of Canterbury, pray for us.

St Bernadette, pray for us.

St Edith of Kemsing, pray for us.



From the Desk of the Parish Priest

Advent Customs

The Advent Wreath

You may be surprised to learn that the first Advent wreath was invented by sixteenth-century Lutherans in eastern Germany. The wreath as we know it today, however, did not take shape until a nineteenth-century German pastor, tired of answering children's questions if Christmas was here yet, took an old cartwheel and attached to it twenty small red candles (symbolizing Saturday and weekdays) and four large white candles (the Sundays of Advent).

After it was simplified into the four-candle wreath with which we are now familiar, the custom spread to most Christian communities in Europe and North America, though not as fast as you might think: even into the 1940s it was virtually unknown in the United States. When the Von Trapp family (of *Sound of Music* fame) first arrived in America after escaping the Nazis, they asked where they could obtain materials for their Advent wreath and were met with blank stares.

The wreath is simple: a wreath made of evergreen leaves with four candles. The colour of the candles varies: in some European countries they are white, in Germany they can be large and red, and in the U.S. and this country they correspond to the liturgical colours of the four Sundays of Advent, three violet and one rose. Sometimes a white central candle is added, lit on Christmas Eve.

The symbolism of the Advent wreath is simple but effective. The wreath's circular shape recalls the crown of Christ the King or the eternity of the Trinity and betokens the "fulfilment of time" that all three of His comings bring about. The evergreen is an ancient symbol of hope and everlasting life. The candles represent the four Sundays of Advent.

You may also be surprised that the Advent wreath is not mentioned in the *Roman Missal*, and so there are no official prayers or rites for blessing or lighting it. It is a devotion you can easily observe as a family at home.

Advent Calendar

Another popular custom from Lutheran Germany is the Advent calendar. Behind each window is a picture or symbol that points to the coming of Christmas. The children are allowed to open one window a day until finally, on December 25th, the Nativity is revealed. Commercial Calendars often contain little chocolates or even whisky miniatures, and for practical reasons most commercially made Advent Calendars begin on December 1st, not the first day of Advent.

The Crib

Nativity scenes arose out of medieval theatre such as mystery plays, but it was St Francis of Assisi who staged a Nativity scene in a cave, with a live ox and donkey, in 1223. Francis' idea caught on quickly throughout Western Christendom, first to churches and then to homes. Not even the Reformation, with its rejection of "graven images," could dislodge some German sects from their nativity scenes: they would rather be bad Protestants than be bereft of their cribs.

There are a number of charming customs involving the crib. One is not to place the Infant Jesus in the manger until Christmas morning or after Midnight Mass to heighten anticipation. Another is to have the family's children "prepare" the manger by earning wisps of straw that can be used for the Infant Jesus' bedding; they earn the straw by prayers or good works. This custom, which began long ago in France, effectively teaches children that the cultivation of virtue is the best way to prepare for the Lord's coming. The Three Kings can be placed at the opposite end of the room to the Crib, and during Advent they can be moved a little closer every day until January 6th, the Feast of the Epiphany.



ADVENT MEDITATION AND UNTO US A SON IS GIVEN

Alice Christina Gertrude Meynell (1847 - 1922), whose father was a friend of Charles Dickens, became a Catholic in 1868. She wrote poetry, and married a young Catholic journalist, Wilfrid Meynell. Alice was the mother of eight children, but found the time to write poems and essays. She was a friend of Tennyson, and widely admired by many writers. G K Chesterton called her a 'very great lady'.

Advent Meditation

*Rorate coeli desuper, et nubes pluant Justum,
Aperiat terra, et germinet Salvatorem.*

[Drop down dew, ye heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain the just;
Let the earth be opened, and bud forth a Saviour.]

No sudden thing of glory and fear
Was the Lord's coming; but the dear
Slow Nature's days followed each other
To form the Saviour from His Mother
- One of the children of the year.

The earth, the rain, received the trust,
- The sun and dews, to frame the Just.
He drew His daily life from these,
According to His own decrees
Who makes man from the fertile dust.

Sweet summer and the winter wild,
These brought Him forth, the Undefined.
The happy Springs renewed again
His daily bread, the growing grain,
The food and raiment of the Child.

Unto Us a Son Is Given

Given, not lent,
And not withdrawn - once sent,
This infant of mankind, this One,
Is still the little welcome Son.

New every year,
New born and newly dear,
He comes with tidings and a song,
The ages long, the ages long;

Even as the cold
Keen winter grows not old,
As childhood is so fresh foreseen,
and spring in the familiar green -

Sudden as sweet
Come the unexpected feet.
All joy is young, and new all art,
And he, too, whom we have by heart.

MASS INTENTIONS

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

SUNDAY 19th DECEMBER *FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT (C)*

6:00pm (Sat)	John Perkins RIP (Anniversary)
8:00am (Latin)	In thanksgiving from Slattery family
9:15am	In thanksgiving from Mercado family
11:15am	Antonette Quadir-Ali RIP (Birthday)
6:00pm	Fr Robert Ellis RIP
9:30am <i>Oxford</i>	People of the Parish
9:30am <i>Borough Green</i>	Norman Kerrigan RIP
11:00am <i>West Kingsdown</i>	Placid Berrett & Pattie Pluck RIP

Monday 20th FERIA

8:00am	Michael Castelli RIP
--------	----------------------

Tuesday 21st FERIA

9:30am	Three Richards & Phyllis
--------	--------------------------

Wednesday 22nd FERIA

8:00am	Fr Joe Andradi
10:00am <i>Oxford</i>	Di Lisio Family RIP

Thursday 23rd FERIA

10:00am <i>Borough Green</i>	Martin & Vivienne Andrews RIP (20th Anniversary)
12:00noon	Marion Clegg RIP

Friday 24th FERIA

8:00am	Fr Robert Ellis RIP
--------	---------------------

CHRISTMAS EVE

6:00pm	Wellbeing of Angela Callan & family
6:00pm <i>Borough Green</i>	Holy Souls
7:30pm <i>West Kingsdown</i>	Holy Souls
8:00pm <i>Oxford</i>	Richard & Laura Knight & Elizabeth Day RIP
11:30pm	Moreen & Hubert Sausman RIP

Saturday 25th CHRISTMAS DAY

8:00am (Latin)	Dec'd members: Mernock & Waite families
9:15am	James Cairney RIP
11:15am	People of the Parish
9:30am <i>Oxford</i>	Jill Hackett RIP
9:30am <i>Borough Green</i>	Bernard & Madeleine Summerville RIP
11:00am <i>West Kingsdown</i>	Bertha & Ruth Lett RIP

SUNDAY 26th DECEMBER *THE HOLY FAMILY*

8:00am (Latin)	In thanksgiving from Frank Haggarty's (91 st Birthday)
9:15am	Shona Bagley RIP
11:15am	Dec'd relatives of the family
6:00pm	Canon Tony
9:30am <i>Oxford</i>	Deceased members of the Scott family
9:30am <i>Borough Green</i>	Hong Ling Chang-Kit RIP
11:00am <i>West Kingsdown</i>	People of the Parish

*Please remember the sick
who have been commended to
our prayers, especially:*

Deidre Thomas, Ann Steven
and Lilian Spragg, Jane Ta-
bor, Rod Shelton and all in
old people's homes.

Baptism

Welcome to
Sienna Herrera Dias

who was baptised at
St Thomas's
last Sunday

Prayer for All The Faithful Departed

*Eternal rest grant unto them,
O Lord, and let perpetual light
shine upon them.
May they rest in peace.*

LATIN ANTIPHONS

Entrance:

Rorate, caeli, desuper, et
nubes pluant iustum;
aperiat terra et germinet
Salvatorem.

Communion:

Ecce Virgo concipiet, et pariet
filium; et vocabitur nomen
eius Emmanuel.