

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

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

30th January 2022

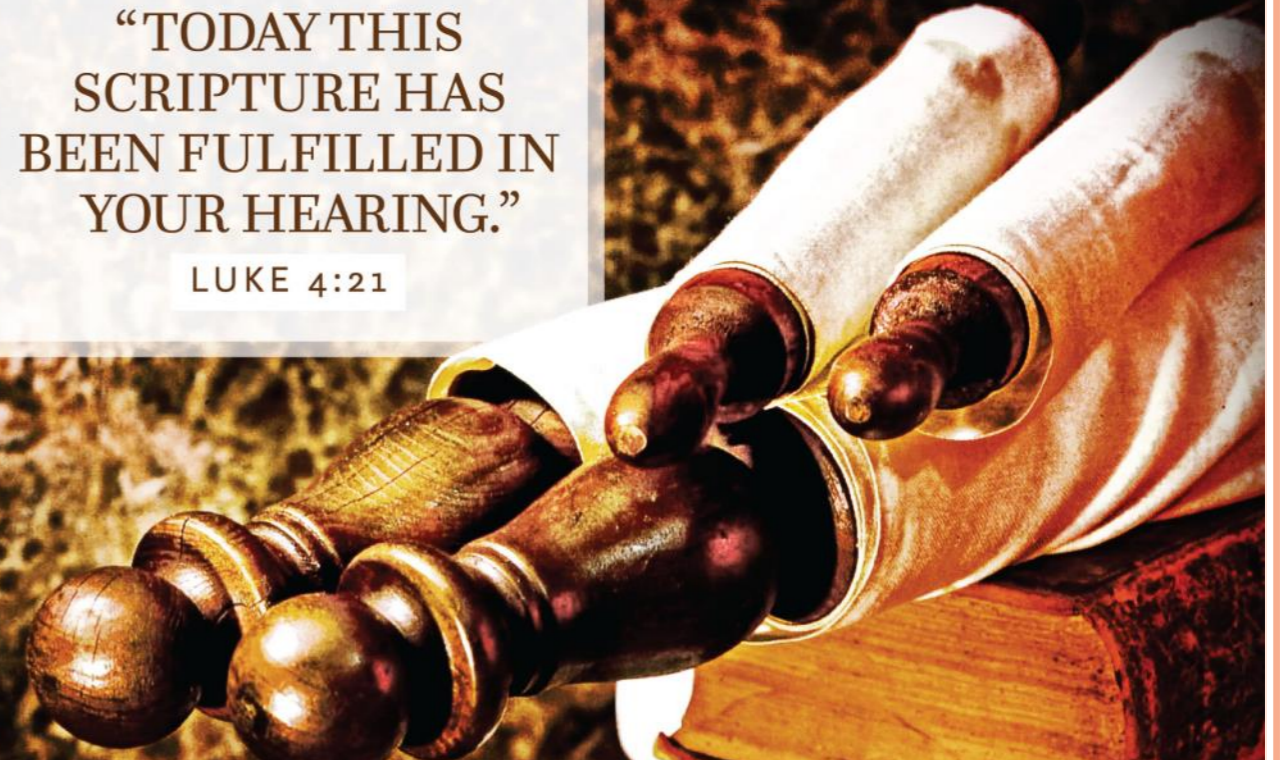
Got
Questions.org

**WHAT DOES IT
MEAN THAT
GOD IS LOVE?**

Question: What does it mean that God is love?
Answer: <https://www.gotquestions.org/God-is-love.html>

“TODAY THIS
SCRIPTURE HAS
BEEN FULFILLED IN
YOUR HEARING.”

LUKE 4:21



Today's Mass: **FOURTH SUNDAY of the YEAR (Year C)**

Jeremiah 1: 4-5, 17-19; Psalm 70; 1 Corinthians 12: 31-13: 13; Luke 4: 21-30

First Reading: Jeremiah is called by God to be a prophet. What he has to say will not be always popular, and like Jesus later he will experience hostility from the people.

Psalm: an old man looks back on a life in which he has always put his trust in God.

Second Reading: in a famous passage Paul describes what we call the three theological virtues: faith, hope, and love. They are called theological virtues because the object of these virtues is God (*'theos'* in Greek).

Gospel: in a dramatic incident Jesus proclaims the fulfilment of scripture in Himself: healing and salvation are now present, through Him. But when he refers to the miracles that Elijah and Elisha wrought for foreigners – suggesting that non-Jews would be more receptive to His own message – the people turn hostile and manhandle Him. Jesus melts away, indicative of His divine power.

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

Adoration:

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

Weekday Mass times:

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

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



Jesus is a prophet

A prophet is a messenger of God.
A prophet reminds people what
God wants.

Everyone likes what Jesus is telling them about God – until he reminds them that God loves everyone, not just them. Jesus reminds them how much God loves foreigners - and this annoys them. The crowd is angry with Jesus. The people don't want to hear what he has to say. Jesus slips away to safety.

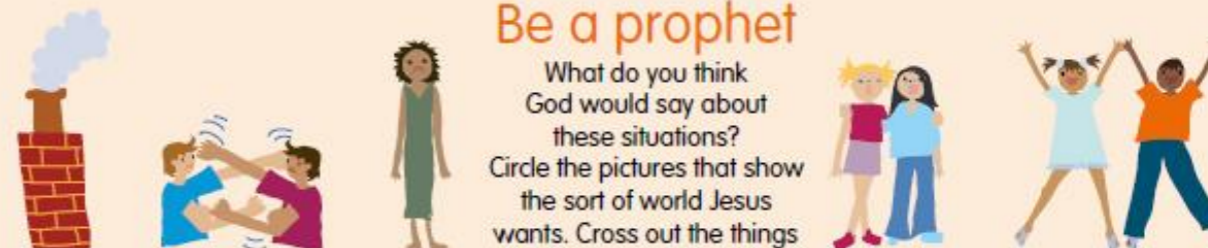


Write something in this speech bubble something you think God wants to say to the world today.



Be a prophet

What do you think God would say about these situations? Circle the pictures that show the sort of world Jesus wants. Cross out the things that you know are wrong.



A PRAYER TO SAY

Help me, Jesus, to be a prophet. Help me to speak up for what is right, even if it annoys other people. Amen.

Mixed up words

Find these words about Jesus

honest loving
brave kind

Jesus is _____ evrab
Jesus is _____ nkid
Jesus is _____ gnivol
Jesus is _____ hnoets

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

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 sevenoakscrow@rcaos.org.uk

Otford, 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

Listening to you (Bereavement Support)

Third Monday, 10:30am in Parish Room

Ronnie Campbell 01732 452988, Sarah Harrison 01959

522357, Kate Travers kate.travers521@hotmail.com and Ann

Livingston annlivingston@hotmail.co.uk

Loaves and Fishes Foodbank

Isabelle Mercer: h.imercer@btopenworld.com

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)

Paul Boyle 07796564018

Kathie Gonzalez sevenoakssvp@gmail.com

Union of Catholic Mothers (UCM)

Borough Green UCM: Mary Ringham 01732 672602

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	Synodal process - Parish summary part 1
Page 9	God is Love
Page 10	Contacts & Organisations
Page 11	Mass Activity for Children

White Flower Appeal

The Second Collection this weekend is the annual White Flower appeal for SPUC (Society for the Protection of Unborn Children). SPUC is currently campaigning to protect pro Life speech. Pro Life witness is being restricted now more than ever; we must be able to speak freely to protect unborn babies. Cards to send to SPUC are available with the Newsletters.

Saturday 6:00pm Mass

Congratulations to Hattie Fox Joyce and Arthur Court, receiving Holy Communion for the first time at this Mass.

Supply priests

We welcome Fr Bryan Wells and Canon Luke Smith, assisting today (Sunday) at Otford and Sevenoaks.

11:15am Mass

The Music Group leads our music today.

Congratulations to Max Gait and Marcus Pop, who will receive Holy Communion for the first time at this Mass.

Sunday: World Leprosy Day

This year, the St Francis Leprosy Guild are asking the Catholic community to reflect upon and pray for the work of the Catholic nuns who dedicate their lives to caring for people with leprosy. Visit <https://www.stfrancisleprosy.org/world-leprosy-day-2022.html> for information and various resources.

Monday: Parish Office

The Parish Office will be open from 11:00am to 2:00pm on Monday. Back to the normal 9:30am - 12:30pm from Tuesday onwards.

St Thomas' School

Year 5 attend the Tuesday 9:30am Mass this week. Parents and family members are welcome to attend; it will not be crowded so you can maintain the safe COVID distance while in the Church.

Wednesday: Candlemas

The Feast of the Presentation of the Lord is on Wednesday. Candles are blessed, and the Mass at both St Thomas's and Most Holy Trinity begins with the Procession. The Penitential Act is omitted and Mass continues with the *Gloria*. Note to readers: only one of the first two Readings in the *Lectionary* is read, followed by the Responsorial Psalm.

Blessing of Throats

Thursday is in this diocese the memorial of St Lawrence of Canterbury. As elsewhere it is the memorial of St Blaise, the Blessing of Throats will take place after Mass at St Thomas's and St Joseph's.

Mass for the International Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life

On Saturday at 12:30pm in the Cathedral. Everyone is invited to attend, either in person or by the livestream at <https://youtu.be/Mdj3LwheqV4>.

Quiet Afternoon

As we come up to the second anniversary of the first Covid lockdown you are invited to attend a quiet afternoon which will afford us a space to reflect on how we move on as life slowly returns to normal. Come along to St Thomas's on Saturday 26th February at 2:00pm to pray, reflect, learn to spot God at work with us, share and enjoy each other's company. The afternoon will be lead by Gilly Fenner. Please email Gilly at gf58b@icloud.com if you would like to join in, to get some idea of numbers.

Synodal Process

This is now complete at parish level, and the Summary of our parish meetings has been submitted to the diocesan delegates. They will then produce a diocesan Summary to go to the Bishops' Conference delegates, who will produce a national Summary to go to the European delegates, who will produce a continental Summary to go to the Synod on the Synodal Process in Rome.

A copy of our parish Summary will be printed over the next three weeks in the Newsletter, with a QR code for the more ITC minded. A copy is also available on the

PARISH AND OTHER NOTICES

parish website. Enormous thanks are due to our parish delegates, Bill Farren and David Cooper, for co-ordinating the parish meetings and for producing the parish Summary.

Thank You to Dave Havercan

After 25 years, Dave Havercan is handing over the role of treasurer for St Bernadette's, West Kingsdown to John Gobel, John will now represent St Bernadette's on the parish Finance Committee. We thank Dave for his many years of conscientious work for the parish.

Loaves and Fishes

People are always immensely generous at Christmas and the Foodbank was inundated with marvellous gifts in December. Donations in January are traditionally more sparse. Unfortunately, we have now 42 families on our books with new recipients every week. Could I appeal to your generosity for tins of pea, carrots, baked beans, biscuits pasta and rice sauce sugar, cleaning products, shampoo and conditioner? Please leave your donation in the box and basket at the Entrance at St Thomas's. Thank you so much.
Isabelle Mercer

The Pilgrims:

Events in March and April during Lent

- 1st March, Tuesday: Pancake Day! Please join us in the Parish Room after the 9:30am Mass for coffee, pancakes and conversation.
- Friday, 25th March: The Feast of the Annunciation. We celebrate that great day of decision when Mary accepted her role as the Mother of Christ. Please join us at 2:30pm in the Parish Room
- Monday, 4th April: Reflections with Stations of the Cross. Again at 2:30pm in the Parish Room

There will be time for tea and discussion after both these occasions.

We would like to support Pat Harman and Janet Clare who are leading Prayer Group meetings in the Parish Centre from 2:30pm to 3:15pm. A time together for quiet prayer and reflection. Open to all Pilgrims and others in the parish.

- Monday 4th March
- Monday 14th March
- Monday 28th March

Monthly coffee mornings at Most Holy Trinity

Most Holy Trinity church, Otford will be resuming their monthly coffee mornings after Holy Mass commencing 6th February 2022. All are welcome!

Another Order of Service typo

"I know that my Redeemer lies".

Calling all poetry lovers!

A new Facebook page has just been launched called The Pilgrim Poet featuring the spiritual poetry of parishioner Gilly Fenner. Do have a look and if you enjoy the poems please feel free to like, follow and share. The poems are also available on Instagram - poetthepilgrim - and Twitter - @ThePilgrimPoet.

Please pray

- for respect for life in our society and for the work of SPUC;
- for the religious sisters who care for people with leprosy;
- for a renewed effort to grow in faith, hope, and love;
- for an end to the pandemic;
- for Margaret Reid, who has died recently.

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

God is Love

As today's Second Reading describes what are known as the three Theological Virtues - faith, hope, and love - it is a good opportunity to revisit Pope Benedict XVI's encyclicals on them. The first, *Deus Caritas Est* (God is Love), was promulgated in 2006. You can read it for yourself on the Vatican website.

In his **Introduction** Pope Benedict reminds us that God is love (quoting *1 John* 4:16), and that this is the heart of the Christian faith. That same verse of Scripture also, he says, offers us a summary of the Christian life: "we have come to know and to believe in the love God has for us".

The encyclical has two main parts. **Part I** ('the Unity of Love in Creation and in Salvation History') examines "the love which God mysteriously and gratuitously offers to man, together with the intrinsic link between that Love and the reality of human love". Our word 'love' can mean *eros* (possessive, often sexual, love), *agape* (unconditional, self-sacrificing love), and *philia* (friendship). All are inherently good (see the *Song of Songs* in the Old Testament for a positive view of sexual love), but *eros* risks being downgraded to mere sex, a commodity to be bought or sold, which debases the human body and person, unless balanced by *agape*, love "grounded in and shaped by faith".

The Church is thus not antithetical to sexual or 'worldly' love (*eros*), but it should lead to Marriage and to seeking the good of the beloved (which leads to forgiveness and even self-sacrifice). *Philia* is demonstrated by the love between Christ and His disciples.

Jesus Christ is the 'incarnate love of God'. We see this in the parables (for instance, He is the good shepherd who goes in search of the lost sheep), in His institution of the Eucharist (where in sacramental Communion we are united with Christ and with one another), and above all in His death on the Cross, which is "love in its most radical form".

"Love is not merely a sentiment". The Church's ministry of love draws its power from contemplative union with God. As we abandon ourselves more and more to God, his will and ours increasingly coincide, and "God becomes our joy". Love grows through love, and is 'divine' because it comes from God and unites us

to God. Thus love of neighbour is no longer a commandment imposed from without, but a consequence of the Christian's faith and union with God.

Part II ('the Practice of Love by the Church as a "Community of Love"') emphasises, in a more concrete way, some basic elements of the commandment of love (and much of this part had actually been penned by Pope St John Paul II).

Starting with St Augustine's observation that "if you see charity you see the Trinity", the Church's charity (*agape*) makes manifest Trinitarian love. One of the Church's responsibilities is exercising the ministry of charity (*diakonia*). This includes responding to immediate needs such as feeding the hungry, solidarity with those in need, and working for justice. In the latter case, the Church is not just a glorified NGO; it must reflect the Lord's love for all people and charitable works must be combined with faith and hope.

Nor does the Church engage in charitable acts in order to convert people (proselytism); love is not practised as a way of achieving other ends, but as a good in itself. This does not mean God is absent; rather, by their charitable actions Christians will be credible witnesses to Christ.

The **Conclusion** mentions some saints who exemplify Christian charity, such as Martin of Tours and the 'entire monastic movement'. The saints are "men and women of faith, hope and love". Above all it is the Blessed Virgin Mary who best shows us "that pure love which is not self-seeking but simply benevolent".



SYNODAL PROCESS PARISH SUMMARY

PART 1

Synodal process – Sevenoaks parish

Summary of input/discussion

The synodal process in our parish took place between November 2021 and January 2022 and comprised of three meetings. 30 parishioners took part. Starting today we will publish notes deriving from those meetings in three parts. In addition to the meetings, parishioners were able to submit comments directly to the Archdiocesan team.

A full version of the notes (as submitted to the Archdiocesan team), including more detail on the process in our parish, are available:

- On the parish website
- By contacting the parish office – Magda will be happy to provide a hard copy
- Via the QR code on this page

We have summarised comments under broad 'headings':

- Knowledge of our faith being a prerequisite to evangelisation
- The perception/ reality that the Church excludes.
- The role of laity in the Church
- Prayer and community/ example



David Cooper, Bill Farren - January 2022

1. Knowledge of our faith being a prerequisite to evangelisation

1.1. "Back to basics" is needed in order to provide a stronger knowledge and understanding of our faith. Mission and evangelisation can then follow. Short, easy-to-access courses have been excellent and need to be provided/promoted further.

1.2. We must equip ourselves to be "mature Christians" via the depth of knowledge of our faith.

1.3. In many people's life of faith "there is little or no formal or informal catechesis - and/or in many cases, contact with the Church - between the time of confirmation as a teenager and the birth of their first child and beyond".

1.4. Sycamore, Alpha etc courses will have significant participation if they are well structured and accessible. If undertaken outside the church building (whether or not as an ecumenical endeavour) these can have the potential benefit of being an outreach/evangelising tool.

1.5. Short face-to-face or Zoom/Teams courses can help build formation in the parish – especially amongst 'cradle Catholics'.

2. The perception/reality that the church excludes

2.1. The view was expressed that the Church is seen to exclude - for example - the "divorced and remarried"; the LGBT community; (1) because of (real or perceived) public/private statements by the Church and its members/clergy; and/or (2) the position regarding admittance to Holy Communion of the divorced and remarried and others outside of "regular unions". There was a suggestion that this is no less an issue in our parish [and may be more of an issue] – "homilies are condemnatory – all about sin - and out of balance". "Specific reference is needed to LGBT / disability awareness / the divorced /excluded minorities – and engaging in the big issues of the day such as climate change".

2.2. Others held the view: (i) that clergy cannot possibly be expected to maintain/teach anything other than the true doctrine/position of the church; (ii) that there is no evidence of "exclusion" in a true sense (it is about individual exercise of lifestyle choice vis-a-vis Church teaching).

2.3. "How do we truly walk with the marginalised and excluded". This needs prayer, organisation and commitment.

2.4. There is a perception from outside that the Church and its members judge people. "Never, ever, ever label people". Think instead about how we bring people into the Church.

2.5. For people without an ongoing relationship with the Church, coming back can be daunting. "Provide a space to talk about how the Church ministers to minority/excluded/ 'un-churched' groups outside of the liturgy".

2.6. We should prioritise the evangelisation and catechesis of the young people in our midst. "Evangelise the young. Believe in the young. They may hear the Holy Spirit".

2.7. Ecumenical activity is not as whole-hearted amongst Catholics as it should be. "We have more in common with non-Catholic [ecclesial] communities than divides us".

2.8. "Homilies can appear to rebuke – which Christ never did". Can we get a better balance between 'rules' and 'mercy'(?). People want their priests to be "on the ground floor" with them – provide spiritual food for thought, rooted in the realities of life.

MASS INTENTIONS

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

SUNDAY 30th JANUARY

6:00pm (Sat)

8:00am (Latin)

9:15am

11:15am

6:00pm

9:30am *Oxford*

9:30am *Borough Green*

11:00am *West Kingsdown*

Monday 31st S John Bosco, Pr

8:00am

Tuesday 1st FEBRUARY *Feria*

9:30am

Wednesday 2nd The PRESENTATION of the LORD

8:00am

10:00am *Oxford*

Thursday 3rd *Feria*

10:00am *Borough Green*

12:00noon

Friday 4th S Lawrence of Canterbury, B

8:00am

10:00am *West Kingsdown*

Saturday 5th S Agatha, V M

9:30am

SUNDAY 6th JANUARY

6:00pm (Sat)

8:00am (Latin)

9:15am

11:15am

6:00pm

9:30am *Oxford*

9:30am *Borough Green*

11:00am *West Kingsdown*

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME (C)

Donor's Intention

Bill Sherratt RIP (anniversary)

William Moore RIP

George Rizza RIP

Douglas Booth RIP

Gizela Golda (Birthday)

Holy Souls

People of the Parish

Good intentions of the Donor's family

Brian Morek RIP

Timothy & Cleta Andradi RIP

In thanksgiving from Lawrence Cronin

Holy Souls

All ill and suffering

Joseph Smialy RIP

Kathleen Fraser & the comfort of Alan

Holy Souls

FIFTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME (C)

Rosalie White RIP

Kathleen Dallas RIP (1st Anniversary)

John Rafferty for success in his treatment and strength for his wife Kathleen and family

Donor's Intention

People of the Parish

Edmund Thomas Watts RIP

John & Peggy Corrigan RIP

Health & wellbeing of the Parishioners

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

Deidre Thomas, Ann Steven, Lilian Spragg, Jane Tabor, Frank Haggarty, Ken Holmes, Mary Scott, Barry McGirr and all in care and nursing homes

Baptism

Welcome to

Lyra Jude

who was baptized at St Thomas's last weekend.

Departed

Please pray for the soul of Margaret Reid who has recently departed.

LATIN ANTIPHONS

Entrance:

Salvos nos fac, Domine Deus noster, et congrega nos de nationibus, ut confiteamur nomini sancto tuo, et gloriemur in laude tua.

Communion:

Beati pauperes spiritu, quoniam ipsorum est regnum caelorum. Beati motes, quoniam ipsi possidebunt terram.