

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

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

Andrés, a young Catholic student from Mexico, is looking for a room to rent in Sevenoaks.

Please email: gonzalez.andres.virtus@gmail.com for further details.



Volunteer at our new shop in Sevenoaks

Give a few hours a week to volunteer and see the invaluable difference you can make

Demelza Sevenoaks Shop, 114 High Street, Sevenoaks, TN13 1UZ

Apply today: www.demelza.org.uk/volunteervacancies
To find out more, email: volunteering@demelza.org.uk or call: 01795 845170

Registered Charity No. 1039651 *Photo taken pre-COVID-19



Demelza
Hospital Care for Children



A big thank you to the Parishioners of all four Churches for your very generous donations to the refugees in Northern France. We sorted them Sunday evening and took them to a drop off point on Monday from where Care4Calais transported them to Northern France. Thank you again.

Frances Smith



Archdiocese of Southwark

PARISH OF ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY SEVENOAKS



CHURCHES IN SEVENOAKS, OTFORD, BOROUGH GREEN AND WEST KINGSDOWN

Parish Newsletter

27th March 2022



Today's Mass: FOURTH SUNDAY of LENT (Year C)

At Masses except the 11:15am Mass:

Joshua 5: 9-12; Psalm 33; 2 Corinthians 5: 17-21; Luke 15: 1-3, 11-32

First Reading: having returned to the Promised Land after the Exodus, the Israelites celebrate their first Passover in the land, and the manna from heaven – which they needed for sustenance on their pilgrimage through the wilderness - ceases. When we go to heaven we will enjoy the eternal banquet there and no longer need Holy Communion for our journey nourishment.

Psalm: the refrain, 'taste and see that the Lord is good', has long been used during the Liturgy as a reference to Holy Communion.

Second Reading: God reconciled us to himself through Jesus Christ, and we are called to hand on that reconciliation to others.

Gospel: the parable of mercy par excellence. Although it is commonly called the parable of the prodigal son, perhaps a better name would be the parable of the merciful father, because the father's mercy – astonishing and unlimited – is the central point of the parable.

At the 11:15am Mass: Samuel 16: 1, 6-7, 10-13; Psalm 22; Ephesians 5: 8-14; John 9: 1-41

These Year A readings are used at Mass with the Second Scrutiny, and are suffused with light. This is the theme of the *Second Reading*, and the *Gospel* - the healing of the man born blind - is about the illumination becoming a disciple of Christ brings. Note the contrast between the increasing vision, and understanding, of the man born blind and the growing blindness of Jesus' adversaries.

Today (Laetare Sunday) is in England also **Mothering Sunday**. An especial welcome to all mothers at Mass today.

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)
Wednesday 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)
Thursday 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
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 Katherine Sexton
Academy Principal:
Ms Geraldine Leahy
Tel: 01732 453921

GOD LOVES HIS CHILDREN

MASS ACTIVITY FOR CHILDREN



Word search

Look very carefully to find these words in the box below:

GOD HOME HAPPY
SORRY PIGS
HUG PARTY

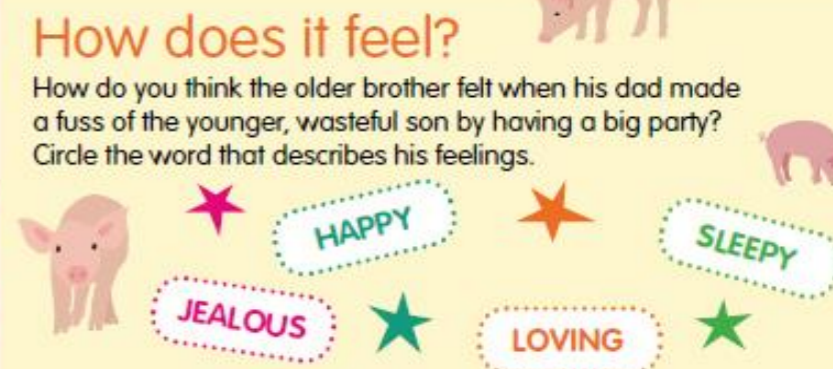
H	O	M	E	H
A	G	O	D	U
P	I	G	S	G
P	A	R	T	Y
Y	R	R	O	S

The younger son takes his share of the family money and leaves home to have a good time. Sadly, he spends it all and ends up in a mess. This wasteful son knows he has made a mistake and goes home to say sorry. Despite everything, his loving father is just waiting for the son to come back. The father runs to meet his son and gives him a great big hug. It's time to celebrate!



How many pigs?

The lost son had a job feeding pigs. How many pigs can you find on this page?



A PRAYER TO SAY

Thank you, Father God, for loving me so much. Help me to remember that you are always waiting to welcome me home, no matter how far I may go away from you. Help me to be generous when I see other people being loved and rewarded. Amen.



PARISH AND OTHER NOTICES

'Building a Better Marriage'

An online course, 9:00am - 1:00pm on Saturday 2nd April. The course offered means that you can attend the course from your own living room and there is no group sharing! Recent 'Building a Better Marriage' courses received the following comments from married couples who logged on: *'The topics were chosen well and we could really relate to them. The personal stories you shared were very insightful and helped us to reflect on our own relationships more deeply... It was relaxed and you put us at ease, being friendly and personable...'* *'We thoroughly enjoyed attending the course and have certainly been practising a few of the things we learnt already. It puts a smile on our faces when we do because we know that we are certainly richer from participating in the course.'* For further information contact Carole on 07983 524727 or mflkent@rcaos.org.uk.

PLEASE PRAY

- ◆ for an end to the pandemic;
- ◆ for peace in Ukraine;
- ◆ for God's help in observing prayer, fasting and almsgiving this Lent;
- ◆ for the catechumens and candidates on our RCIA programme;
- ◆ for all mothers.

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.



POWERFUL PRAYERS

A Prayer for World Peace

Lord Jesus, You came that the world might know the peace that You have experienced with the Father eternally. Yet, You taught us that in this life there will be wars and rumors of wars. Nations will rise against nations as violence works itself out in the world. However, through You, the world may be saved. O Lord, send Your spirit into the hearts of all men, that the world might know true peace through Your abundant mercy. Amen

Unity Prayer

Father, You sent Your only begotten Son into this world to bear our flesh and to save us. In His mission, He taught us about Your heart. You are surely a God of peace who abhors violence. Wherever possible, You encourage unity. He taught us to follow Him, to be the salt of the earth, and to make peace wherever we can. Lord, teach us to be peacemakers and to walk in a manner that reflects the wondrous peace that is given through Your Spirit in Christ, our Lord. Amen.

A Prayer for Faith in God's Intervention

Father, even when things seem hopeless, we know that through You we are never without hope. We beg Your intervention for a world on the constant brink of war. Beat the swords into ploughshares and cause the lion to lie down with the lamb. Intervene in this world that they might avoid the horrors of war and let peace rule in all lands. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen. .

A Prayer to End Violence Through Forgiveness

Father, violence is never the answer. It destroys Your good creation and it grieves Your heart when people resort to it. Despite the world knowing who You are, they do not know the peace that You can give them. Lord, I ask that You arise and put an end to all violence. Extinguish pain and misery wherever it is found, and spread Your gift of grace and peace upon the face of creation. Let forgiveness reign and end the bloodshed. Through Christ, Your Son, our Lord. Amen.



From the Desk of the Parish Priest

The Gospels of the Sundays in Lent 4

Today's Gospel is the well known Parable of the Prodigal Son, one of the three major parables in *Luke* (along with the Parables of the Good Samaritan and of Dives & Lazarus). It is also known as the Parable of the Two Brothers and the Parable of the Good Father.

People generally think of the parable as being about God's wonderful, forgiving grace, ready to welcome back sinners at the first sign of repentance. And so it is. But there is more to the parable than that.

Right at the beginning we see the magnanimity of the father. He probably knows what the younger son is planning but he gives him freedom and lets him go on his way with his share of the inheritance. The son goes to a 'distant country', which the Church Fathers read as interior estrangement from God. The son just wants to enjoy himself and not be subject to any authority. Does he not represent the many people who nowadays reject God?

He squanders his inheritance and instead of living in freedom becomes a mean, and hungry, slave. Freedom, as an arbitrary licence to do what one wants, is in fact an illusion: it leads to slavery (like someone who becomes a drug addict).

But then a conversion takes place: he has a change of heart and realises his alienation from his true home. We can see the inner workings of this conversion and repentance in the son's reasoning as he decides to return to his father.

The father sees the son a 'long way off' and runs to meet him. The son makes a confession, and the father in his great joy orders a great feast to celebrate, a feast which is an image of the Eucharist. Here we see the sheer boundless, generous forgiveness of God who, in his compassion forgives rather than punishes when we confess our sins.

The older son now appears, discovers the 'music and dancing', and learns of the brother's return and the father's celebration. He becomes angry. He thinks it unfair, it contradicts his notion of justice, and he becomes resentful and bitter. The father tries to explain, using an expression - "you are always with me, and all I have is yours" - which Jesus will use in His high-priestly prayer in *John 17:10*: "everything I have is yours, and everything you have is mine, and through them I have been glorified."

Here the parable ends, because it is aimed at Jesus'

hearers, especially his foes, the scribes and Pharisees. They have been objecting to His goodness to sinners, and He is inviting them to leave their estrangement from God and be reconciled to God's true, forgiving and merciful, nature.

And of course this parable is addressed to us here and now. St Paul takes this up in the Second Reading (2 *Corinthians 5: 17-21*): "the appeal that we make in Christ's name is: be reconciled to God." The father's words to the older son are aimed at those who are self-righteous. Are we like the older son who says "I never once disobeyed your orders"? Do we resent those who come in to the Church at the eleventh hour (see *Matthew 20:6*)? Are we truly humble before the sheer generosity and love of God, who is the one who is truly prodigal (which means 'lavish'), not the younger, rebellious son? Are we prey to the bitterness of the older son? Or are we still rebellious, wanting to do our own thing in 'freedom', still in practice far off from God, like the younger son? And are we lavish in our forgiveness of others, like the father?

In short, have we matured in our faith, made a true conversion, and find joy in our faith? When did YOU last go to Confession?

One last point. Am I being fanciful as seeing this story as, in part, also being about Jesus' descent from heaven into our realm (represented by the son going far off), and the joy when He returns to heaven after His Ascension? Perhaps the details about the younger son's debauchery and the older son's resentment don't quite fit this hypothesis. But could it be a parable about the joyous welcome we shall receive when - after this our exile - we return to our true homeland which is heaven?



UKRAINE- SEVENOAKS WELCOMES REFUGEES (SWR)

What is SWR?

SWR is a locally registered charity helping to support resettling in the Sevenoaks district, as part of the UK Government's refugee resettlement. We help to support the resettlement of refugee families from Syria and Afghanistan now living across Sevenoaks District area- Sevenoaks, Swanley, New Ash Green, Kemsing, and Eynsford. We provide local practical support - welcoming, help with learning English, finding jobs, taking them shopping, help to settle to a different way of life etc – and we make small welfare grants. Refugees are very vulnerable who have been through a traumatic experience and need a lot of support. Also, unfortunately refugees sometime face some hostility locally.

We are particularly keen to recruit volunteers to support refugee families. A typical refugee family has 5-8 volunteers to help them with a variety of tasks.

It's great that the Ukraine refugee resettlement scheme has now opened. There is an amazing amount of compassion and energy in our area, with so many people ready to help. All of us working together will do everything that we can to help with the resettlement of refugees and asylum seekers from Ukraine in the Sevenoaks District area. Let's also not forget supporting refugees from other conflict countries, including Afghanistan and Syria.

But the details provided by the Government so far are patchy. We understand that more information will be released shortly, and we hope that we will then have a more detailed picture of how the scheme(s) will work. SWR have asked the Government for more information about safeguarding arrangements (for both hosts and refugees), and for an online matching service to help people offering rooms/houses and refugees to connect.

We have two key asks of volunteers and supporters: properties and people who know refugees fleeing from Ukraine.

Properties and rooms

Please let us know as soon as possible if you can offer a room, a couple of rooms or an entire house to the refugee resettlement schemes in the Sevenoaks District area. Ukrainian refugees only, under the Government scheme, can be accommodated in rooms or an entire property; refugees from other countries can only be housed in an entire property. The £350 per household which the government is giving to hosts/sponsors only applies to the Ukraine scheme. You must also make your own registration of the property or room on the Government's Homes for Ukraine website.

People who know refugees fleeing Ukraine

If you live in the Sevenoaks District area and personally know people who have fled, or are fleeing, Ukraine and you wish to help them find sanctuary in the UK, please contact us (contact details below). SWR will ask for your contact details and the number of people (not names) that you are trying to help. At this stage we need to know the number of named people that you are trying to help, and whether they are adults or children. We will then try and make connections to people offering accommodation but who don't know any people fleeing Ukraine. We may need to share your contact details with another organisation (for example UK central or local government) so by contacting us with this information you are giving us permission to share your contact details and the information mentioned above.

You can contact us if you wish to volunteer/support at sevenoakswelcomesrefugees@gmail.com.

Ben Andradi - (volunteer for SWR)

MASS INTENTIONS

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

SUNDAY 27th MARCH

6:00pm (Sat)
8:00am (Latin)
9:15am
11:15am
6:00pm
9:30am *Otford*
9:30am *Borough Green*
11:00am *West Kingsdown*

Monday 28th Feria

8:00am

Tuesday 29th Feria

9:30am

Wednesday 30th Feria

8:00am
10:00am *Otford*

Thursday 31st Feria

10:00am *Borough Green*
12:00noon

Friday 1st April Feria

8:00am
10:00am *West Kingsdown*

Saturday 2nd Feria

9:30am

SUNDAY 3rd APRIL

6:00pm (Sat)
8:00am (Latin)
9:15am
11:15am
6:00pm
9:30am *Otford*
9:30am *Borough Green*
11:00am *West Kingsdown*

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT (C)

Conrad RIP (Birthday)
People of the Parish
Peace in Ukraine
Margaret Griffiths RIP
World Peace
Matylda Wiacek (10th Birthday)
Joseph McDermott RIP
UCM, Mothers and carers everywhere

Good intentions of the donor's family

Peter & Ally Black RIP

Lilian & Cyril Pluck RIP (Anniversary)
Lawrence Cronin and family wellbeing

Ann Bailey (Birthday)
Pat M^cCullagh RIP

Lawrence Cronin and family wellbeing
Holy Souls

Brian's Craig McFeely recovery

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT (C)

People in Ukraine
Private Intention
More vocations to the priesthood
Sadie Gleeson RIP
Fr Huebert Miranda RIP
Magdalena & Dawid Wiacek (Birthday)
Sean McDermott RIP
People of the Parish

Departed

Please pray for the soul of

Mary Glover

who has recently departed.

Anniversaries

Thomas Greene, Edmund Curtis, Thomas Griffin, Jane Heyward, Agnes Cramer, Harry Bellingham, Laura Haffenden, Paul Travers, Edward Travers, Harold Fletcher, John Dolby-Gray, Mary Warnett, John Salt, Kathleen Lawless, Jeanne Austin, Cyril Hardaker, Christina Chambers, Henry Glyde, Michael O'Farrell, Mary Howes, Mäire Collins, Joan Brooks, Frederick Triggs.

Eternal rest grant unto them...



LATIN ANTIPHONS

Entrance Lætare,
Ierusalem, et conventum
facite, omnes qui diligitis
eam; gaudete cum lætitia,
qui in tristitia fuistis, ut
exsultetis, et satiemini ab
uberibus consolationis
vestræ.

Communion Oportet te,
fili, gaudere, quia frater
tuus mortuus fuerat, et
revixit; perierat, et inventus
est.

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

Deidre Thomas, Ann Steven, Lilian Spragg, Jane Tabor, Ken Holmes, Mary Scott and all in care and nursing homes.