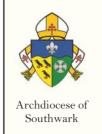
## CHRISTMAS EVE MASS AT ST JOSEPH'S



## A CHURCH IN FLORIDA, KNOWN AS THE 'CONFUSED CHICKEN CHURCH'!





# PARISH OF ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY **SEVENOAKS**

CHURCHES IN SEVENOAKS, OTFORD, BOROUGH GREEN AND WEST KINGSDOWN

8th January 2023



Today's Mass: BAPTISM OF THE LORD (Year A)

Isaiah 42: 1-4, 6-7, Psalm 28, Acts 10: 34-38, Matthew 3: 13-17

The season of Christmas ends today.

First Reading: Isaiah describes the true servant of God and of the community. The Church has always seen here a portrait of Christ, especially in the reference to the servant as "covenant of the people and light of the nations".

The Psalm is a majestic hymn of praise to the Lord, the God of thunder and the water. It is a reminder of the use of water by God in our salvation, from creation through Noah and the Flood, the Exodus, and on to Christ's (and our) Baptism.

Second Reading: St Peter, in his sermon to Cornelius and his household (who significantly are Gentiles, not Jews), tells them about Jesus' ministry and how it began with His Baptism.

Gospel: Jesus is Baptized in the river Jordan by John. John tries to dissuade Jesus, because he understood that Jesus, the sinless one, did not need Baptism, but Jesus insists, partly because it marks the beginning of His public ministry, and partly to make the point that, on the Cross, He would take away our sins.

This is one of the rare times in all scripture when the three persons of the Holy Trinity appear together. This reminds us that at our own Baptism we were Baptized in the name of the Three Persons of the Godhead.

Fr David

## ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY **SEVENOAKS**

Thursday

Saturday

Friday

**Sunday Mass times:** Weekday Mass times: Saturday Monday 6:00pm Tuesday Wednesday Sunday

8:00am (Latin) **9:15am** (Children's Liturgy of Word)

11:15am 6:00pm

Tuesday

Sacrament of Reconciliation: Adoration:

Monday 8:30am - 9:30am Saturday

> 10:00am - 10:30am, 6:00pm - 7:00pm 5:15pm - 5:45pm



## Granville Road, Sevenoaks TN13 1ER

Parish Office: Magdalena Wiacek Monday - Friday 9:00am - 12:00noon Tel: 01732 454177 sevenoaks@rcaos.org.uk www.sevrcparish.org.uk



High Street, Otford TN14 5PH

## MOST HOLY TRINITY OTFORD

8:00am

9:30am

8:00am

12:00noon

8:00am

9:30am

Mass times: Sunday 9:30am (with Children's Lituray 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

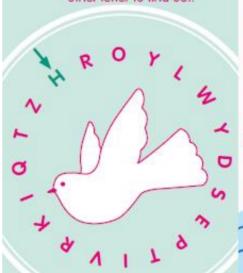
**Executive Head:** Mrs Katherine Sexton **Academy Principal:** Ms Geraldine Leahy Tel: 01732 453921

# GOD LOVES HIS CHILDREN MASS ACTIVITY FOR CHILDREN

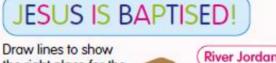


# Search party

Can you find out who God has sent to guide us and protect us? Start with H and write down every other letter to find out.



Jesus is baptised by John in the river Jordan, just as God wants. When Jesus comes up out of the water, the Holy Spirit comes down like a dove. A voice from heaven says, "This is my Son, I love him and I am pleased with everything that he is doing."





and you are

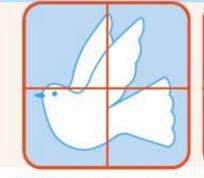
you love

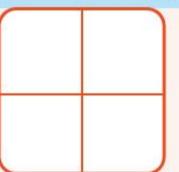
## A dove to draw

The Holy Spirit came down in the form of a dove. Use the squares to copy the picture of the dove. Then perhaps you could have a go without the squares to help you.

Father God, thank you

for loving me. Amen.





# Listen with your heart

This is what God is saying to you. You can hear God speaking to you with your heart. Close your eyes. Imagine God saying these words to you. Use your heart to listen to God's words.

> ..(your name), you are my child. Hove you. I am proud of you.

redemplorist

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## **CONTACTS & ORGANISATIONS**

## Parish of St Thomas of Canterbury, Sevenoaks

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

Parish Priest: Fr David Gibbons, KCHS 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 9:00am - 12:00noon

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@sevrcparish.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 sevenoaksclow@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 454729

Borough Green: Chris Hurll chris.hurll@outlook.com

#### **Church Cleaning (St Thomas's)**

James McSharry jamesmcsharry@hotmail.com

#### **Church Flowers**

Kate Travers katetravers521@hotmail.com

#### **Confirmation Programme**

Gabrielle Ellis sevenoaksconfirmation@rcaos.org.uk

#### **Parish Finance Committee**

Secretary: Mary Scott 3maryscott@gmail.com

### First Holy Communion & Reconciliation Programme

Fr Peter Littleton: peterlittleton@rcaos.org.uk

#### 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 katetravers521@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

Tuesdays 10:00am - 12:00noon, Parish Centre Mary Hunt 07890 229794

### **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

Saturday 6:00pm, Sunday: 8:00 am, 11:15am Sophie McBrien sophiemcbrien@yahoo.co.uk

#### 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 01732 450197

#### **Scripture Fellowship**

Reading a Gospel together

Andrew Wilkinson andrewwilkos@gmail.com

### St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP)

Paul Boyle 07796564018

Kathie Gonzalez sevenoakssvp@gmail.com

#### Union of Catholic Mothers (UCM)

West Kingsdown UCM:

Monica Biggs mmdbbiggs@outlook.com

#### Webmaster

Barry Authers sevenoakswebmaster@rcaos.org.uk

## PARISH NOTICES

## Contents this Week

Pages 3-4 Parish Notices

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Page 6 Mass Readings

Page 7 Sunday Message

Page 8 Benedict XVI - Obituary

Page 9 Baptism of Jesus

Page 10 Contacts & Organisations

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## **TODAY**

### **Crib Offerings**

Today, being the last day of the Christmas season, is the last day of the Christmas Cribs. All donations will go to support the work of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, in schools, clinics, parishes etc.

### **Supply Priests**

We welcome Fr Bryan Wells and one of the Capuchin Friars assisting today.

## St Joseph's

Coffee after Mass when we shall say goodbye to Julie Lee, who is moving across the pond, and thank her for all her contributions to the local community over the years.

## THIS WEEK

## **Ordinary Time**

Ordinary Time begins on Monday and continues until the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday. No particular mystery of Christ is celebrated; rather on Sundays we work through the *Gospel of Matthew* in order. The weekday Mass readings are from year 1, and the Office this week is taken from the Psalter week 1.

#### St Thomas's works

Work will be undertaken on the earth bonding and lightning conductor at St Thomas's from Monday to Wednesday. This may entail interruption to the electrical supply.

### **Tuesday Adoration**

There is no Adoration on Tuesday evening at St Thomas's this week, as some regular attenders are away.

## Josephine Coakley RIP

Funeral Mass at St Bernadette's on Tuesday at 11:00am, followed by Interment in West Kingsdown Burial Ground.

## Margaret Thackaberry RIP

Funeral Mass at St Thomas's on Thursday at 12:00 noon followed by Interment in the Greatness Cemetery.

### **Christmas Offering**

Fr David and Fr Peter thank you for the generous Christmas Offering, which totalled £18,588.

## Finance

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The total Offertory for December was £11,402.69. Thank you very much.

#### Sick and housebound

We do our best to keep in touch with those who are seriously ill or housebound, and to bring them Holy Communion. Additionally the Parish SVP members are always willing to visit anyone who would welcome a visit. But with the best will in the world we can lose track of people, especially because of the disruption caused by the pandemic, so if you or someone you know should be getting a visit but isn't please contact the Parish Office.

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## PARISH AND OTHER NOTICES

### **Dean of Tunbridge Wells**

The Archbishop has reappointed Fr David as Dean - or Vicar Forane, to use the Canonical term - of the Tunbridge Wells Deanery, for a further term of three years.

#### **Next Sunday**

is Peace Day. The second collection will be for Pax Christi.

## **NOTICES**

## The Pilgrims - Monday 16th January 2:00pm

We were sad to have to cancel the Christmas Carol Concert but we look forward to the New Year with hope and faith. We invite you to join us for tea and cake when Janet Clare will entertain us with her talk 'My life is Magic'. Janet holds the diploma 'Member of the Inner Magic Circle with Gold Star' and in spite of trials and tribulations with eyesight continues to make magic!

#### **Advance Notice**

There will be a Mass of Thanksgiving for the Ministry of Mgr Matthew Dickens in his role as Vicar General on Saturday 28th January at 12:30m in St George's Cathedral, followed by a Reception in Amigo Hall.

## Parish Holy Land Pilgrimage 22<sup>nd</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> June 2023

We shall stay in Bethlehem, Tiberias (for the Sea of Galilee) and Jerusalem, with daily Mass at a holy place. The Pilgrimage will be led by Fr David. The price is £1,945; this includes flights, half board accommodation (Breakfast and Dinner) and two Lunches, luxury coach, and a local English speaking guide. Single room supplement: £600; travel insurance £94 per person. Obtain a booking form from the Parish Office or contact <a href="mailto:sales@tangneytours.com">sales@tangneytours.com</a>. Don't delay: book your place now.

#### Formed.org

Don't forget that as a parishioner you have full and free access to an immense collection of videos, TV programmes, discussions, course, audiobooks, and children's content. Simply

- 1. go to www.formed.org and click 'sign up'
- 2. click 'sign up as parishioner'
- 3. search for 'St Thomas of Canterbury Sevenoaks'
- 4. enter your name and email address, and click 'sign up'.

## **CAFOD**

The church relies on people getting involved. Our church, our world needs you. Could your New Year's resolution be getting more involved in the life of our church? What aspects of church brings you life or joy? Could you give a bit of time to help those parts flourish?

CAFOD, the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development, are looking for people to give some time and join them in their mission. Could you help in our parish, bringing people together to help build a better world or by visiting local schools? Or raise a voice and campaign for justice or perhaps speak for CAFOD throughout the diocese? Could you support local volunteers or share your office skills to help CAFOD keep costs low?

We believe that everybody had unique gifts and talents and we want to support you to use these gifts to serve the parish community and our brothers and sisters across the world.

Training and support are provided. See <a href="mailto:cafod.org.uk/">cafod.org.uk/</a> <a href="mailto:Volunteer">Volunteer</a> for more information or get in touch with Celeste and Sarah: <a href="mailto:southwark@cafod.org.uk">southwark@cafod.org.uk</a> and let's transform the world in 2023 together!

#### **RACET**

The latest Newsletter can be viewed on the noticeboard in St Thomas's Entrance.



From the Desk of the Parish Priest

## The Baptism of Jesus



n chapter 3 *Luke* carefully dates the Baptism of Jesus: "in the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius ....." etc. Jesus' Baptism therefore is a precisely datable event, a real historical happening. But there is a second level of meaning: the Roman Emperor and Jesus represent two different orders; as Jesus said, His kingdom is not of this world. The reference to the various princes of the Holy Land also points to the fact that Israel, the kingdom of David, lay in pieces, and God seemed to be absent.

All four Gospels describe the prior ministry of John the Baptist, who preached a Gospel of repentance and who Baptized in water. The immersion in water practised by John was about purification from sin, leading to a rebirth. So why was Jesus, who was without sin, Baptized by John? The dispute between Jesus and John, related in *Matthew* 3, probably reflects the early Christians asking the same question.

One answer is that Jesus' Baptism marks the beginning of His public ministry, of preaching, teaching, healing, and performing miracles. It is for this reason that we regard someone's Baptism as the beginning of that person's participation in the mission of the Church, even if the person Baptized is a baby.

A more important answer is that Jesus' Baptism expresses His solidarity with the sinful People of God, and this leads us to the crucial (literally) point. Jesus took the burden of all mankind's sin and guilt upon His shoulders. In His Baptism He anticipates His saving act on the Cross. Jesus' Baptism points forward to His death on the Cross, when He would take away *our* sins, and also therefore points forward to His Resurrection.

This is why Jesus uses the word 'Baptism' to refer to His death (*Mark* 10:38, *Luke* 12:50). There is a deep connection between Christ's Baptism and Easter. As St John Chrysostom writes: "going down into the water and emerging again are the image of the descent into hell and the Resurrection".

This understanding explains the words of John the Baptist in *John* 1:29: "Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!". These words – which are spoken after Christ has been made present on the Altar and before the distribution of Holy Communion in Mass – are partly a reference to the lamb led to the slaughter in the Song of the Suffering Servant in *Isaiah* 53:7 and partly, according to the dating in *John*, a reference to the fact that Jesus was crucified on the feast of the Passover, as the true Passover lamb.

The expression 'the sin of the world' adverts to the universal mission of Jesus Christ and of the new Israel (the Church). Jesus' ministry was God's means of bringing salvation to *all* people, not just the Jewish people.

Notice three aspects of the scene, as recounted by the four Gospels. First, heaven is torn open: heaven and earth unite, if briefly, at this juncture. Secondly, God the Father proclaims who Jesus is: He is the 'beloved Son of the Father'. Thirdly, we see here the mystery of the Holy Trinity, and this culminates in the end of Matthew (28:19) when Jesus commands His disciples "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, Baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit".

As always these reflections are not original. The late Pope Benedict XVI puts these ideas much more lucidly in his book *Jesus of Nazareth*, so let me conclude by quoting him: by His Baptism Jesus "is, on the one hand, the Wholly Other, but by the same token He can also become a contemporary of us all, 'more interior' to each one of us 'than we are to ourselves' (St Augustine Confessions III, 6, 11)".

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# BENEDICT XVI - OBITUARY

## Papal visit

Benedict XVI was Pope for less than eight years – 19<sup>th</sup> April 2005 to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2013 – and became generally known in Britain as the second Pope in history to visit the UK, in 2010. The first such visit had been by Pope St John Paul II in 1982. The turning point that sealed the visit as a national success came on the second day, when Benedict addressed the representatives of society, including parliamentarians, in Westminster Hall. He spoke about 'the legitimate role of religion in the public square', and pressed the idea that 'the Church and the public authorities can work together for the good of citizens'. He received a standing ovation.

The central purpose of the visit was to Beatify the 19<sup>th</sup> century English theologian John Henry Cardinal Newman, which took place in Cofton Park, Birmingham at a Mass attended by 55,000 people. The Pope singled out Newman's 'gentle scholarship, deep human wisdom and profound love for the Lord'.

During his visit Pope Benedict also visited St Peter's Residence in Vauxhall, escorted by the late Archbishop Peter Smith, where he met a number of retired Catholics, including retired clergy. The same day saw an evening Prayer Vigil in Hyde Park, at which Fr David was privileged to be given a front row ticket. It was not so much what was said as the sight of 80,000 people, praying silently before the Blessed Sacrament.

## Early years

Joseph Ratzinger was born in 1927 in Bavaria in Germany. In 1951 he and his brother were Ordained Priests. After a doctorate in theology and post doctoral work he taught Theology at Freising, Bonn, Münster and then Tübingen. He then became Professor at Regensburg University.

In 1962 he accompanied Josef Cardinal Frings as a peritus (theological advisor), attending all four sessions, and where he was regarded as something of a progressive theologian. In 1972 he was one of the founders of the theological journal *Communio*. In 1977 Pope St Paul VI named him Archbishop of Munich and made him a Cardinal.

#### Rome

Then in 1981 Pope St John Paul II appointed Cardinal Ratzinger as Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the department of the Holy See for promoting and defending the Catholic faith. Amongst other things he headed up the committee which drew up the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, a synthesis of the essentials of Catholic doctrine – faith and morals – published in 1992.

He had a reputation as a theological conservative, but it is the nature of the CDF that it will say no to innovation more often than yes. As Dean of the College of Cardinals it fell to him to preside and preach at John Paul II's Funeral, and to preside at the subsequent Conclave.

#### Pope

On 19th April 2005 Cardinal Ratzinger, aged 78, was elected the 265th Pope at the fourth ballot and chose the name Benedict; he was the first German Pope in almost 1,000 years. His time as Pope was not without difficulties: he accidentally sparked a controversy with Islam in a lecture at Regensburg University, and he had to deal with a mounting crisis over child abuse.

He wrote three Encyclicals, on Love (*Deus Caritas est*), Hope (*Spe Salvi*), and Social Justice (*Caritas in Veritate*); another Encyclical (*Lumen Fidei*) on Faith was completed by his successor. He also, extraordinarily, published a three volume book called *Jesus of Nazareth*.

An example of his concern for Unity was the establishment in 2009 of the personal Ordinariates for former Anglicans. England was the first place where this was set up.

Perhaps the most remarkable event was his resignation – in Latin – on  $11^{th}$  February 2013, because of his physical frailty. He became the Pope Emeritus, and he did what he said he would: he prayed for the Church.

A fuller Biography can be found on the Diocesan website.

# MASS INTENTIONS

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

## SUNDAY 8<sup>th</sup> January BAPTISM of the LORD

6:00pm (Sat) Theodora Wilson RIP 8:00am (Latin) Valerie Hooper RIP 9:15am People of the Parish

11:15am Sue Timson RIP

6:00pm Dympna Cearney RIP

9:30am Otford Margaret Mary Healy RIP

9:30am Borough Green Parish Priests

11:00am West Kingsdown John & Kathleen Doyle (anniversary)

## Monday 9<sup>th</sup> Feria

8:00am Timothy & Cleta Andradi RIP

## Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> Feria

9:30am Jeremiah Gould RIP

11:00am West Kingsdown Funeral Mass - Josephine Coakley RIP

## Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> Feria

8:00am Mary & Henry Parr RIP

10:00am *Otford* Wellbeing of sister & brother-in-law

## Thursday 12th Feria

10:00am Borough Green Good health and wellbeing of Donal D'Souza

12:00noon Victoria Lapore RIP

Funeral Mass - Margaret Thackaberry RIP

## Friday 13<sup>th</sup> Feria

8:00am Marie Mernock RIP
10:00am *West Kingsdown* John Gibson RIP

## Saturday 14th of Our Lady

9:30am Otford

9:30am Parish Priests

## SUNDAY 15th January SECOND SUNDAY of the YEAR

6:00pm (Sat) Thomas Ahern RIP

8:00am (Latin) Paul Galia

9:15am People of the Parish

11:15am Joseph & Freda Ford, Canon Anthony Ford

Agnes Kelly RIP

and all dec'd in the family

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6:00pm Rita Lewis RIP

9:30am Borough Green Pax Christi

11:00am West Kingsdown John Gibson RIP

Baptism

Welcome to

Wiktoria & Amelia Michalik

who were Baptized at St Thomas'. Sevenoaks

**Recently Departed** 

Pope Emeritus Benedict Anne McDonnell Katherine Lester Margaret Dickens

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

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

Lynne Stanley, Veronica
Williams, Yvonne Bollen, Peter
Ringham, Ann Steven, Lilian
Spragg, Jane Tabor,
Ken Holmes, Mary Scott,
Sean Cloke, Ann Farren and all
in care and nursing homes.

) |-----

## LATIN ANTIPHONS

#### **Entrance**

Baptizato Domino, aperti sunt cæli, et sicut columba super eum Spiritus mansit, et vox Patris intonuit: Hic est Filius meus dilectus, in quo mihi bene complacui.

## Communion

Ecce de quo dicebat Ioannes: Ego vidi et testimonium perhibui, quia hic est Filius Dei.