

LENTEN PROGRAMME FOR 2023

Tuesday evening from 28 February to 4 April
Food served from 7:30 - sessions finish by 9:00

SYCAMORE

Each year our Parish tries to offer a Lenten Program to help us deepen our faith. This year we are pleased to announce the return of Sycamore. The format comprises a light meal, short video presentations and an opportunity for small group chat. The material is curated by our own, and much beloved, London Priest Fr Stephen Wang, who now works in Rome.

"Living the Christian Faith in the World"

- (1) CREATION, FALL, SALVATION - The goodness of creation. Suffering and sin. The gift of salvation.
- (2) THE MEANING OF LOVE - What is love? How to love your neighbour. Knowing the love of God.
- (3) FINDING TRUE FREEDOM - Is there such a thing as right and wrong? Where can we find moral guidance? How do you discover your true identity?
- (4) FORGIVENESS, HEALING AND MISSION - Forgiveness and the Sacrament of Confession. Healing and the Sacrament of the Sick. Christian mission and the call to share our faith.
- (5) THE SOCIAL TEACHING OF THE CHURCH - The dignity of the human person and the right to life. Christian teaching about family and society. Speaking the truth and following conscience.
- (6) THE CHRISTIAN VOCATIONS - The meaning of vocation. Marriage and family life. Ordination and consecrated life.

See <http://www.sevrcparish.org.uk/> for registration or hand in completed form to Parish secretary

ANDREA RAMSAMOOJ
AND ALEX OWEN,
AFTER THE RITE OF ELECTION
HELD AT
ST GEORGE'S CATHEDRAL
ON SATURDAY 25TH FEBRUARY



A SIGN



A sign seen in Florence.

.....
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details.**



Archdiocese of
Southwark

PARISH OF ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY SEVENOAKS



CHURCHES IN SEVENOAKS, OTFORD,
BOROUGH GREEN AND WEST KINGSDOWN

Parish Newsletter

26th March 2023



Today's Mass: FIFTH SUNDAY of LENT (Year A)

Ezekiel 37: 12-14, Psalm 129, Romans 8: 8-11, John 11: 1-45

The third Scrutiny is celebrated today for the elect, who will be Baptized at Easter, and this week's long **Gospel** from *John*, which records the raising of Lazarus, is chosen with the elect in mind. It has many important themes, important for the elect on their spiritual journey to Baptism but also important for us all on our own spiritual journey in Lent.

We see Jesus' human side: he loves Lazarus and his sisters, and He is so distressed that He weeps. We see His power over death as He brings Lazarus back to life, which prefigures Jesus' own resurrection. We see Martha's response when Jesus says "*I am the resurrection and the life*" and she confesses him as the Christ, the Messiah. We see Jesus' intimate relationship with the Father, and finally we see how many people came to believe in Him as a result of what they had witnessed.

The prophet Ezekiel, in the **First Reading**, foretells the general resurrection of the faithful, and St Paul, in the **Second Reading**, tells us that the spirit which raised Jesus from the dead will raise us from the dead as well.

The **Psalm** is one of the seven penitential psalms of the church: it is a lament and a plea to God, but it also shows trust in God to forgive us from our sins and redeem us.

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
9:00am - 12:00noon
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



GOD
GIVES LIFE!

Spot the
difference

Can you find differences
between Martha and Mary?



A PRAYER TO SAY

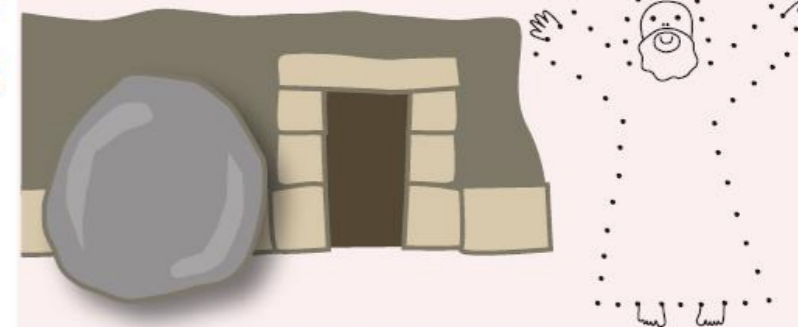
I feel all kinds of different things, Jesus. You felt lots of different things too. Help me to remember you are always with me, however I am feeling. Amen.

redemptorist
publications

Jesus' friend Lazarus has died. Jesus is very sad. He asks for the stone to be rolled away from the entrance to the tomb and calls to Lazarus. Lazarus comes out of the tomb alive - it's a miracle!

Lazarus Lives again!

Join the dots to see Lazarus coming back to life!



When I am ill

Lazarus' sisters, Martha and Mary, looked after Lazarus when he was sick. Who looks after you when you are sick? Draw a picture of them caring for you.

looks after me when I am sick

No longer sad

Lazarus was alive again! How do you think everyone felt?



Draw the faces of the people when they saw Lazarus come out of the tomb. How would you feel? Draw yourself in the crowd.

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fsc logo

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, 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@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

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 454729

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

Church Cleaning (St Thomas's)

James McSharry jamesmcsharry@hotmail.com

Church Flowers (St Thomas's)

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

Parent & 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)

Can help financially, practically, and through visits to the

isolated or housebound. Contact Paul Boyle 07796564018 or

Kathie Gonzalez sevenoakssvp@gmail.com

Union of Catholic Mothers (UCM) (West Kingsdown)

Monica Biggs mmdbbiggs@outlook.com

Webmaster

Barry Authers sevenoakswebmaster@rcaos.org.uk

PARISH NOTICES

Contents this Week

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TODAY

Second Collection

The Second Collection is for Easter flowers, separately at each church.

Supply priests

We are grateful to Fr Bryan Wells and the Capuchin Franciscans for their assistance today.

9:15am Mass at St Thomas's

We welcome the Choir from St Thomas' School, singing at this Mass. An especial thank you to Ms Leahy and Miss Carlton for enabling this, and thanks to the parents who have agreed to bring their children.

Third Scrutiny

Those on the RCIA programme have their Third and final Scrutiny today, with the presentation of the *Patnoster*, at the 11:15am Mass.

11:15am Mass

The Music Group lead our music today.

First Holy Communion programme

Formation session at 3:00pm, at St Thomas's.

THIS WEEK

Parish Office

As Magda will be away the Office will be closed on Monday. It will open as normal from Tuesday, 9:00am - 12:00pm.

Monday: Walk through the Church

7:00pm in St Thomas's. Fr David will conduct his annual Walk through the Church for those on this year's RCIA programme. Anyone is welcome to come along, if you would like to find out about the main features of a Catholic church and the particular features of St Thomas's, including the artwork in the apse.

Tuesday: Sycamore

The fifth session in our Lent course: food served from 7:30pm, videos and discussion 8:00pm - 9:00pm in the Parish Centre. This week's subject is *the Social Teaching of the Church*. Come even if you haven't been before.

Thursday: The Pilgrims Lent talk

At 2:15pm Fr Peter will give a talk called *Dominus Est*, on the real Presence, in the Parish Centre. We hope many Pilgrims and their friends will attend; this will be the last opportunity for Fr Peter to speak to us before he leaves.

Jackie Pembroke

Friday: St Thomas' School

End of Term Mass at 9:30am in St Thomas's church. All family members and all connected to the School are invited to attend. This will be followed by the Talents Fair in school where the children (based on the Parable of the Talents) make things to sell for a local charity, organised by the pupil Chaplains. On weekday afternoons this week the children perform the various stages of their Passion Play.

Friday: Mass for Archbishop Peter Smith

On Friday at 12:30pm in St George's Cathedral the present Archbishop will celebrate a Mass of Thanksgiving for the Life and Ministry of Archbishop Peter Smith. This will be followed by the unveiling of a new portrait. All are most welcome to attend.

PARISH AND OTHER NOTICES

A night at the Foot of the Cross: all night Vigil

From 8:00pm on Friday a night of Adoration, starting with Stations of the Cross and ending with Holy Mass at 6:30am. Please join us for the whole night or just for an hour. For further details contact me at neilphilipson@rcaos.org.uk.

Deacon Neil

Next Sunday (Palm Sunday)

All Masses will begin with the Palm Gospel and Blessing of palms, followed by either the Solemn Entrance or the Palm Procession. You should make sure you arrive in good time for Mass next week or you will miss the Blessing of palms.

The Second Collection next Sunday will be the annual SVP collection. The monies raised are earmarked half for the victims of the earthquake in Turkey and Syria and half for the educational needs of poor children in Kerala, via the SVP International Disaster Fund.

NOTICES

New Assistant Priest

The Archbishop has appointed Fr Vipin James, SVD to replace Fr Peter as Assistant Priest. He will be coming in Easter week. Fr Vipin is a priest of the Society of the Divine Word, and comes from Kerala in India.

Divine Mercy

We are getting ready to celebrate The Divine Mercy Sunday in our Parish, the first Sunday after Easter, which this year will be celebrated on 16th April from 2:30pm at St. Thomas's, followed by refreshments in the Parish room (more details to follow).

As in the last few years Deacon Neil will lead the Divine mercy Novena via Zoom. It worked really well during the pandemic and we decided to continue with this format. If you want to take part in praying the Divine Mercy Novena via Zoom please contact Deacon Neil on neilphilipson@rcaos.org.uk. He will contact you with the details of Zoom links for each day.

We start praying the Novena on Good Friday (7th April this year). You can also join a Divine Mercy WhatsApp group in our Parish. If you are interested please let Deacon Neil know, and he will add your details to the group.

Enia Adeleye

Southwark Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes, 18th-25th August

After the restrictions of the past few years, I'm delighted that we are now once more able to include support for pilgrims who need assistance for medical or mobility reasons. In Lourdes, those who are often marginalised are placed at the centre, and we who travel with them are blessed by their presence. I warmly invite you to join us. For details, please see <https://www.tangney-tours.com/pilgrimages/lourdes/southwark-ca>.

Bishop Paul Hendricks

Children's Mental Health

There is a useful site giving information about managing digital well being, which parents may wish to bookmark: <https://swgfl.org.uk/topics/digital-wellbeing/>.

Marriage minimum age

A recent Marriage Act has raised the minimum age for Marriage in England & Wales to 18. The Bishops of England & Wales have passed a formal resolution to align the minimum age of Marriage in Canon Law (Canon 1083) to 18. Please note that this prevents us from issuing paperwork for someone under 18 who is Marrying elsewhere.

Finance

The Mission Appeal for the SMA fathers was £2,065.91, the Clergy Support Fund was £1,201.49, and the CAFOD collection was £1,545.65.

The total first Collection for the parish for February came to £11,434.00.

Thank you for your generosity.



From the Desk of the Parish Priest

The Old Testament 5: Joshua 3-4, 2 Samuel 5-6

"So when the people set out from their tents to pass over the Jordan with the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people, and as soon as those bearing the ark had come as far as the Jordan, and the feet of the priests bearing the ark were dipped in the brink of the water And the people passed over opposite Jericho. Now the priests bearing the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firmly on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan, and all Israel was passing over on dry ground until all the nation finished passing over the Jordan." (Joshua 3: 14-17, ESV).

"The people passed over in haste. And when all the people had finished passing over, the ark of the Lord and the priests passed over before the people." (Joshua 4: 10-11, ESV).

This is the account of the people of God, after their 40 year trek in the wilderness, finally crossing the Jordan and entering the Promised Land. We can see how this evokes the previous crossing of the Red Sea, and is part of God's deliverance of his people. from slavery in Egypt to possession of the land of Canaan. God is sovereign over the land, and can grant it to whom he chooses. The importance of the ark of the covenant in this story symbolises the guidance of God on the journey.

The centrality of the ark and the priests in this event, along with the instruction to carry twelve stones, one for each tribe, in *Joshua 4* point to a further significance: this story doesn't just narrate past events – wonderful though they may be for the Israelites – but also points forward to future worship and liturgy. I shall return to this point.

"They anointed David king over Israel. David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned for forty years." (2 Samuel 5: 3-4, ESV). "David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom to the city of David [Jerusalem] with rejoicing. And they brought in the ark of the Lord and set it in its place, inside the tent that David had pitched for it. And David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the Lord." (2 Samuel 6: 12-17, ESV).

Two interesting details about King David are that he lived and reigned 1,000 years before Christ (an easy date to remember) and that if you take an Old Testament and open it in the middle you find the story of David; he is the centre of the Old Testament and is, again, a type of Jesus and, as we know, the ancestor of the Messiah.

I referred in my analysis of Pope Benedict XVI's theology to his understanding of the Exodus, entry into Canaan, and establishing of the Temple in Jerusalem. These events, he says, were not only an important historical event in the history of the Hebrews but also a liturgical event in which God consecrates the Hebrews to himself as a worshipping community.

It is for this reason that God gives them the Promised Land, because it is the place (the Temple in Jerusalem) where the Liturgy will take place. The land thus becomes a divine dwelling where the Creator himself abides. The true worship revealed in the Exodus and subsequent events is in stark contrast to the golden calf incident, a human generated cult, which *"is a warning about any kind of self-initiated and self-seeking worship"* (Pope Benedict).

David is described as wearing a 'linen ephod', which is a priestly garment, and the tent he built to house the ark was the precursor of the Temple constructed by his son, Solomon.

Once again, moral purity and ritual worship go hand in hand in the Jewish religion and, as the *Letter to the Hebrews* explains, the Jerusalem Temple and its worship were to be superseded by the new Covenant of Jesus Christ, and every Christian liturgy is but a shadow of the true worship in the heavenly Temple. Our Tabernacles in our churches demonstrate the same presence of God as the ark of the covenant.

The entry of the People of God into the Promised Land is also a metaphor or an image for the entry of the Baptized People of God into heaven: it is as part of the People of God - the Church - that we can enter heaven, not simply as an individual.

Fr David

GIFT AID

Thank you

I'd like to say a very big thank you to everyone for your continued support this year. Your support keeps the parish financially healthy.

How significant is the tax relief to the parish?

Everyone's contribution whether small or large is important. In the 2021/2022 tax year we will be able to claim back from the tax authorities nearly £40,000. It is a big part of our income and allows us to fund our four Mass centres and contribute to the diocese.

What can we claim for?

Firstly, we can claim the tax that you have already paid on all the donations made by parishioners registered for Gift Aid. Secondly, the Inland Revenue also allows us to claim for cash put in the collection up to £8000 for each Mass centre. This means that almost "All" the money put into the collection at St Joseph's, St Bernadette's and Most Holy Trinity is boosted by 25% through Gift Aid.

If you are a parishioner, particularly if attending Mass at St Thomas's, changing the way you donate to the parish could have a big impact on our finances.

Using the Contactless Machine.

The first time you use the contactless machine in St Thomas's Entrance it will ask you to register for Gift Aid. After that, every time you use contactless (for the first or second collections) your contribution is automatically increased by 25%. I pick up the Gift Aid registration electronically.

If you prefer to set up a standing order or make donations online please complete and sign the Gift Aid Declaration

If you are currently not registered for Gift Aid, are a tax payer and would like to Gift Aid, please complete the Gift Aid form. You only need to do it once. Do it now and put it in the second collection plate as you leave.

Standing Order

Once registered for Gift Aid, if you also want to set up a Standing Order you can do that online on the Parish website, or complete a Standing Order form and put it through the Presbytery door. I'll do the rest. Standing Orders are now the single most important way parishioners support the parish.

For parishioners who use the weekly envelopes.

Your boxes of weekly envelopes are now ready to be collected at the back of church. Please take your box home.

For parishioners who makes standing orders.

A small bundle of Second Collection and special collection envelopes are now ready to be collected at the back of church. Each bundle is in an envelope with your name on. Please find your envelope and take it

To all parishioners

Inflation has been a lot higher this year than over the last decade: if you can please review the amount you give.

Mea Culpa in advance

With four churches in the Parish, I try to make sure that the correct box or bundle goes to the right place. It's more of an art than a science. I have a long list which I keep and update each year where I have made a mistake in the past. So, if I get it wrong, please let me know and email me at sevenoaksgac@rcaos.org.uk or ring me on 07771 945321. I'll sort it out and get your envelopes to you.

Sean Corrigan

MASS INTENTIONS

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

SUNDAY 26th March *FIFTH SUNDAY of LENT*

6:00pm (Sat)	Patsy Savage RIP & the wellbeing of her family Philip, wee Philip and Stacy
8:00am (Latin)	People of the Parish
9:15am	John Gibson RIP
11:15am	L.R.L Edwards RIP (anniversary) In thanksgiving
6:00pm	Jake - that he will be Baptized
9:30am <i>Oxford</i>	Sarah Boyle RIP
9:30am <i>Borough Green</i>	Nigel Jenkins RIP
11:00am <i>West Kingsdown</i>	Parish Priests

Monday 27th *Feria*

8:00am	Good intentions of the donor's family
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Tuesday 28th *Feria*

9:30am	John Gibson RIP
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Wednesday 29th *Feria*

8:00am	Peter Black RIP (anniversary)
10:00am <i>Oxford</i>	James and Carmela Gibson RIP

Thursday 30th *Feria*

10:00am <i>Borough Green</i>	Good health for John Dunkin and improvement in his health
12:00noon	James & Carmela Gibson RIP

Friday 31st *Feria*

8:00am	James & Carmela Gibson RIP
10:00am <i>West Kingsdown</i>	James & Carmela Gibson RIP

Saturday 1st April *Feria*

9:30am	Joseph & Josephine Brown RIP
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SUNDAY 2nd April *PALM SUNDAY of the PASSION of the LORD*

6:00pm (Sat)	People of the Parish
8:00am (Latin)	Fr James Hurley RIP
9:15am	For continued fruits of the recent Parish Women's Retreat at Aylesford Priory
11:15am	Iven Jones RIP
6:00pm	Fr James Hurley RIP
9:30am <i>Oxford</i>	Wellbeing of Dawid & Magda (birthday)
9:30am <i>Borough Green</i>	Izabella's parents RIP
11:00am <i>West Kingsdown</i>	Peace in the World

FOR YOUR PRAYERS

Recently Departed

John Berry
Josie Haynes

Departed anniversaries

Patrick Creagh, Hubert Cramer,
Josephine Adair, Pamela Coelho,
Mary Jeffreys, Herbert Boak,
Stanley Campbell, Mariano Lobo,
Elizabeth Pope, John Brennan,
Herbert Schwarz, Alice Mather,
Henry Hatfield, Ann Carrol, Ellen
Partington.

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

The sick

Angela Brunning, Tony Barrett,
Frank Eastbrooke, Lynne
Stanley, Veronica Williams,
Yvonne Bollen, Peter Ringham,
Ann Steven, Lilian Spragg, Jane
Tabor, Ken Holmes, Mary & Chris
Scott, Sean Cloke, Ann Farren
and all in care and
nursing homes in the Parish.

For those preparing for the Sacraments

LATIN ANTIPHONS

Entrance

Iudica me, Deus, et discerne
causam meam de gente non
sancta; ab homine iniquo et
doloso eripe me, quia tu es
Deus meus et fortitudo mea.

Communion

Omnis qui vivit et credit in
me, non morietur in aeternum,
dicit Dominus.