

St Thomas of Canterbury

Archdiocese of Southwark CIO

Registered Incorporated Charity Number 1173050



Parish Priest: Canon Brian Coyle

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17 December 2023 3rd Sunday of Advent (B)

Sat 16	Feria of Advent
4.45-5.15pm	Confessions
5.30pm	Mgr Brendan Devlin RIP
Sun 17	Third Sunday of Advent (B)
	Gaudete Sunday
9am	People of the Parish
11am	Michael Connolly RIP
<i>Refreshments after both Masses in the Becket Centre – All welcome.</i>	
Mon 18	Feria of Advent
12noon	Chris Cheffins RIP
Tues 19	Feria of Advent
9.30am	Sr Rose McDermott RIP
11am	Rosary – Sacred Heart Chapel
Wed 20	Feria of Advent
	No Mass today
Thurs 21	Feria of Advent
12noon	Fr David Maher RIP
Fri 22	Feria of Advent
12noon	Deacon Kevin Dunne RIP
6-6.30pm	Adoration & Advent Reflection
Sat 23	Feria of Advent
11-12	Confessions
4.45-5.15	Confessions
5.30pm	Aubrey & Hilda Watkins RIP
Sun 24	4th Sunday of Advent (B)
	Day of Prayer for Expectant Mothers
10am	Bill Dix RIP
	No refreshments today
	CHRISTMAS EVE
5.30pm	Wellbeing of Julie Barwise
9.30pm	Carols before ...
10pm	MASS DURING THE NIGHT
	People of the Parish
Mon 25	THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD
	CHRISTMAS DAY
11am	Tony, Mary & William Ashman RIP

THE WORD OF GOD: 3rd Sunday of Advent (B), p25

1st Reading: Isaiah 61:1-2.10-11

Resp Ps (Luke 1): My soul rejoices in my God.

2nd Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

ALLELUIA, ALLELUIA! The Spirit of the Lord has been given to me. He has sent me to bring good news to the poor ALLELUIA!

GOSPEL: John 1:6-8.19-28

Pope Francis' Prayer Intention for December: For people with disabilities We pray that people living with disabilities may be at the centre of society's attention, and that institutions may offer inclusive programmes which value their active participation.

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Denis Lawrenson, who died on 6 December. Please also pray for Ruth, his wife, and their children, Stephen and David. The Funeral Mass is on 2 January 2024 at 11am, followed by Barham Crematorium at 12.40pm.

Sick & housebound parishioners: please keep in your prayers all who are sick and housebound and all who have requested our prayers, especially Graham Edwards, Eve Morris, Paul Dale, John Patrick McDermott & Deacon Andrew Bishop. Please continue to pray for the good health of Pope Francis.

The weekly newsletter is on our website:

[Newsletters St Thomas of Canterbury Deal](https://stthomasdeal.org/Newsletters%20St%20Thomas%20of%20Canterbury%20Deal)
(stthomasdeal.org)

Parish News

Congratulations to Alfred Harvey Kenton baptised into the faith of the Church last Sunday, and to Samantha and Harry, his parents, Rosanna, his sister, his godparents and wider family.

Fr Noah of Missio has written to thank the parish for the warm welcome he received. The collection came to **£1400!** Thank you all for your generosity.

St Edmund's School, Dover: congratulations to **Lynda Sutton, Clare Watson & Paula Kerr** who earned both the Dover Pastoral Care Award and the overall title of Kent Pastoral Care Champions for 2023 at the 2023 *Kent Mental Wellbeing Awards*.

Hosanna House and Children's Pilgrimage Trust

HCPT is a registered charity offering pilgrimage holidays, to [Lourdes](#) in the south of France, for disabled and disadvantaged people from [around the UK](#) and further afield. The letters "HCPT" stand for the Hosanna House and Children's Pilgrimage Trust. Every [Easter](#) around 1,000 disabled and disadvantaged children enjoy a fun and safe week in Lourdes, staying in hotels with their volunteer helpers. *Parishioners Lucy & Jamie Rees are part of a local HCPT group travelling to Lourdes at Easter 2024. They need to raise funds to support this great work. HCPT 2023 Christmas Raffle tickets are on sale after 9am Mass this weekend (Monica Russell) and after all Masses on 30/31 December. 1st prize £4,000, 2nd*

£1000, 3rd £750. Tickets £1 each (£10 a book). All proceeds go directly to HCPT. The draw closes on 5 January.



Register with the parish [Register with The Parish \(stthomasdeal.org\)](http://stthomasdeal.org) Our Parish Register needs continually updating to ensure that it is reliable and current. Whether you are new to the parish or have been here for many years you are now kindly asked to register your details on our new database, powered by ChurchSuite. The information you give will help us to support you and the parish as a whole, as well as maintaining an ongoing census of St Thomas' Parish. Thank you for co-operation and for those who have already shared their information with us.

Deal Area foodbank: Items currently needed are Squash, UHT milk, ketchup, biscuits, tinned vegetables, custard, curry sauce. Very many thanks.

First Reconciliation & First Holy Communion 2024: we hope to have a parents' meeting in the early new year – the date to be announced in the near future. It is crucial that parents, as the first educators of their children, are at the forefront of the preparation of their children for the sacraments.

Junior Church (Children's Liturgy) It is important that parents accompany their children during Junior Church. Please encourage families with young children to join us at the 9am Mass. **All children are warmly invited to come to the 5.30pm Mass on Christmas Eve dressed as Nativity characters (Mary, Joseph, Shepherd, Angel etc) for the Blessing of the Crib and the placing of the Child Jesus in the crib.** Junior Church takes a break until 7 January 2024. Many thanks to all.

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS 2023 AT ST THOMAS'
Sunday 17 December opens the second phase of the Advent season when our focus shifts to the birth of the Christ child in Bethlehem. **Today is Gaudete Sunday** when we **REJOICE** that the Lord is near. The rose candle on the Advent wreath is lit. **The church Christmas Tree** is blessed at all Masses and the lights turned on. The **Crib** is in the Lady Chapel and blessed at evening & night Masses on Christmas Eve. The Crib collection this year is shared between Southwark Catholic Children's Society and Friends of the Holy Land.

Collection for Christmas decorations and flowers: there is a collection basket at the rear of the church to help cover the costs of Christmas decorations. Many thanks for your generosity.

Parish Advent Synod Meeting: we will soon celebrate the Incarnation / the Feast of the Nativity – the Word became flesh for us. We want the Word of God to be decisive in our lives. In the early new year, we will publish a report on our October and December

2023 parish synod meetings. Let us pray this Advent/Christmas for a deep receptivity to the Word of God in our lives.

CHRISTMAS WEEKEND MASS TIMES are given on the list overleaf of Masses and intentions. PLEASE NOTE TIMES OF MASSES.

CHRISTMAS LUNCH on St Thomas' Day, Friday 29 December at 12.45pm, following Mass at 12noon.

DEAL WARM WELCOME Churches and Community Groups offer warmth, refreshment and friendship during these cold months to all. Full details of times and places in the porch.

The Christmas Offering 2023 Priests in our diocese do not receive an annual salary. The weekly collection is for parish purposes and does not go to fr Brian. Fr Brian's parish income comes from the Christmas & Easter offerings and stipends for Masses, Baptisms & Funerals. Of all these, the offertory collections taken during the Christmas Masses are usually the largest single amount. Please note that your December Standing Orders do not go to fr Brian, so unless you make a specific payment at Christmas he will not benefit. There are several ways you can make a Christmas Offering: • By cash/cheque (cheques should be made payable to 'Deal RCAS': please place your contribution in a **Christmas Offering envelope** (available at the back of the church), including your name and address if you wish to Gift Aid. The envelope can be dropped in to the offertory basket at Mass or posted through the presbytery door. Gift Aid envelope users can use their numbered 'Christmas Offering' envelope. • By bank transfer to NatWest: Account Name: RCAS Deal Account No: 09658378 Sort Code: 52-30-23 **Reference: Christmas Offering**

Diocesan, National & International News

CAFOD, the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development, has launched an **Israeli-Palestinian CRISIS APPEAL**. Donate online at cafod.org.uk/ipc or call 0303 303 3030 or scan the QR code in the porch. A GIFT TODAY will provide essentials like FOOD, WATER and BLANKETS.

A Prayer for Peace & Justice

O God of peace, who are peace itself, and whom a spirit of discord cannot grasp, nor a violent mind receive, grant that those who are one in heart may persevere in what is good and that those in conflict may forget evil and so be healed. Amen.

Part of the blessing of the Christmas tree contains these words: **Let your blessing come upon us as we illumine this tree. May the light and cheer it gives be a sign of the joy which fills our hearts. May all who delight in this tree come to the knowledge and joy of salvation.** A restful holiday and thanks to all our school communities. A blessed Advent (a week left!) and a blessed week! fr Brian

