

St Thomas of Canterbury

Archdiocese of Southwark CIO

Registered Incorporated Charity Number 1173050



Parish Priest: Canon Brian Coyle

14 Blenheim Road, Deal, Kent CT14 7DB

01304 367496

Email: deal@rcaos.org.uk

Website: <https://stthomasdeal.org/>

Parish Safeguarding Rep: James Walmsley

dealsg1@safeguardrcaos.org.uk

25 February 2024 **2nd Sunday of Lent (B)**

Sat 24 Feria of Lent

4.45-5.15pm Confessions

5.30pm Christina Middleton RIP (1st anniversary)

Sun 25 2nd Sunday of Lent (B)

2nd collection – CAFOD Family Fast Day

9am Deceased members of the Ryan-Seed Family

11am People of the Parish

Refreshments after both Masses in the Becket Centre –

All welcome

Mon 26 Feria of Lent

12noon Intentions of Alison Mulholland & Family

**Tues 27 St Anne Line, Bl Mark Barkworth,
Bl Roger Filcock**

9.30am In honour of the above Saint & Blesseds

11am Stations of the Cross – Sacred Heart Chapel

Wed 28 Feria of Lent – No Mass today

Thurs 29 Feria of Lent

12noon Joseph D'Cruze RIP, Fr Philip McGuinness

RIP, Fr Robert Jones RIP, Housekeeper Rose RIP

Fri 1 March St David, Patron of Wales, Feast

12noon Fr Patrick Moloney RIP,

Deacon Charlie Bianco RIP

7pm Stations of the Cross – St Thomas'

Sat 2 Feria of Lent

4.45-5.15pm Confessions

5.30pm Brian Middleton RIP

Sun 3 3rd Sunday of Lent (B)

9am Silvio Valente RIP (1st anniversary)

Emilio Valente RIP

11am People of the Parish

Refreshments after both Masses in the Becket Centre –

All welcome

THE WORD OF GOD: 2nd Sunday of Lent (B), p145

1st Reading: Genesis 22:1-2.9-13.15-18

Response Ps 115: I will walk in the presence of the Lord in the land of the living.

2nd Reading: Romans 8:31-34

PRAISE TO YOU, O CHRIST, KING OF ETERNAL GLORY! From the bright cloud the Father's voice was heard: *This is my Son, the Beloved. Listen to him!*

PRAISE TO YOU, O CHRIST, KING OF ETERNAL GLORY!

GOSPEL: Mark 9:2-10

Pope Francis' Prayer Intention for February: For the terminally ill – We pray for the sick who are in the final stages of life, and for their families; may they always receive the necessary medical and human care, and the accompaniment they need.

Parish News

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Elizabeth Tobin and for her family. Elizabeth's Funeral Mass is here on Monday, 4 March, followed by burial in Hamilton Road cemetery. Elizabeth died at Shottendane Nursing Home in Margate and had lived at Selway Court, off Cowdray Square in Deal.

Sick & housebound parishioners: please keep in your prayers all who are sick and housebound and all who have requested our prayers: June Bartels, Bernadette Baugh, Bernadette Hunter, Andrew Lock, Pauline Farmer, Josie O'Keefe, Graham Edwards, Maureen Sipek & Paul Dale. Please continue to pray for the good health of Pope Francis and HM The King.

The weekly newsletter is on our website:

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

First Reconciliation (Confession) & First Holy Communion 2024: thank you to those who have emailed the parish. A meeting will be held in the near future to arrange details.

Many thanks for £300 – 2nd collection last weekend for the Clergy Support Fund. This weekend there is a 2nd collection for **Cafod Family Fast Day**. Envelopes still available in the porch.

Register with The Parish (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. Your information will only be accessed by authorised parish office staff for administrative purposes. Thank you for co-operation and for those who have already shared their information with us.

The Parish Flower Team invites Flower Assistants to join the Team. This is to ensure that there is always a minimum of two people in church for the flowers. The Assistant is not responsible for the flower arranging. Please contact Margaret Andrews on 10304 379121.

Mobile phones in church: you are kindly requested to switch off phones in church. If it is absolutely necessary to have access to your phone, please ensure your phone is on silent. Thank you for your understanding.

Deal and Walmer Handelians are putting on a ***Come and Sing Handel's Messiah*** at St George's Church on Saturday 2nd March at 7.30. Those unfamiliar with the work will recognise many of the texts set from readings from the Christmas and Easter seasons. There is a poster in the church porch.

Deal Area foodbank: [Deal Area Foodbank | Helping Local People in Crisis](#) The items currently needed are long-life fruit juice, UHT milk, packet sauces, ketchup, biscuits, tinned vegetables, tinned fruits, custard and tinned soups. **With very many thanks.**

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.

Lent in the Parish

Praying the Gospel of Mark during Lent: based on ***Meeting God in Mark*** by Rowan Williams (SPCK). Individually, we can pray a few verses each day.

Here is Week 3: Monday to 3rd Sunday of Lent – Mon: Mk 5:1-20; Tues: Mk 5:21-43; Wed: Mk 6:1-13; Thurs: Mk 6:14-29; Fri: 6:30-56; Sat: Mk 7:1-23. The following Reflection is given for the 3rd Sunday of Lent: Reactions to Jesus (and similarly, John, in the middle of chapter 6) vary widely, from awe and enthusiasm to contempt and violent rejection. ***What distinctions do you see between those who are eager to see, hear and touch these holy men and those who condemn them? We all like to think we would have embraced Jesus enthusiastically and looked to him for wisdom and healing, but might we have been among his opponents? What do you have in common with those who embraced Jesus, and what do you have in common with those who rejected him?***

God, grant me the humility to see my own privilege. Let me see Jesus' challenge as a gift and not a threat. Amen.

The Big Lent Walk: more sponsor forms are available in the porch. The aim is to complete 200km during Lent. All proceeds go to Cafod. Fr Brian has so far completed 50km since Ash Wednesday.

Lent Penitential Service at St John's, St Richard's Road, Monday of Holy Week, 25 March at 7pm. The Advent Penitential Service was at St Thomas' and Fr Matthew and parishioners from St John's joined us. They now invite us to join them for the Lent service.

Diocesan, National & International News

Father Andrew Bishop – congratulations to Fr Andrew Bishop on his priestly ordination. Let us pray for him and for vocations.

Caritas Southwark celebrates its **1 Year Anniversary on 16 March 2024**. The event will begin with a Mass at St George's Cathedral at 12.30pm with Archbishop John Wilson and continues thereafter at the Amigo Hall with Talks and Discussions on the "Journey so far" and the "Way forward".

Catholic Association Pilgrimage to Lourdes, including Southwark: 23-30 August 2024. Register your interest: www.catholicassociation.co.uk **Ask anything** (from pilgrims on Zoom): 16 March 2024 11am: www.catholicassociation.co.uk/askanything

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.

Synod – Moving Forward

As mentioned last week, we are moving forward with our synod process. At the heart of our meetings before Christmas was prayer, centred on the Word of God. We began to discern where we felt the Holy Spirit was calling us, as a parish. There were three main areas which emerged:

- Being a parish community, which welcomes and cares
- Being a parish community, which prays & worships
- Being a parish community, which reaches out

There is now a fuller synthesis of the previous two sessions on the website – attached to the newsletter for 25 February 2024 (and hard copies are available at the back of church this week).

Our next step is to move from discernment to action. What will we actually do? Whatever we do as a parish needs to be achievable. Our parish and Christian life should not be burdensome. Rather, it should be life giving. So, our next session will seek to identify one or two concrete things in each of the areas we can do, which will give life and hope. We'll also ask how we can move this forward, considering the practical need of getting organised as we grow and develop as a parish community.

Our next Parish Synod Gatherings are on Monday 4 March (7-9pm) or Saturday 9 March (10am-12noon)

We know that not everyone will be able or will wish to be involved with meetings. That is understandable and those who attend are no more important than anyone else. We are simply trying to identify ways to move forward as a parish community which will be lifegiving to our parish and hopefully to our local community in Deal, too. (If you are unlikely to come to the meeting, please feel free to drop a note to the presbytery, or an email, with any thoughts about the three areas.)

Today, the 2nd Sunday of Lent, we hear the Gospel of the Transfiguration in Mark. A voice comes from the cloud: *This is my Son, the Beloved. Listen to him.* Let us listen! A blessed and holy week, Fr Brian

Journeying Together in Deal

During October we hosted two Synod meetings in the parish, with a further meeting on 2nd December to consider our parish priorities for 2024. We shared our faith together, beginning with the Word of God, and then using the 'Conversation in the Spirit' method of discernment. This way of sharing encourages everyone to discern the presence of the Holy Spirit within the conversation. This is a short overview of the fruits of these meetings.

October Gatherings

We shared on the Sunday Gospel, considering the commandment of Jesus to love God and love neighbour. We then had 'conversations in the Spirit' on the following questions:

- **How do you experience the Church community journeying together? (When does this bring joy? When might it bring pain or sadness?)**
- **What might the Holy Spirit be inviting us to do, in our steps to become a parish community 'journeying together' in Deal?**

The sharing from each group helped to distil the following areas which we felt the Holy Spirit was inviting us to consider as a parish:

- Building our Parish Community
- Listening & Sharing our faith together
- Centrality of the Eucharist
- Prayer
- Engaging with young people
- Outreach to the local community
- Relationships with other Christian denominations and other faiths

December Meeting

We reminded ourselves in December that the purpose of synodal meetings is "to inspire people to dream about the Church we are called to be, to make hopes flourish, to stimulate trust, to bind up wounds, to weave new and deeper relationships, to learn from one another, to build bridges, to enlighten minds, warm hearts and restore strength to our hands for our common mission." (Vatican Synod Document).

Again, we began by sharing faith centered on Scripture. We shared on the Sunday reading from St Paul, reflecting on the gifts of the Spirit which have been given to us, and our reliance on the steadfastness and faithfulness of God. This provided the foundation for us to continue our conversations in the Spirit and consider the fruits of the last meetings (above). We asked:

- **Reflecting on your own experience, how do the 'areas' above strike you?**
- **Are there other 'areas' of parish life we should be considering?**
- **What might the Holy Spirit be saying to us today?**

Several common themes emerged. Prayer was seen as a unifying theme for many, with the importance of the parish as a praying community, both individually and collectively. Prayer will enable us to face the challenges of our times, and also to become a truly welcoming parish, where we see others as people first and foremost, transcending any difficulties or obstacles to being inclusive.

The theme of welcome was shared by many others. Some people shared that there has been hurt in the parish in recent years, and have not felt welcome, and that that hurt will take time to heal. The Eucharist remains the centre – the source and the summit – and hence our source of strength and means of healing and unity.

Several groups spoke of the Indian community now visible in Deal and within our worshipping community. How are we welcoming them, and how are we celebrating and promoting the participation of the riches they will bring to the parish?

There is currently an exciting feeling of renewal in the Parish, partly inspired by this synodal process, and there is hope that something is happening. Meeting and sharing will be a source of healing of remaining hurt in the parish.

In fact, the experience of meeting, listening, sharing and praying was appreciated by a large proportion of those present, and there was a strong desire to continue. One group described it as a sign of 'blossoming' and that we are on the right track and should keep going, grasping the opportune moment which we have as a parish.

They felt that we can rely on God's faithfulness to enable us to be steadfast in our commitment to all the areas of parish life we are discerning. Prayer and liturgy will be central, but so will our response to the Christian call to 'service' to the wider community.

This links to the sharing of one group who spoke about evangelizing from within the parish, as a foundation for reaching out. We need to be a prayerful community, building up the body of the parish (and in dialogue and relationship with other Christians and other faiths), so we can spread outwards to others, including our own loved ones who may not be practicing.

We then committed to develop concrete ideas for moving forward. We shared together on the following:

- **What are the dreams/possibilities for you individually, and for the parish?**
- **In what ways has the Lord enriched us, individually and as a parish, to help develop these dreams?**
- **Are there any specific things which the Spirit might be inviting us to do, in our steps to develop our parish life?**

The sharing which followed pointed towards a common discernment in the Spirit. We felt the Holy Spirit was inviting us to continue the listening, sharing and discerning, and to building on the fruits in three main areas:

A parish community which welcomes and cares

- Keeping the scripture sharing and synodal meetings going as a means of developing community
- Those who attend these synod meetings are no more holy than others! We recognise people are busy, and that some people will choose to engage with parish life in other ways.
- Looking after one another – as a sign to others of our love. Service through action– and a willingness to be available to the parish community (driving, cooking etc.)
- Using our buildings well, to build community
- Developing good communication with one another

A parish community which prays & worships:

- Prayer groups
- Spiritual book library
- Formation on the Mass
- Initiatives to enrich the Mass going community – e.g. An 'everyone brings someone' Sunday.

A parish community which reaches out:

- Developing activities to have a greater presence in Deal
- Reestablishing the SVP
- Church open more often
- Warm buildings to welcome people – will require money and commitment (time, treasure, talent).