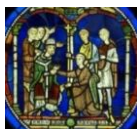


St Thomas of Canterbury

Archdiocese of Southwark CIO

Registered Incorporated Charity Number 1173050



Parish Priest: Canon Brian Coyle

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Parish Office hours: Thurs & Fri 9.30 – 12noon

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This newsletter covers two weeks

4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT (A), 21 December 2025

Sat 20 Feria of Advent–O Clavis David (Key of David)

4.45-5.15pm Confessions

5.30pm People of the Parish – Fr Francis Parkinson RIP

Sun 21 4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT (A)

O Oriens (Dawn of the East)

9am Kate, Sidney, Noel & Colin Sturla RIP

11am Stanley Kent RIP (MB)

Refreshments after both Masses in the Becket Centre – all welcome

Mon 22 Feria of Advent – O Rex (O King)

9.30am Jean Ellis RIP (SD)

Tues 23 Feria of Advent – O Emmanuel

9.30am Thanksgiving (MMS)

Wednesday 24 December Christmas Eve:

5.30pm Vigil Mass: Julie Barwise RIP

9.30pm Carols

10pm Night Mass: All who care for those in need

PLEASE NOTE: No Midnight Mass

Thursday 25 December CHRISTMAS DAY

Mass at 11am: People of the Parish, especially those who are ill and housebound

Fri 26 St Stephen, Deacon, the first martyr

12noon Jean Ellis RIP (SLW)

Sat 27 St John, Apostle & Evangelist

4.45-5.15pm Confessions

5.30pm Dr Marc Feeney RIP

Sun 28 The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph (A)

9am People of the Parish

11am Ernest & Moira Lock RIP

Refreshments after both Masses in the Becket Centre – all welcome

Mon 29 St Thomas of Canterbury, Bishop & Martyr

140th anniversary of our parish church

12noon Parishioners Past & Present

12.45pm Christmas lunch – Becket Centre

Tues 30 Sixth Day in the Octave of the Nativity

12noon Thomas and Eileen Dobbyn RIP

Wed 31 Seventh Day in the Octave of the Nativity

12noon Bernadette McCoy RIP

Thurs 1 Jan Mary, the Holy Mother of God

12noon Peace

Fri 2 Sts Basil the Great & Gregory Nazianzen

12noon Terry Murphy RIP

Sat 3 Feria of Christmas

4.45-5.15pm Confessions

5.30pm Jean Ellis RIP

Sun 4 2nd Sunday after the Nativity (A)

9am Maxime Gibbons RIP

11am People of the Parish

Refreshments after both Masses in the Becket Centre – all welcome

4th Sunday of Advent (A), p13

1st reading: Isaiah 7:10-14

Response Ps 24: Let the LORD enter; he is the king of glory.

2nd Reading: Romans 1:1-7

ALLELUIA, ALLELUIA. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they will call his name Emmanuel – which means, God with us. ALLELUIA!

GOSPEL: Matthew 1:18-24

CHRISTMAS EVE: 5.30pm & 10pm, p53

1st reading: Isaiah 9:2-7

Response Ps 96: Today a Saviour has been born to us; who is Christ the Lord.

2nd Reading: Titus 2:11-14

ALLELUIA, ALLELUIA! I bring you good news of great joy: for unto us is born this day a Saviour, Christ the Lord. ALLELUIA!

GOSPEL: Luke 2:1-14

CHRISTMAS MASS DURING THE DAY, p60

1st reading: Isaiah 52:7-10

Response Ps 98: All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

2nd Reading: Hebrews 1:1-6

ALLELUIA, ALLELUIA! A hallowed day has shone upon us. Come, O nations, and adore the Lord; for today a great light has come down to earth. ALLELUIA!

GOSPEL: John 1:1-18

THE HOLY FAMILY (A), p65

1st reading: Sirach 3:2-6.12-14

Response Ps 128: Blessed are all who fear the LORD, and walk in his ways.

2nd Reading: Colossians 3:12-21

ALLELUIA, ALLELUIA! Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts; let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.

ALLELUIA!

GOSPEL: Matthew 2:13-15.19-23

Pope Leo's Prayer Intention for December 2025, for Christians in areas of conflict: Let us pray for Christians living in areas of war or conflict, especially in the Middle East, to be seeds of peace, reconciliation and hope.

Parish News

CHRISTMAS 2025 at ST THOMAS' A warm welcome to all returning to Deal for Christmas and the New Year and to all visitors. You are all very welcome and thank you for joining us to celebrate the great feast of the Nativity.

Please pray for the repose of the souls of Frans Nitzsche, Gerard McQuillan and Peter Logue. The Funeral Mass for Frans was here on 15 December at

10.30am. Please also pray for Corry, his wife, and for their family. The Funeral Mass for Gerard is here on Friday 9 January 2026 at 2.30pm, followed by Barham Crematorium at 4pm. Please keep his family in your prayers. **Our prayers also asked for Sr Mary Stanislaus and Sr Edith, Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions, who have died.** Their Funeral Mass is in Sturry on 7 January 2026, followed immediately by burial in Deal Cemetery.

Sick & housebound parishioners: Please keep in your prayers all who are sick and housebound, all who care for them, and all who have requested our prayers: Mary Collins, Mike Sykes, June Bartels, Josie O'Keeffe, Graham Edwards, Maureen Sipek and Paul Dale. Please continue to pray for the good health of HM The King.

The Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill is now in the **House of Lords** for scrutiny. **The Catholic Union** has [21 suggested points](#) 'to put in your own words in letters to your local newspaper, or newsletters of organisations which you belong to' or to our local MP: mike.tapp.mp@parliament.uk

There is very helpful guidance on writing to a Peer on our Bishops' website: [How to write to Peers in the House of Lords - Catholic Bishops' Conference](#)

Children's Liturgy: all children are warmly invited to come to the 5.30pm Mass on Christmas Eve dressed as Nativity characters (Mary, Joseph, Shepherd, Angel, or donkey) for the Blessing of the Crib and the placing of the Child Jesus in the crib. Children's Liturgy takes place today (21 Dec.) and will take a break on 28 December and 4 January 2026. It will resume at the 9am Mass on Sunday 11 January 2026.

A big thank you to the Children's Liturgy Team for their work and dedication.

The Crib (in the Lady Chapel), is blessed at the 5.30pm and 10pm Masses on Christmas Eve. The Crib will stay in place until the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord on 2 February 2025. The Crib collection is shared between the FRIENDS OF THE HOLY LAND & THE CATHOLIC CHILDREN'S SOCIETY SOUTHWARK CRISIS FUND. Please take a moment after Mass to pray at the Crib for peace and the protection of all human life, especially the most vulnerable in our world.

St Thomas of Canterbury (martyred 1170) is the patron saint of our church and parish. **This year marks the 140th anniversary of the building of the church in 1885.** Mass will be celebrated at 12noon on Monday 29 December – the feast day of St Thomas of Canterbury – followed by the Christmas lunch in the Becket Centre. The 140th anniversary is a time to give thanks to God for all God's blessings on our parish, to give thanks to God for past parishioners for their faith and commitment, and to recommit ourselves to the building up of God's Kingdom on earth in our worship, our parish community life, in our homes and schools, and in our outreach locally and further afield.

Deal Area foodbank requests: Tinned meats, mince, corned beef or ham, fruit squash, cooking oil, shampoo and conditioner, deodorant, custard, tinned vegetables, tinned fruit and sponge puddings. Very many thanks.

Archbishop John Wilson's Christmas Message 2025

The Archbishop says, *The beautiful truth of Christmas is that because of God in Christ we are never lost. God chose to be near us, to stay close to us always, to draw us to himself, always. In his endless mercy, the Lord Jesus chose to love us, so we could know and believe that "God is love" (1 John 4:16). In turn, all the Lord Jesus asks of us is to not be afraid and to say yes to him, to draw close to him, to love him.* The full message is available here:

[Christmas means God in Christ Jesus loves you:](#)
[Archdiocese of Southwark](#)

The Christmas Offering 2025 Priests in our diocese do not receive an annual salary. Fr Brian's parish income comes from the Christmas & Easter offerings and stipends for Masses, Baptisms & Funerals. Of all these, the collection taken at Christmas is usually the largest single amount. 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: [1] By cash/cheque (cheques should be made payable to 'RCAS Deal': 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 Gift Aid goes to the parish and not to Fr Brian. The envelope can be dropped in to the offertory basket at Mass or posted through the presbytery door. [2] By using the card machine in the church. [3] By using the DONATE button on our website. [4] By bank transfer to NatWest: Account Name: RCAS Deal Account No: 09658378 Sort Code: 52-30-23 Reference: Christmas Offering

AID TO THE CHURCH IN NEED, a Catholic charity, needs your help in supporting those suffering in Gaza and the Holy Land. You can donate via: www.acnuk.org/holyland-donate or call 0345 646 0110 (quote Holy Land).

Sudan: the situation is very grave for so many people. If you are able to donate to help, please go to: cafod.org.uk/give/donate-to-emergencies/sudan-crisis

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.



Thank you to so many who are working so hard to ensure we celebrate the Birth of Christ with faith, hope and joy. We are all very grateful.

And so, at the birth of our Lord the angels sing in joy: Glory to God in the highest ... peace to people of good will as they see the heavenly Jerusalem being built from all the nations of the world. Christian, remember your dignity ... now that you share in God's own nature (from the Christmas sermon of Pope St Leo the Great, Pope 440-461).

A very holy and happy Christmas to all – Fr Brian.

