

St Thomas of Canterbury

Archdiocese of Southwark CIO

Registered Incorporated Charity Number 1173050



Parish Priest: Canon Brian Coyle
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Parish Safeguarding Reps:

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2nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT (A), 7 December 2025

Sat 6 St Nicholas, Bishop

4.45-5.15pm Confessions

5.30pm People of the Parish

Sun 7 2nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT (A)

2nd collection for the Forward Trust

9am Mary Mannings RIP

11am Intentions of Nick Middleton (90th birthday)

Refreshments after both Masses in the Becket Centre – all welcome

Mon 8 Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary Principal Patron of our diocese

12noon Bridget & Patrick Connolly RIP
Wellbeing of Irma Wood

7-8pm Forward Trust Information Evening Becket Centre

Tues 9 Sts John Roberts & Companions, Martyrs

9.30am John Povey RIP

11am Rosary – Sacred Heart Chapel

11am Deanery Meeting – Becket Centre

Wed 10 Our Lady of Loreto – No Mass today

6.50pm Advent Course 3 – Golf Road Comm Centre

Thurs 11 Funeral Mass

1.15pm Jean Ellis RIP

3pm Barham Crematorium

Fri 12 Our Lady of Guadalupe

12noon Thanksgiving (RG)

Sat 13 St Lucy, Virgin

4.45-5.15pm Confessions

5.30pm Thanksgiving (PH)

Sun 14 3rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT (A)

Gaudete Sunday

9am Maura Griffin RIP

11am People of the Parish – Fr Michael Gwinnell RIP

Refreshments after both Masses in the Becket Centre – all welcome

2nd Sunday of Advent (A), p5

1st reading: Isaiah 11:1-10

Response Ps 72: In his days justice shall flourish, and great peace for ever.

2nd Reading: Romans 15:4-9

ALLELUIA, ALLELUIA. Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his path straight; all flesh shall see the salvation
of God. ALLELUIA!

GOSPEL: Matthew 3:1-12

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

Please pray for the repose of the souls of Frans Nitzsche and Jean Ellis. The Funeral Mass for Frans is here on Monday 15 December at 10.30am, followed by burial in Rye, East Sussex. Please also pray for Corry, his wife, and for their family. The Funeral Mass for Jean is here on Thursday 11 December at 1.15pm, followed by Barham Crematorium at 3pm. Please also pray for Sue, her daughter, and the wider family.

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.

Congratulations to Nick Middleton who celebrates his 90th birthday this weekend.

Please pray for Irma Wood, granddaughter of Denise Wood, who is undergoing major surgery in France on 8 December. Irma was severely injured in a car accident a year ago. Irma is in her mid 20s. May Our Lady be with Irma on 8 December.

This weekend 6/7 December 2025: Diana from the **Forward Trust** will give a short talk at the end of all the weekend Masses about the work of the Trust. There will be a 2nd collection for its work. The **Forward Trust** helps many with addiction, mental health issues, homelessness and helping people gain employment. It is a non-denominational organisation and extends its outreach to anyone and everyone. Darren and Louise will also be available for an **Information Evening on Monday 8 December 2025 between 7-8pm in the Becket Centre** if you would like to discuss something in confidence or gain more information about the Forward Trust.

Tuesday Rosary at Sacred Heart Chapel: this Tuesday 9 December at 11am is the last meeting of the Rosary Group until Tuesday 13 January 2026. Many thanks to Jim Davenport and to all members of the Rosary Group for this important prayer ministry in our parish.

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](#)

CHRISTMAS LUNCH: St Thomas' Day, Monday 29 December at 12:45pm, following Mass at 12noon. The lunch is primarily for our senior citizens and those who are by themselves over the Christmas period. We have room for 40 guests. There is no charge. Donations on the day to defray costs will be gratefully received. We need to know numbers asap. Volunteers needed to help with setting up, clearing up and serving lunch in the Becket Centre. Volunteers also needed for transport. Hugh Irvine has very kindly agreed to prepare the lunch and source the food. Please sign up now if you would like to attend as a guest or help as a volunteer, either using the sign-up sheet in the porch or via email: deal@rcaos.org.uk **Sunday 14 December is the final day to book or volunteer.**

Ben Bano is organising a pre Christmas collection for the hundreds of migrants who are stuck in Calais in appalling conditions as winter sets in. The items most needed are men's coats and jackets in good condition sizes small and medium. Toiletries also welcome, as well as sleeping bags. If you can help please contact Ben on **07887 651117** or email him on benbano@aol.com to arrange collection.

Red Missio Boxes are available for collection at the back of the church. Thank you to all who collect for the Missions in this way. **Missio 2026** calendars are also available for all parishioners at the back of the church.

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

ADVENT 2025

Advent reflection 3:

John the Baptist reminds us to look deep into our lives in search of the things which distract us from bringing peace and justice into the world. Repentance requires a shaking up of the regular, daily routine of how we choose to belong to God and to each other in harmony. The penitential nature of the Advent season engages our greater awareness; it draws us away from the regular and challenges us to risk making changes to our normal pattern of living. The changes we choose to make ought to lead us closer to the kingdom of God which Isaiah describes, a kingdom of peace where justice will flourish.

Sowing peace and justice into our hearts and into our world requires small changes or shifts in our daily routine. Repentance urges us to step out of ourselves

and into community, paying attention to the little details which we have overlooked, tending the blind spots, and sharpening our vision to see God's kingdom which is already here. **With John the Baptist's call to repent,** we discover an invitation to shift our hearts back to God and to reflect on what it means to do things a little differently (with thanks to *Living Liturgy* 2023).

Tuesday 16 December 2025: Advent Reconciliation Service with individual confessions at 7pm at St Thomas'. This is a joint service with Mongeham & Sandwich parish.

Advent Course: the second Advent Talk, a live-streamed presentation from Catholic speaker Mauro Iannicelli, was again well attended and received. The next meeting, using the same format, will take place between 6.50pm and 8pm on **Wednesday 10th December** at Golf Road Community Centre. Please come along to find out what great depth there is in Scripture and as support for our Advent journey. The Gospel reading will be that of the 3rd Sunday of Advent - **Matthew 11:2-11**. All are very welcome. For more information about Mauro and his ministry: www.comeandsee.org

CHRISTMAS 2025 - Mass times
Wednesday 24 December Christmas Eve: Masses at 5.30pm and 10pm (Carols at 9.30pm)
PLEASE NOTE: NO MIDNIGHT MASS
Thursday 25 December CHRISTMAS DAY
Mass at 11am

Monday 29 December, Solemnity of St Thomas of Canterbury Mass at 12noon, followed by Christmas lunch in the Becket Centre.

Deanery, Diocesan, National & International News

Fr John Panario, the parish priest of Our Lady of Dover, Buckland, steps down in January 2026 as Dean of the Dover Deanery. Fr John has been an excellent and caring Dean and the Deanery owes him a great debt of gratitude. His successor as Dean is **Fr Peter Iwuoha**, parish priest of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel, Hythe.

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.



Let us be alert this Advent to the coming of the Lord – at Christmas, at the end of time, at the moment of our death, and in the everyday experiences of our lives.

The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight (Matthew 3).



A blessed week, Fr Brian