

PRAY FOR THE SICK



Lately dead: Margaret Wright

Anniversaries:

Francis Keane, Maurice O'Sullivan, Martin Thomas, Lena Tyson, Eileen Christie, Ruth Comorford, Roger Higgins, Elizabeth Stoffel, Lucia Nie, Patricia Greene, Peter Jacques, Katherine Delaney, Martin Fuller, Joan Hayes, John Martin, Leslie Bond, Ethel Humphrey, Rita Marrai, Robert Taylor, John Fernandez, Peter Morgan

WHAT A HAPPY CHRISTMAS FAYRE

Thank you to all who came along and importantly to those who worked to enable our Christmas Fayre are to be congratulated on creating a wonderfully welcoming atmosphere where everyone was happy and were pleased to meet each other. The children were a bit shy at first but then they saw their friends and wondered off from their parents feeling perfectly safe. There was something for everyone plus meeting old friends and making new ones. At the end of an exhausting days work, the youthful 'Vinnies' arrived to help clear up and it was done quickly. Well done everyone.

Girl Guiding at St Thomas'

We are currently very fortunate as we have Brownies who meet on Tuesdays and Guides who meet on Fridays in term time. However without new leaders coming forward to help the units may not be able to continue. Could you be a future leader, could you help with admin or could you support the Leaders? To find out more pop along on a Tuesday or Friday and have a chat or email 15thbrownieswoodford@gmail.com

SUNDAY MASSES

1st Mass: 6pm Saturday;
8.30am; 10am & 11.30am Sunday
(The 11.30am Mass is recorded)



Join us for tea/coffee after
Sunday Mass in the Becket
Centre

10am Chigwell Convent

WEEKDAY MASSES

10am St Thomas'
9.30am Chigwell Convent except on
Saturday's when mass takes place at
10am

CONFESSIONS

Saturdays 10.30 to 11am
and
5.15 to 5.45 pm

BAPTISMS

1st and 3rd Sundays
of the month

Retiring collection

Thank your for your kind donation last
weekend of £1209.17 for BCCYS

**The St Thomas of Canterbury
Young Vinnies are collecting
Christmas gifts for the Salvation
Army and Orchard children's centre
for low-income families in
Woodford/Redbridge.**

If you would like to donate any gifts of
toys/baby products/toiletries please leave
at the parish office by Friday 6th
December (**ONLY NEW gifts please**)
Thank you

My Day by Day Advent guide 2024
is available at the back of the Church
for £1.00



ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY

Woodford Green

A FAIRTRADE PARISH

Parish Office: 020 8504 1686

Friary: 020 8504 1688

Email: parishoffice@stthomaswoodford.org



Website: www.stthomaswoodford.org

Facebook: @STOCWoodford

Twitter: @STOCWoodford



Served by the Franciscans

First Sunday of Advent (C) 1st December 2024

Please note the nearest Fire Exit to you whilst you are in the Church

We prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus at Christmas, and we prepare to greet him when he returns in glory. We wait, we watch and we pray.

First Reading Jeremiah 33:14-16

Jeremiah prophesies that the Messianic era is coming, and God will save the people of Israel.

Second Reading 1 Thessalonians 3:12-4:2

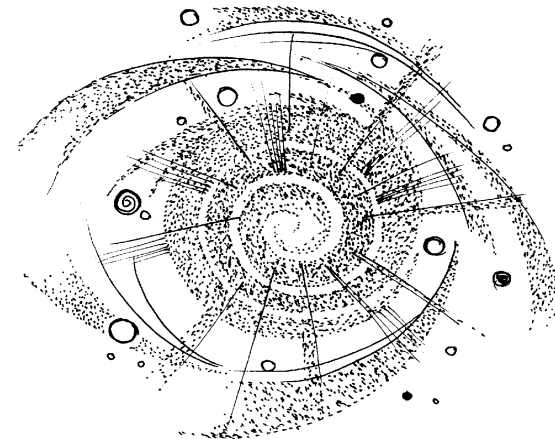
Paul encourages the Thessalonians to live ever more deeply the Good News they have received, remembering that his teaching comes from Jesus.

Gospel Luke 21:25-28, 34-36

Jesus tells the disciples that the cataclysmic end-times are a sign that the Son of Man brings liberation; they must be on their guard, pray, and be confident before him.

Responsorial Psalm

To you, O Lord, I lift me soul



LET US BE VIGILENT THIS ADVENT

The Gospel of today's liturgy, the First Sunday of Advent, speaks to us about the Lord's coming at the end of time. Jesus announces bleak and distressing events, but precisely at this point He invites us not to be afraid. Why? Because everything will be okay? No, but because *He will come*. Jesus will return as He promised. This is what He says: "Stand erect and raise your heads because your redemption is at hand" (Lk 21:28). It is nice to hear this encouraging Word: stand up straight and raise our heads because right during those moments when everything seems to be coming to an end, the Lord comes to save us. We await Him with joy, even in the midst of tribulations, during life's crises and the dramatic events of history. We await Him. But how do we raise our heads and not become absorbed with difficulties, suffering and defeat? Jesus points the way with a strong reminder: "Beware that your hearts do not become drowsy... Be vigilant at all times and pray" (Lk 21:34, 36).

"Be vigilant": *vigilance*. Let us focus on this important aspect of the Christian life. From the words of Christ, we see that vigilance is tied to alertness: be alert, do not get distracted, that is, stay awake! Vigilance means this: not to allow our hearts to become lazy or our spiritual life to soften into mediocrity. Be careful because we can become "sleepy Christians" – and we know there are many Christians who are asleep, who are anesthetized by spiritual worldliness – Christians without spiritual fervor, without intensity in prayer, without enthusiasm for mission, without passion for the Gospel; Christians who always look inwards, incapable of looking to the horizon. And this leads to "dozing off": to move things along by inertia, to fall into apathy, indifferent to everything except what is comfortable for us

This is a sad life going forward this way since there is no happiness.

We need to be vigilant so that our daily life does not become routine, and, as Jesus says, so we are not burdened by life's anxieties (cf. v. 34). So today is a good moment to ask ourselves: what weighs on my heart? What weighs on my spirit? What makes me go to sit in the lazy chair? It is sad to see Christians "in the armchair"! What are the mediocrities that paralyze me, the vices that crush me to the ground and prevent me from raising my head? And regarding the burdens that weigh on the shoulders of our brothers and sisters, am I aware of them or indifferent to them? These are good questions to ask ourselves, because they help *guard our hearts against apathy*. What then is apathy? It is a great enemy of the spiritual life and also of Christian life. Apathy is a type of laziness that makes us slide into sadness, it takes away zest for life and the will to do things. It is a negative spirit that traps the soul in apathy, robbing it of its joy. It starts with sadness sliding downwards so that there is no joy.

The Book of Proverbs says:

"With all vigilance guard your heart, for in it are the sources of life" (Prov 4:23).

Guard your heart: that means to be vigilant!

Stay awake and guard your heart.



Mass Intentions

Sunday 1st December

8.30 Graeme McNeil RIP
10 Eoin Franey anniversary
11.30 Anthony Grimes

Monday 2nd December

Gloria McQueen intentions
Joe Moss very ill

Tuesday 3rd December

Cassie Braley RIP
Deceased of Perera family

Wednesday 4th December

Quek Keng Thyie RIP
Donald Raecke very ill
C.W.L

Thursday 5th December

Joan Hayes anniversary
Chris Douglas birthday

Friday 6th December

Rob Taylor anniversary
James Daniell RIP

Saturday 7th December

10 Ann Dawkins anniversary
6 Adrian Corrigan RIP

Sunday 8th December

8.30 Teresa McGilloway RIP
10 Shirley Spanjar ill
11.30 Deceased of Lopez family
Chigwell Michael Kilkenny well-being

Please note that the music group will not be playing on the 1st December

Church Cleaning
Saturday 7th December 10.30am
Rosie O'Connor & Charmaine Turrell

Franciscan life: Invitation

The Franciscan Community invite enquiries from single Catholic people aged 18-40 years pondering a possible vocation in the religious and/or priestly life, and Franciscan life; (website: www.friar.org). If interested and need guidance, please talk to one of the Friars or contact *Br Dónal ofm* via email - brdonalofm@yahoo.co.uk

Baptism Congratulations

To those who were baptised at St Thomas during November
Oscar Ofori, Ethan Ofori, Sienna-Grace Dobkin, Isla-Rose Dobkin, Soraia Rebello-Hood, Zachary O'Brien, Gemma Louw & Cormac McMullen-Jones

Henrietta Suite

As you will have seen in last week's newsletter we have commenced a project to refurbish the Henrietta Suite. If any of our parishioners who are builders, decorators, flooring, lighting specialist etc. would be interested in tendering for the work please email the parish office to register your interest. When the works specification is ready we will ensure that you receive the details which will enable you to tender for the work.

Ecumenical Advent Service **December 8th at 4.30 pm at** **St Thomas' s**

Please come and join the Christians of Woodford for this service of music and readings in preparation for Christmas. The choirs of All Saints, St Mary's and St. Thomas' s will be taking part. Light refreshments will be available afterwards in the Becket Centre. Now, more than ever, it is important to celebrate what we have in common with other denominations. Please do come along.