



# ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH

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Parish Priest: Canon Edward Perera

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School St. Stephen's Primary School, Ruskin Avenue, Welling, Kent. DA16 3QG

Telephone: 020 8303 9738

## Second Sunday (Year C)

### Saturday 15th January

**5pm** Ints of Keville Family

### Sunday 16th January

**9.30am** People of the Parish

**11.30am** Paddy Elroy RIP—2nd anniv

### Mon 17th St Anthony

**7pm** Nigel Baptiste RIP

### Tues 18th Feria Church Unity Octave

**10am** John Herity RIP—11th anniv

### Wed 19th Feria

**7pm** Kathleen Gibson

### Thurs 20th Feria

**10am** Ann Vine RIP

### Fri 21st St Agnes

**10am** Billy Corbett—anniv

## Third Sunday (Year C)

### Saturday 22nd January

**5pm** Repose of the Soul of Deborah McArdle

### Sunday 23rd January

**9.30am** Agnes Fernandes RIP—birthday

**11.30am** People of the Parish

## Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturdays 10am—10.30am & 4pm—4.30pm

Please remember in your prayers the sick and housebound; at home, in hospital or in residential care.

## DONATIONS

As the sharing of a collection bag is not permitted during Mass there will be a collection basket at the entrance and exit doors of the church to put your donation in. Any donation you are able to make will be greatly appreciated at this time to help support our church & parish. Thank you.

You can post your donation in a sealed envelope through the presbytery letterbox at anytime, place your donation in the basket in church or you can make an online donation—as a 'one-off' payment or set up a standing order to make regular weekly or monthly donations. Please consider signing up to our Gift Aid scheme. Contact the church office for more details.

Our bank details are as follows;

NatWest Bank

Sort Code: 51-70-14

Account No. 39013332

Account Name: RC Archdiocese of Southwark St Stephens Catholic Church Welling

Please use your name as a reference (gift aiders please add your envelope number). Thank you.

**To give online** using your debit / credit card go to <https://portal.mydona.com/assets/webPay/index.php?cid=236> Making a donation here is simple and quick. Enter the amount you would like to give and enter your card debit / credit details—you also have the option to gift aid your donation & any future donations you make using this card online or in church will also be gift aided (if eligible).

**PayPal Donate Button** on St Stephen's website—go to [www.saintstephens.co.uk](http://www.saintstephens.co.uk) and click on the PayPal donate button on the left of the page. Donations can be made as a 'one off' or regular monthly payments and will go directly to St Stephen's Church.

**JustGiving:** Parishioners who wish to support the parish may also do so online via [justgiving.com/campaign/parishsupport](http://justgiving.com/campaign/parishsupport). Please note that parishioners need to reference their donation with the full parish name and location.

My Dear People

The Gospel of John is not read often on Sundays except during the season of Lent and Easter. However every year on the second Sunday of the year we begin reading from the Gospel of John.

The story of the wedding feast of Cana is a well known story. Though it is a miracle story John the author of the Gospel is very clear not to use the word miracle. He uses the word 'Sign' - 'this, the first of his signs' -a very significant word in the Gospel of John. Signs are different from miracles because the significance is not just in the miracle but in how it points to something more deeper.

It is a rich gospel text with so much depth in it. We can take many different themes to reflect this weekend. The image of a wedding is often used in the Old Testament to describe the relationship of God and his people.

Isaiah tells us that the Lord is Israel's husband. In the time of Jesus the longing for the coming of the Messiah was expressed in terms of a wedding. The readings of today directs our mind to the call to newness. God invites us to something new.

Just as the host and guests were spared from the embarrassing situation of wine running out, as we reflect on the text we can ask ourselves of times when God has come to our help in a Cana-like experience! How has God blessed us with his abundance of gifts? Can we thank God or do we thank God each day for the abundance of his gifts of life—health, family, friends, food and drink etc. etc.? The list goes on and on!

God Bless and love you.

United in prayer.  
Canon Edward

**Second Sunday in Ordinary Time - (Year C)**

Today's readings speak eloquently about the theological mysteries of God's mercy. The first reading comes from an anonymous prophet, sometimes referred to as Third Isaiah (see Is 56-66), who lived in the sixth century BC. He joyfully announces the end of Israel's exile in Babylon. The exile had happened because the people broke their covenant with God. They did not follow God's laws, and they neglected worship. The covenant worked like a land lease. If the people kept it, they kept the land. If they broke the covenant, they could be evicted. But the Lord's mercy and love for the people is so great that it restores the bond between them. In this prophecy, God pronounces Israel fully vindicated; this nation, once despised, will now be honoured again.

The Gospel today focuses on the mercy of the incarnation. In Ephesus, John's community knew many synagogues that said Jesus was a great prophet but not divine. They also knew of the Docetists, who said Christ was only divine and not at all human. John attempts to show that Christ is both fully human and fully divine throughout his Gospel account. In this particular example, Jesus performs an incredible miracle to show his divine authority. But he acts at the behest of his mother in order to help relatives who would be embarrassed to run out of wine. What is more human than doing a favour for your mother?

Even the dialogue bespeaks an intimate parent/child relationship. Mary never orders Jesus—she states that there is a problem, implying that he should do something. When he demurs, she merely tells the staff to do whatever he says. John shows us Jesus, prompted by his mother, responding to a human need with divine mercy as

he performs his first sign—an apt portrait of the incarnation.

**Reflections**

- The first reading celebrates a time of vindication for Israel. The exile is ending. A new day dawns for a long-suffering people, thanks to our merciful God. It is God's glory that sets the Israelites free. It is God's glory through Christ that saves the wedding feast—and redeems the human race.
- Where has the wine run out in our communities, in our hearts? Many are bogged down by the injustices of the world. Perhaps we're targeted because of our race or enduring a painful chronic illness. Maybe we struggle to put enough food on the table. The plague of suffering leaves many of us feeling empty. It's easy to lose hope in times like these.
- Imagine yourself as the water jug in today's Gospel. Are you prepared to be transformed by Christ? Just as Jesus turns water into wine, the Son of God can take the sinful, broken aspects of our lives and transform them into forces for good if our hearts are open. The world needs us, just like the wedding at Cana needed wine.

*LTP Sourcebook 2021*

**NHS TRACK AND TRACE**  
*"To manage the risk of the virus re-emerging."*  
*Attending public worship in the Archdiocese of Southwark*

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*This information is being collected at the direction of the UK Government. It will be kept secure and will be destroyed 21 days after the act of public worship.*

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# PEACE SUNDAY

16TH JANUARY 2022



## GOD OF LOVE

show us our place in this world as channels of your love for all the creatures of this earth, for not one of them is forgotten in your sight.

Enlighten those who possess power & money, that they may love the common good, advance the weak, and care for this world in which we live.

The poor and the earth are crying out.

O LORD, seize us with your power & light, help us to protect all life, to prepare for a better future, for the coming of your Kingdom of justice, peace, love and beauty.

PRAISE BE TO YOU! AMEN.

- Pope Francis, adapted from Laudato Si'

**Today** there is a collection for **Peace Sunday Pax Christi**. The work of Pax Christi is based on the gospel and inspired by faith. Our vision is a world where people can live in peace, without fear of violence in all its forms. Rooted in Catholic Christianity, we work with all who share our values to abolish war and create communities of peace and justice. Envelopes are available for your donation – please place them in the collection baskets by the entrance and exit doors of church. Alternatively, please donate online at [Pax Christi England and Wales – International Catholic Movement for Peace](https://www.paxchristi.org.uk/)

## Week Of Prayer For Christian Unity

18th - 25th January. The theme is *We saw the star in the East, and we came to worship him* (Mt 2:2). Materials have been prepared by the churches of the Middle East. Engage in *Reflection, Prayer and Action*. Churches Together in Britain and Ireland have produced a pamphlet offering readings, a short reflection, prayer and possible actions on a global, local and personal basis, for each day of the week. Go to <https://www.rcsouthwark.co.uk/news-events/news/week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-2022/>

**Day of Healing** at St George's Cathedral, SE1 7HY on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> February 10am – 5pm. Praise & Worship, Teaching, Healing Testimonies, Prayer Ministry, Confession, Eucharistic Healing Service & Holy Mass. See poster & cards. Click on the link to register for this Free event <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/southwark-archdiocese-catholic-renewal-day-of-healing-2022-tickets-194027681017?aff=ebdsoporgprofile>

**Growing in Faith Together** is a follow on course for engaged and married couples and consists of four one hour-long sessions via Zoom and is a wonderful opportunity for:

- engaged couples who have completed their marriage preparation course and want to continue exploring their faith together.
- married couples to enrich their friendship and love.

There are two opportunities to attend the course. The first course runs on Tuesday evenings from 8pm-9pm beginning **18 January 2022** and the second course runs on Saturday mornings from 10.30am-11.30am beginning **19 February 2022**. To register click on the link: [Growing in Faith Together – Agency for Evangelisation and Catechesis \(rcaos.org.uk\)](https://www.growinginfaithtogether.org.uk/) You can attend alone or as a couple – your choice! This new ONLINE course, has been developed in collaboration with the Southwark Marriage and Family Life team and Sycamore, a programme about the Catholic faith by Fr Stephen Wang. See poster for more details.

## Racial Justice Sunday - SAVE THE DATE

Archbishop John Wilson, in collaboration with *The Commission for Promoting Racial and Cultural Inclusion* would like to invite all parishioners to celebrate Racial Justice Sunday at St George's Cathedral Southwark on **13th February 2022**. This year's theme is *'One in Christ'*. Mass begins promptly at 10am. Light refreshments will be served after the mass in the Amigo Hall. All are welcome: please mark the date in your diary!

## Celebration of Mass:

At St Stephen's, we will continue to celebrate Mass socially distanced and face coverings are to be worn. Hand sanitisers should be used entering and leaving church and the 'one-way' in and out system will be in use. *NHS Test, Track and Trace* system is in operation—please use the NHS app and scan the QR code *or* complete a *Track & Trace* card. It will be kept secure and will be destroyed 21 days after the Mass you have attended. A copy of the card is attached to this newsletter which you can print and complete at home to bring with you when you come to Mass. One card per individual or household group. Cards will be available in the porch at each Mass (please bring your own pen) and must be completed. *Please note a card is required to be completed for each Mass you attend.* There will be no toilet facilities open in church or the hall.

We ask everyone to respect and follow the guidance for the celebration of Mass in our church and for your cooperation and understanding so we can keep the church a safe environment for all. Many thanks to all our stewards.

**Church Flowers:** If you would like to join a rota to look after the flowers in church, please sign the list on the noticeboard in the church porch or contact Velia Dobinson. Everyone welcome—no floral experience needed. Velia 07789 673747. If you would like to make a donation towards the cost of flowers for church, please put your donation in the box on the wall at the back of the church labelled **Flowers**. Thank you.

## Live Catholic Mass Online

<https://www.cbcew.org.uk/home/our-work/health-social-care/coronavirus-guidelines/online-mass-directory/>

Use the online directory of churches in England and Wales streaming Catholic Mass live online (web address above). Narrow down your search results by selecting the Mass Type (Daily, Vigil or Sunday). You can also select from the available languages (including signed).

**Celebrate:** a free initiative designed to help children grow in their faith. Each week we will provide a **Children's Liturgy** in the form of a video of the week's Gospel reading, a reflection and a final prayer. [Celebrate | Following Your Faith | Children's Liturgy \(rpbbooks.co.uk\)](https://www.rpbbooks.co.uk/)

**A Day With Mary** at St Mary of the Crays Church, Crayford DA1 4DN on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 10am – 5.30pm. See poster for programme or go to [www adaywithmary.org](http://www adaywithmary.org).

## CAFOD's Walk Against Hunger Lent

**Challenge:** There are 200 million children in the world whose lives are at risk from malnutrition. So, this Lent, challenge yourself to walk 200km, and help give hunger its marching orders. Help stamp out hunger, one step at a time. Do 5k a day, your way, for the 40 days of lent, and you'll conquer your 200k target in time for Easter – and help people around the world to live free from hunger. To take part and to find out more, go to <https://walk.cafod.org.uk/> and sign up for the challenge.

**The Catholic Post** newspaper is a brand new monthly national Catholic newspaper available in the small hall by the exit door. This edition is free of charge. Please subscribe to receive future editions. Individual subscriptions £2 (posted to you) online subscriptions £1 (sent by email). Go to [www.CatholicPost.co.uk/subscribe](http://www.CatholicPost.co.uk/subscribe) or email [subscribe@catholicpost.co.uk](mailto:subscribe@catholicpost.co.uk) or tel 01440730399. Please pick up a copy as you leave church – for health reasons once you pick up the newspaper please take it with you.

**Zumba Fitness** is back in the parish hall every Tuesday at 6pm. You don't have to be a dancer to join. Beginners welcome. Contact Emma on 07979 330145 or check [www.emmalock.zumba.com](http://www.emmalock.zumba.com)

**St Stephen's Playgroup** begins on Wednesday 19th January from 10am-12pm for babies and toddlers in the parish hall. First child £2 and any additional children will be £1. Every Wednesday including half term. All welcome.

**Your Legacy of Faith:** Remember the Church with a gift in your Will. When you move onto the next life, you can make your lifetime of faith live on through a gift in your Will. If you are thinking of putting your affairs in order, the Archdiocese of Southwark can help. If you would like to receive information on Will writing and estate planning contact the team on [legacy@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:legacy@rcaos.org.uk) or tel.no. 020 7960 2504. An information leaflet is available on the table in the porch. A copy is also on the parish website / Twitter feed) and on the new Diocesan Church Legacy page: <https://rcaos.org.uk/donate/leave-a-legacy/>