

No Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament on Tuesday 7th May.

St Stephen's School children and staff will be joining us on Thursday 9th May for the morning Mass on Ascension Day.

World Communications Day: Second Collection Next Weekend 11th / 12th May

This collection supports the work of the Catholic Communications Network (CCN), the media office of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. The CCN seeks to be of service both to the Church and the world in offering professional channels of communication, and provide support to the Bishops of England and Wales and the wider Church in promoting the Gospel through the media on current issues.

To read Pope Francis' message for World Communications Day- *Artificial Intelligence and the Wisdom of the Heart: Towards a Fully Human Communication* please go to [Pope Francis' message for World Communications Day 2024 - Catholic Bishops' Conference \(cbcew.org.uk\)](https://www.cbcew.org.uk/news/2024/05/01/pope-francis-message-for-world-communications-day-2024)

Please visit the Bishops' Conference website: [Catholic Church in England and Wales - Catholic Bishops' Conference \(cbcew.org.uk\)](https://www.cbcew.org.uk/) Here you will find the latest news, features, events, podcasts and more. You can also sign-up for the communications team's weekly newsletter.

Online Parish Gift Aid Declaration Sign-up:

Support our parish and make your donations go further by signing a valid Gift Aid Declaration form. Go to <https://forms.rcaos.org.uk/giftaid>.

Young Adults' Masses at St George's Cathedral on **Sunday 5th May** at 12pm (and on the first Sunday of every month), followed by a social gathering (for those aged 18+) in the Amigo Hall. You can find details of this and other young adult events at St George's Cathedral on Facebook and Instagram @stgeorgesya or [Southwark Catholic Youth Service: Archdiocese of Southwark \(rcsouthwark.co.uk\)](https://www.southwarkcatholic.org.uk/)

The Southwark Catholic Youth Service has several activities for those aged 10-35. For details of what is on offer, please sign up to receive regular updates at <https://form.jotform.com/230894642403052>

Opportunities for Young People booklet in the porch giving details of some events and activities for our youth (under 18) and young adults (18 to 35) to assist in their faith journey. Please take a copy home.

Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Hartley on **Saturday 4th May** from 12pm (light refreshments served from 11.30am). The pilgrimage will include reflections, hymns and prayers to Our Lady, ending with Adoration before the Parish Mass at 5.30pm. The pilgrimage is a wonderful way to participate in devotions honouring Our Blessed Lady during May. St Francis de Sales Church, Church Road, Hartley, Kent DA3 8DW. The day will also be live-streamed at www.churchservices.tv/hartley

Archbishop John is encouraging people to pray the Rosary to journey with Mary to Christ. In a recorded message to the Archdiocese, Archbishop John said Mary is the "perfect disciple" who in perfect obedience to God gave a resounding yes in her fiat – a yes that changed not only her life but the lives of all of us. To hear the full message go to <https://rcaos.org.uk/news-events/news/archbishop-john-calls-us-to-journey-with-mary-to-christ/>

The Agency for Evangelisation and Catechesis has [Rosary resources](#), which you can download for free.

The Call for Adult Formation was overwhelmingly present in the synod responses, across the world and in our archdiocese. On the 8th June, the AEC will be hosting a *Formation Fayre*, featuring Archbishop John Wilson as the keynote speaker. It will be an enriching day of faith development at Amigo Hall, St. George's Cathedral. With the theme "*Made for More*," our event promises dynamic breakout sessions, times of prayer and opportunities for spiritual reflection. Don't miss this chance to deepen your understanding of Catholicism and emerge renewed and empowered. Register now at <https://aec.rcaos.org.uk/formation-fayre> and be part of this transformative event.

Saint Jude Summer Celebration on 1st June starting at 11am at The Shrine of St Jude, 34 Tanners Street, Faversham ME13 7JW. Mass celebrated outside followed by a procession past the Shrine of St Jude. Opportunity for pilgrims to be anointed with Saint Jude oil. Refreshments and piety stall available. See poster for full itinerary or go to <https://www.stjudeshrine.org.uk/news/summer-celebration-1-june-2024>

CAFOD: The Big Pilgrimage: Saturday 1st June 12noon – 5pm at St George's Cathedral, Southwark. Come along, pray & walk. 2 routes available with refreshments and a warm welcome. Also a space for prayer and reflection. Holy Hour 4pm – 5pm with music and guided reflection. See poster and leaflets. <https://cafod.org.uk/news/events/the-big-pilgrimage>



ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH

26 DEEPDENE ROAD, WELLING, KENT DA16 3QL ☒ Telephone: 020 8303 4422

Parish Priest: Canon Edward Perera

website: www.saintstephens.co.uk Email: welling@rcaos.org.uk

Secretary: Mrs. Lorraine Harris. email: wellingsecretary@rcaos.org.uk

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

Telephone: 020 8303 9738

Sixth Sunday of Easter (Year B)

Saturday 4th April

5pm Sister Theresa Tham Ngo RIP

Sunday 5th April

9.30am Anthony Lobo—thanksgiving birthday

11.30am People of the Parish

Mon 6th Feria

10am Hilda Johnson

Tues 7th Feria

10am Gala Lobo RIP (J Kelly)
(No Adoration)

7pm Novena Mass

Wed 8th Feria

10am George and Annie Jessop
11.30am Funeral: Michael Bryne

Thurs 9th The Ascension of The Lord

10am Mike & Jo O'Connell—Ints (P Norville)

7pm Parishioners in Thanksgiving (J Kelly)

Fri 10th St John de Avila, Priest & Doctor of the Church

10am Ellen Kelly RIP (J Kelly)

Sat 11th Feria

10am Priest Ints

Sacrament of Reconciliation
Saturday 10.30am—11am & 4pm—4.30pm

Seventh Sunday of Easter (Year B)

Saturday 11th May

5pm Sacred Heart of Jesus (M Tambyapin)

Sunday 12th May

9.30am People of the Parish

11.30am Patrick Denahy

Mass Times & Intentions

Mon 13th Our Lady of Fatima

No Mass

Tues 14th St. Matthias, Apostle

10am William John Shortt—wellbeing (P Norville)

7pm Novena Mass

Wed 15th St. John Stone, Priest & Martyr

10am Lucy & PM Dias RIP (A DeMello)

Thurs 16th St Simon Stock, Priest

10am Gala Lobo RIP (J Kelly)

Fri 17th Feria

10am Patricia Barratt RIP (P Norville)

Sat 18th Feria

No Mass

Sacrament of Reconciliation
Saturday 4pm—4.30pm

Pentecost Sunday (Year B)

Saturday 18th May

5pm Peter Khang & Theresa Nguyet RIP

Sunday 19th May

9.30am Lauren D'Costa—thanksgiving birthday

11.30am People of the Parish

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

My dear People

Our gospel reading today is a continuation of last Sunday's gospel. Last Sunday's text spoke of Jesus as the 'true vine' and the disciples (and today we) as 'the branches' and the importance of being connected to him. Bishop Robert Baron would call it being wired into Christ.

For Jesus the only way the disciples can be connected to him or be in relationship with him is by living out the love he has shown to them. To the extent that they can show that love they will share in the joy of Christ.

Jesus reminds the disciples what he means by love, saying that they too must love the way he has loved them. Remember he called himself the 'the good shepherd' who lays down his life for his sheep, he made known all he had heard from the Father, he washed the feet of his disciples and he called them his friends. In a way to be a friend of Jesus is to be loved by him and in turn love him unconditionally.

As we come to the end of our Easter season, we have heard his gifts to each one of us. Among them is the great gift of his friendship. We—each one of us—are his friends because we are chosen by him individually and personally, and having chosen each one of us he has loved us and continues to love us.

We all have our friends and those who are close to us. Two questions we can ask ourselves is what does it mean for Jesus to have me as his personal friend? And for me to have Jesus as my personal friend?

God bless and love you all.
Canon Edward

Sixth Sunday of Easter (Year B)

Scripture Insights

We are introduced to the Gentile Cornelius. In the verses immediately preceding today's selection, Cornelius has a vision in which he is instructed to meet Peter. Meanwhile, Peter has a vision that confounds him and that he will later understand as a sign that Gentiles who proclaim Jesus as Lord should be welcomed into this new community. Upon his first meeting with Peter, Cornelius falls before Peter's feet. While a conversation between the two ensues, a large crowd gathers. For the first time, Peter begins to teach "that God shows no partiality" between Jew and Gentile. The Holy Spirit descended upon the believers, and the baptism of Cornelius and his household followed.

The Gospel emphasises that the love that exists between the Father and the Son is the same love that must characterise the relationships of Jesus' followers. This love is so foundational for Christians that we are commanded to love one another. The noun friend, which Jesus uses to describe his relationship with the disciples, is derived from the verb to love. Thus, the friendship identified in this Gospel emphasises mutual self-giving. Such friendship is far more than a casual relationship with another person.

Reflection

• The Scripture passages from the Acts of the Apostles show how the Holy Spirit was at work in the early Church. Many times, the spirit surprises the early Christians, bestowing blessings on people who may at one time have been deemed unworthy. Today, this Spirit is still surprising us, pouring out gifts on those we may least expect. Think who those people might be today: women, young people, immigrants, the LGBTQ+ community. Where are we failing to recognise those whom God has chosen?

• Again, St. John implores: it is about love. Those who don't know love do not know God: whom are we failing to love today? How might God's love be shown through us, simply by extending a hand, greeting a stranger, sitting with one who mourns?

• Notably, these passages where Jesus pours out his repeated messages of love for on another do not mention how we have earned this love, or what we did to deserve the kind of love that has prompted our God to lay down his life for us. We did not even choose him: he chose us. We did nothing to earn this, and yet God has found us worthy. This kind of bond should in turn prompt us to change our lives to strive to be worthy recipients, to learn to lay down our agendas for one another.

LTP Sourcebook 2024

Many Thanks for your contributions to St George's Cathedral collection which came to £223.66.

You can still support St George's Cathedral by;

- Donate Online: www.rcaos.org.uk/Cathedral
- Scan QR Code using telephone camera (see below)
- Telephone weekdays 9 am – 5 pm: 020 7960 2504



Mass Intentions: If you would like to offer a Mass for an intention, please use the Mass Intention Envelopes available on the table at the back of the church and post it through the presbytery letterbox. Please ensure you include your contact number. The recommended stipend (donation) by the Archdiocese for a Mass Intention is £10.

Prayer Intentions Book: Parishioners are invited to write any prayer intentions in our Parish Prayer Intentions book which is placed on the table at the back of the church. Please take time to read the intentions and include them in your prayers.

Volunteers Needed for SPARK in the Park

2024: An invitation to join the team on Thursday 9th May at 8pm or Saturday 11th May at 9.30am for a Zoom meeting. During the meeting we will pray, tell you what we are about and answer questions. We will also present a short video about volunteering and supporting SPARK in the Park 2024.

Link to the Zoom meeting -

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82816814457?pwd=VXRldHBUDJGTmFuQ2hYa2JQQUprUT09>

SPARK in the Park Volunteer Form.

<https://www.sparkinthepark.org.uk/volunteer/apply>

Date for the Diary: SPARK in the Park 29th July – 2nd August 2024 1pm – 4.30pm in Danson Park.

Each day will feature a range of *free* activities for children of all ages and family events – sports, crafts, inflatables, games, stories, SEN zone, under 5's area and more. Plus, Family Fun nights (complimentary hot dog included) and SPARK Quiz. *SPARKextra* will run similar to the afternoons but aimed at families with older children and adults. <https://www.sparkinthepark.org.uk/>

Parish Garden Day: Saturday 4th May, from 10.30am (weather permitting). Everyone welcome. Please bring your own equipment. Families welcomed – jobs for all. Any amount of time you are able to give to help make the church grounds look tidy and cared for will be greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Join Archbishop John and Bishop Paul on a pilgrimage to Lourdes from 23 to 30 August 2024. Details on the pilgrimage, including volunteering and accommodation options can be found on [our website](#). Experience the unique spirituality of Lourdes, along with people from parishes around the Archdiocese. Please pick up an information and booking form from the table in the porch. For more information and / or to register your interest please email contact@catholicassociation.co.uk. More details at www.tangney-tours.com/CA see poster.

Migrant Mass: To celebrate the valuable contribution migrants make to life in London and beyond, a special Mass is being held at St George's Cathedral on Monday 6 May at 12.30pm. It will be led by Archbishop John and is in partnership with the dioceses of Westminster and Brentwood, and supported by Justice and Peace and the Ethnic Chaplaincies. Please arrive by 12pm to secure a seat. [More details here](#)

Bexley Foodbank: Donations can be left in the box in the porch. Many thanks.

Join our Mailing List: To receive our weekly newsletter by email please email wellingsecretary@rcaos.org.uk to subscribe, include your name and confirm your consent to receive our newsletter. You can unsubscribe at any time by notifying the parish office. Your email address will not be shared and used only to receive our newsletter.

Archdiocese of Southwark Job Vacancies: Priests' Welfare & Wellbeing Officer (part time – 3 days per week). To apply for this position, please email a copy of your CV to HR@rcaos.org.uk
Episcopal Vicar and Bishop Group Secretary (full time – 35 hours per week). To apply for this role, please email your cover letter and CV to HR@rcaos.org.uk
Full details of the roles on the website: <https://www.rcsouthwark.co.uk/get-involved/vacancies/vacancies-in-southwark/>

SVP & Ink Cartridges: Recycle your old ink cartridges and raise funds for the *St Vincent de Paul Society* by placing them in the box on the table in the porch. Many thanks.