

Confirmations 2024: Congratulations to all our Confirmation candidates and their families. We pray for the outpouring of the grace of the Holy Spirit upon them. Huge thankyou to the Catechists and all those who were involved with our Confirmation programme.

Many thanks for your donations to Peter's Pence collection last weekend which came to £258.58.

Sea Sunday Seafarers and fishers play a vital role in all of our lives, but they often work in difficult, hazardous conditions. Sea Sunday is next weekend, 13th / 14th July. It is when the Church prays for all those who live and work at sea. Your support will make a big difference to seafarers and fishers in need. You can donate in church (gift aiders please use Stella Maris envelopes on table at the back of church), by visiting www.stellamaris.org.uk/donate, or by texting 'SEA' to 70460 to donate £5. This collection is vital to enable Stella Maris to continue its important work, so please give generously. Thank you.

Permanent Diaconate Vocations: On Sunday 14 July we are celebrating our first Archdiocesan Diaconal Day, during which we pray for the Permanent Deacons serving in our Archdiocese as well as we pray for the new vocations to this ministry. If you are a man between 21 years to 58 years, prayerful, with the desire to love God and God's people, you are involved in services within your parish and community, you have tried many things and still feel drawn to a closer relationship with Christ and His Church you might possibly be called to be a Permanent Deacon? If you require further information about the Permanent Diaconate, please speak to Canon Edward or contact the Diaconate Formation Director via e-mail: ianblack@rcaos.org.uk. See poster. Lots of information can also be found on the diocesan website: <https://www.rcaos.org.uk/TheDiaconate>

Pilgrimage to Walsingham in Reparation & Prayer for the Sanctity of Life on Saturday 3rd August led by Bishop David Oakley, Bishop of Northampton. For details, please go to <https://prolifepilgrimage.org/> or tel. 01858 571242 / 07779 122365. See poster. Those unable to travel to Walsingham can join the pilgrimage online via these links: youtube.com/c/WalsinghamCatholicTV or Walsingham.org.uk/live-stream/

Young Adults' Masses at St George's Cathedral at 6pm on 7th July (and 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

Be Aware: Following a report from another parish please be aware of anyone taking photos around the card readers in church claiming to be checking the machines (but actually photographing bank card details). If you see anything suspicious or someone taking photos in church please report it to Canon Edward immediately.

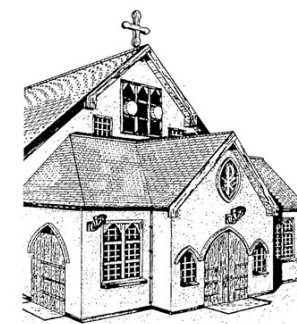
Altar Servers' Trip 29 July–1 August for youngsters aged 11-16 at the Westminster Diocese Youth Centre in Pinner. A well organised, fun, educational and prayerful four days for altar servers or teenagers who regularly attend Mass at the weekend. A great opportunity to experience a packed programme, with faith-based activities plus sport and a visit to Thorpe Park. Cost £189 (includes coach ride to & from site, all food & accommodation & Thorpe Park ticket). For details contact Fr Stephen Boyle: dartford@rcaos.org.uk, telephone: 01322 220075.

The Southwark Catholic Youth Service has lots of activities for those aged 10-35. Sign up to receive regular updates at <https://form.jotform.com/230894642403052> Please take a booklet from the table in the porch *Opportunities for Young People* giving details of some events and activities for our youth (under 18) and young adults (18 to 35) to assist in their faith journey.

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.

Divine Mercy Retreat on Saturday 20th July from 1:30pm to 4:30pm at St Sebastian and St Pancras Church, Kingsbury NW9 0NG. The Retreat will include teachings on the Message of Mercy, Stations of the Cross, Holy Mass, Hour of Mercy with Adoration and Benediction and Veneration of the Image of Merciful Jesus. All Welcome. Millie on 07957594646 for info.

Archbishop John Wilson recently delivered a lecture at St Mary's University Twickenham on the *Synodal Mission of the People of God*. You can read the rich and engaging lecture by clicking on the link - [our website](#).



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

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year B)

Saturday 6th July

5pm Rev. Dang Nguyen RIP

Sunday 7th July

9.30am Anthony D'Costa RIP—birthday

11.30am People of the Parish

Mon 8th July Feria
10am Lee & Eleri Abreo—Thanksgiving

Tues 9th Feria
10am Anthony Jose Gomes RIP—anniv

7pm Novena Mass

Wed 10th Feria
10am Kitty & Eddie O'Donovan & Family
(J Kelly)

Thurs 11th St Benedict, Abbot
10am Santana & Maria Rodrigues—
wedding anniv

Fri 12th Feria
10am Ludovina Demello RIP—2nd anniv

Sat 13th Feria
10am Priest Ints

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

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year B)

Saturday 13th July

5pm Christopher Lobo—thanksgiving birthday

Sunday 14th July

9.30am People of the Parish

11.30am Rev Clifford Nevatt

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

DONATIONS

All donations are greatly appreciated to help support our church & parish. Thank you.

The offertory collection during Mass on Saturday evening & Sunday morning is for parishioners who wish to donate with their gift aid envelopes or with loose cash. Other methods to donate are via the digital plate in church, online or by standing order. The collection bag will be circulated for second collections.

Donate online at <https://portal.mydona.com/assets/webPay/index.php?cid=236> or <https://justgiving.com/campaign/parishsupport>—please include parish name and location. To set up a standing order to make regular monthly donations see bank details below. **Support our parish** and make your donations go further by signing a valid Gift Aid Declaration form. Go to www.rcaos.org.uk/media/xfqfyxyj/welling-planned-giving-and-gift-aid-form.pdf Paper copies of the form are available on the table at the back of the church. You can also join the gift aid scheme by completing an online form at <https://forms.rcaos.org.uk/giftaid>.

NatWest Bank
Sort Code: 51-70-14
Account No. 39013332
Account Name: RCAS Welling
Please use your name as a reference. Thank you.

Digital Collection Plates are at the back of the church. Making a donation is simple and quick. Press one of the donation values or Other Amount. Tap your card or phone on the card reader. Your donation can be gift aided by completing a digital Gift Aid Declaration on the Digital Collection Plate screen (name, address and email address required) and all future donations you make using this card will automatically be recorded as a gift aid donation. A Gift Aid Declaration is required when using the Digital Collection Plate for the first time even if you are already registered for Gift Aid at St Stephen's.

My dear People

If we had been following the readings from Mark (*our readings were interrupted last week as we celebrated the solemnity of Sts. Peter and Paul*), we would have read about two miracles of Jesus. They were the raising of the daughter of Jairus and the healing of the woman who suffered from a hemorrhage. Both those miracles were because of the faith of Jairus and the woman.

Today in the gospel we find Jesus returning to his home town Nazareth. Jesus left Nazareth to go to John the Baptist (Mk.1:9). His disciples—the *new family of Jesus*—are following him. How is he now received? A lot has taken place since he left his hometown. His audience is curious about his wisdom in his teaching, his power in his miracles, his authority over the demons and death, and many have come to faith in him. So, they questioned saying ‘where did he get all this?’

As we heard earlier, his own natural family believed that he was insane and tried to stop him in his mission. Has anything changed!!!

The townspeople know his family, and, with their limited experience of him, cannot believe there is anything significant about him. They describe him using the Greek word ‘tekton’, meaning a craftsman who works with wood or metal. For the local people it seems Jesus is no different to themselves.

Mark tells us rather bluntly that he ‘*could work no miracle there.*’ Earlier in the gospel Mark tells us, after the healing of the Gerasene Demoniac, how the people were amazed. But now it is Jesus’ turn to be ‘amazed’ at their lack of faith.

The people of Nazareth because of their preconceived ideas about Jesus failed to see and hear who Jesus is. What about us? In the words of William Barclay, ‘*there is laid on us the tremendous responsibility that we can either help or hinder the work of Jesus Christ. We can open the door wide to Him—or we can slam it in His face.*’

God bless and love you all.
Canon Edward

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year B)

Scripture Insights

Paul explains that he was given a thorn in the flesh so that he “might not become too elated” over the abundance of his visions and divine revelations. The phrase “become elated” could also be “become conceited” or “start lording it over others.” Christ specifically condemns lording any merit over others, urging his followers instead to become servants to one another (see Mt 20:25-28; Lk 22:24-27). Paul perceives that, paradoxically, his weaknesses allow the power of Christ to dwell in him and work through him.

The Gospel offers more thoughts on power, in a different key. The people of Jesus’ hometown struggle to believe that the carpenter’s son, who grew up as a normal boy in their midst, whose family was well known to them, can speak with such wisdom and perform such powerful deeds. Because of their lack of faith, Jesus is not able to do many powerful acts among them. He can only heal a few sick people who must have overcome their scepticism to trust their former neighbour. These acts portray power working not so much through weakness as through the familiar and the mundane (a small-town carpenter) and point to the counterintuitive way that power works in the kingdom.

Like the people of Nazareth, the people of Israel in Ezekiel’s day were offered the chance to turn away from God’s offer of salvation or to be forgiven and healed. The prophet Ezekiel, having caught a glimpse of God’s glory,

has fallen flat on his face. The spirit lifts him to his feet to receive his message for Israel: they are hard-hearted rebels, but they still have the chance to heed God’s words rather than to resist—to turn and be healed—if only they will call on God to have pity on them, as in the responsorial psalm.

Reflections

• Paul chooses to see discomfort as something that keeps him grounded and focused. In fact, he suggests that perhaps those uncomfortable things that are attempting to weaken his mission are actually the things that give him strength. What is the thorn is your side? How do you use it to anchor you in your mission?

• For those who grew up with you, watched you work out life’s most awkward phases and sometimes learn by making mistakes, it can be difficult to see you in any other light. Certainly, seeing you as a prophet seems to be a problematic mental hurdle for those who simply cannot erase the image of you as a child with lots to learn. And yet you have a prophetic voice. You do have a message that needs to be heard, that can only be proclaimed by you, uniquely and on purpose. Who are the young ones among us who we are failing to see as prophetic voices? What is their message?

LTP Sourcebook 2024

SVP Raffle: Tickets will be on sale this weekend for the annual raffle which helps fund the St Vincent de Paul Society’s support for needy people in our area. And given the cost of living crisis more and more people are desperate for the support we can give them. Tickets cost £1 each and we appreciate how generous you have been in the past and for this we thank you. We look forward to receiving your support once again.

Parishioners’ Tea Party at St Stephen’s school on Tuesday 9th July from 10.30-11.30am. All welcome.

Date for the Diary: Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion & Readers Formation Day— 9.30am -3pm

Saturday 19th October ~ at St Stephen’s Church Hall 26 Deepdene Road, Welling, DA16 3QL. OR **Saturday 26th October** at Thomas Grant School, Belltrees Grove, Streatham SW16 2HY. See poster for full programme of the day.

Spark in the Park 29th July – 2nd August 2024 1pm – 4.30pm. Each day will feature a range of *free* activities for children of all ages. Evening Events (aimed at families with older children and adults) 7pm – 9pm. Please note: children remain the responsibility of parents or carers at all times. See posters for details or go to <https://www.sparkinthepark.org.uk/>

There are currently just over 60 volunteers from 18 different churches for SPARK 2024, but 60 more volunteers are needed. For information about volunteering at SPARK please go to [Volunteer | SPARK in the Park](#)

If you are able to be part of the team, even for just one day, please complete your application as soon as possible so we can start planning volunteer assignments. <https://www.sparkinthepark.org.uk/volunteer/apply>

If you have any questions about SPARK and how you can support SPARK this year please don’t hesitate to get in touch by email at sparkparkbexley@gmail.com

On Sunday 7th July at 4pm there will be a **SPARK Transform Praise Service** followed by a BBQ at St John’s Church Welling DA16 2BQ. All welcome.

On Tuesday 16th July there will be a **Cake & Cut Evening** 6.30-8.30pm at St John’s Church Hall, Danson Lane, DA16 2BQ when craft will be prepared ready for SPARK week. It is a fun get together with cake! Please come along to help.

Thank you for your donation of craft items last weekend —no more are needed thank you.

Archbishop John warmly invites you to join him as he leads the Southwark Archdiocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage, from 23rd to 30th August 2024. Details of can be found on the Archdiocesan website: <https://rcaos.org.uk/news-events/news/archbishop-john-to-lead-pilgrimage-to-lourdes/>) Experience the unique spirituality of Lourdes, along with people from parishes around the Archdiocese. See poster.

Bexley Foodbank: Donations can be left in the box in the porch. Your support and generosity is much appreciated. A list of wanted items can be found at <https://bexley.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food/>

Day for Celebration - Sharing in the Gift of People with Disabilities on 7 July. Bishop Paul will celebrate Mass at Aylesford Priory. Creative prayer and art activities, along with an Edith Stein retreat available on the day. All are welcome. More [details here](#). See poster.

A Day with Mary:

Saturday 6th July at St Mary of the Crays, Crayford DA1 4DN 10am – 5.30pm.
Saturday 13th July at Westminster Cathedral, London 9.45am—5pm.
See posters for details of the day or go to www.adaywithmary.org.uk

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>.

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.

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.

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.