

**Coffee Mornings** every Sunday between the two morning Masses, up to & including 1st June. Helpers are required to set up the hall from 9am.

**Save the Date: Bexley Deanery Pilgrimage** on Saturday 5th July from St Stephen's to St John Vianney, Bexleyheath. More details to follow.

**Archdiocesan Jubilee Celebration Day at The Friars, Aylesford 7 June 2025.** Led by Archbishop John Wilson for a day of prayer, reflection, celebration and fun. There will also be a walking pilgrimage from St George's Cathedral to The Friars (2-6 June). You can find out more including how to join the walking pilgrimage and the Archdiocese Jubilee Year plans at [www.rcsouthwark.co.uk/faith/jubilee-2025/](http://www.rcsouthwark.co.uk/faith/jubilee-2025/)

**Summer Celebration of Saint Jude** on Saturday 31st May in the grounds of Carmelite Shrine of Saint Jude in Faversham. Starting at 11am—Devotions with Anointing, 1.30pm Open Air Mass & 2.30pm Procession to the Shrine. Refreshments & piety stall available. See poster. [www.stjudeshrine.org.uk](http://www.stjudeshrine.org.uk)  
34 Tanners Street, Faversham ME13 7JW

**Join our Mailing List:** To receive our weekly newsletter by email please email [wellingsecretary@rcaos.org.uk](mailto: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.

**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.

**St Catherine's Catholic School, Bexleyheath** are seeking to appoint an inspirational Chaplain who feels called to make a significant contribution to the faith journey of every member of our school community. The successful candidate will be a practising Catholic with a strong personal faith and a passion for encouraging young people in their faith, and the ability to lead and develop the spiritual, liturgical and prayer life of the school community. The Chaplain plays a vital role in ensuring that the Catholic ethos of the school is maintained and spiritual values safeguarded, liturgical celebrations are promoted, the pastoral needs of the school are met and links are made between school, parish and home. For further details, please see the school website - <https://www.stccg.co.uk/Support-Staff-Vacancies/>

**Mass in Celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage** on Saturday 12th July at St George's Cathedral. If you are celebrating your 1st/10th/25th/40th/50th/60th + wedding anniversary this year, please email [mflse@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:mflse@rcaos.org.uk) before the middle of May, so you can receive an invitation from the Archbishop for the renewal of vows during Mass. Please include your full names, address, the anniversary you are celebrating and your parish name.

**Children's Liturgy:** If you are interested in joining a team to provide *Children's Liturgy*, for children aged 4 – 7yrs old during the 9.30am Sunday morning Mass, please add your name to the list on the table at the back of church or email Alexia Powell [alexpowell679@gmail.com](mailto:alexpowell679@gmail.com) or Christabel Acquah [christabelacquah@me.com](mailto:christabelacquah@me.com) to express your interest. All volunteers will require a DBS check. This will be arranged & paid for by the diocese / parish prior to Children's Liturgy beginning.

If you would like your child(ren) to attend *Children's Liturgy* please notify Alexia or Christabel via email who will send you a registration form to complete and return and also answer any questions you may have. Please note each child attending Children's Liturgy will have to be pre-registered—please do not just 'turn up' on the day. Please contact Alexia or Christabel for further information on volunteering or to register your child(ren).

**St Stephen's Playgroup** meet in the parish hall on Wednesdays 9.30am—11.30am. Volunteers are needed to help set up &/or help run the sessions. If you can offer any time to keep the playgroup running please contact the group via their Facebook page or speak to Ilke or Yoke.

Yoke will be leading a team on *The Moonwalk London* on 17th May to raise money and awareness for breast and other cancers. If you would like to support Yoke and the team please donate via the QR code below.



**The Pilgrim Virgin Statue** on 17th -18th May at St George's Cathedral: The Relics of Saints Jacinta and Francisco to visit. Programme includes Holy Mass, Veneration of the relics of Sts Jacinta & Francisco, Fatima Talk, Enrolment & Investiture of the Brown Scapular. Please see this link for more details: [National Statues of Our Lady of Fatima visiting St George's: Archdiocese of Southwark](https://www.nationalstatuesofourladyoffatima.org.uk/)



# 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](http://www.saintstephens.co.uk) Email: [welling@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:welling@rcaos.org.uk)  
Secretary: Mrs. Lorraine Harris. email: [wellingsecretary@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:wellingsecretary@rcaos.org.uk)  
School: St. Stephen's Primary School, Ruskin Avenue, Welling, Kent. DA16 3QG  
Telephone: 020 8303 9738

## Fourth Sunday of Easter (Year C)

**Saturday 10th May**  
5pm Sarah Griffin RIP (C Lintorn)

**Sunday 11th May**  
9.30am James Morris (P Fernandes)  
11.30am People of the Parish

**Mon 12th** **Feria**  
10am Patrick Denahy

**Tues 13th** **Our Lady of Fatima**  
10am Chloe Coutinho—birthday thanksgiving  
7pm **Novena Mass**

**Wed 14th** **St Matthias, Apostle**  
10am Errol & Teresa Vertanness (M Hellein)

**Thurs 15th** **St John Stone, Priest & Martyr**  
10am Elizabeth Sommers RIP—birthday (G Robinson)

**Fri 16th** **St Simon Stock, Priest**  
10am Bernard Keohane RIP—30th anniv (G Chiosso)

**Sat 17th** **Feria**  
10am Priest's Ints

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

## Fifth Sunday of Easter (Year C)

**Saturday 17th May**  
5pm Peter Khang & Theresa Nguyet Ngo RIP

**Sunday 18th May**  
9.30am People of the Parish

11.30am 30th Wedding Anniversary Thanksgiving (J & G Akhilomen)

**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 after the Liturgy of the Word during Mass on Saturday evening & Sunday morning is for parishioners who wish to donate with their gift aid envelopes or with loose cash. If you choose to donate via the digital plate in church, online or by standing order, please continue to do so—there is no need to change your chosen method of giving. The collection bag will also be circulated for second collections.

**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](http://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>.  
**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.

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 situated at the back of the church. 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 registered for Gift Aid at St Stephen's.



My dear people

Habemus Papam! Yes, we have a new Pope. Praised be the Lord. Just after 5.00pm on Thursday, the world witnessed white smoke bellowing from the chimney on the roof of Sistine Chapel, announcing the election of the new Pope. We offer Pope Leo XIV our prayers and looked forward to his papacy, as he said, “let us all walk together towards that homeland God has prepared for us, and help us and help each other build bridges.”

I look forward to new Pope’s first address, ‘Urbi et Orbi’ (*to the city and to the world—an address and blessing by the Pope to the city of Rome and the entire Catholic world*) on Good Shepherd Sunday as our chief shepherd.

Fourth Sunday of Easter is traditionally known as Good Shepherd Sunday. It is because every year the Gospel text for this Sunday is taken from chapter 10 of John’s Gospel and it deals with Jesus as the good shepherd. Today is also a day of prayer for vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

The image of the good shepherd - a great image in the Easter season - was the favourite image of Jesus in the

early church. Long before we had the crucifix, the Christians in Rome and other places carved images of the good shepherd. The image of the good shepherd was a favourite image in the tombs in the early days of the Church.

The call to follow Jesus is a call to be good shepherds for one another and especially to the vulnerable among us—refugees, the poor, immigrants exploited workers and victims of trafficking. Each one of us who has the responsibility of care for others—be it priests, parents, teachers, care workers or others— are called to be shepherds and good shepherds.

One striking saying of Jesus in the gospel of today is, ‘My sheep listen to my voice.’ Listening for the voice of the shepherd is not merely a passive activity. Today is an opportunity to ask ourselves, am I only who I want to be or am I whom God wants me to be? Each one of us has been and is being called by God. As St. John Henry Newman said, ‘God has committed some specific work for me which he has not committed to another.’

God Bless and love you all. Canon Edward

#### Fourth Sunday of Easter (Year C)

#### Scripture Insights

In the brief Gospel, we learn it is not sufficient to hear the shepherd’s voice; true disciples follow it. The reward is life in union with God. We can never be snatched from God’s hands. This life, however, begins with belonging to God here and now. It continues even as we pass from this world into God’s eternal presence.

Jesus intensifies the imagery of his relationship with God as Son to the Father. He draws his sheep to him and, in so doing, presses far beyond both his interrogators’ messianic expectations and comfort level by presenting his oneness with God.

“The Father and I are one” (Jn 10:30) articulates a familiar truth for us, but first-century Jewish people found it difficult. One teaching they understood unambiguously was that God is one (see Dt 6:4). When Jesus spoke of “the Father and I,” it seemed like two, but this is the stunning beauty of God’s gift of Jesus to the world. The Son is indeed one with the Father in love and pastoral care for all who are open to their one voice.

#### Reflections

· In Acts, we encounter a growing distinction between the existing Judaism and the new followers of Jesus. Negative actions of Jews toward the disciples should not be taken as a condemnation of the Jewish people. Throughout the course of history great violence has

been inflicted upon the Jewish people by Christians who hold them responsible for Jesus’ death. The Church must recognise this harm and renew our commitment that “decries hatred, persecutions, displays of anti-Semitism, directed against Jews at any time and by anyone” (*Nostra aetate*, 4).

· It is a heavy burden for parents whose adult children reject the faith they grew up with. How can parents approach their children with the unconditional love of the shepherd, seeing their inherent goodness even as they choose to walk a different path?

#### Liturgy of Life

Jesus espouses the characteristics of a Good Shepherd. He is selfless, willing to lay down his life for the sheep. He is welcoming, willing to lead those inside and outside his flock. He is faithful, willing to use his power for the greater glory of God. These are the sorts of characteristics we might hope for in all leaders. Unfortunately, abuses of power are all too common in public life. How can we hold civic leaders accountable? What would it be like to have “good shepherds” in positions of power within governments?



LTP Sourcebook 2025

**The Election of Pope Leo XIV:** Archbishop John Wilson rejoices and gives glory to God for the gift of our new Holy Father. You can read the full statement from Archbishop John on the election of Pope Leo XIV, 266th Successor of Peter here

<https://rcaos.org.uk/news-events/news/archbishop-john-pope-leo-is-called-to-be-a-sign-of-unity-and-a-herald-of-hope/>

Archbishop John asked us to join him "in praying for Pope Leo XIV, asking the Lord to bless him abundantly. And let us thank God for this great gift to the Church and to the world".

#### Archbishop John on Mary and the Eucharist:

For the month of May, Archbishop John is calling on us to imitate the Blessed Virgin Mary and be a man or woman of the Eucharist. Each May, the Catholic Church dedicates the month to Mary to honour and celebrate Our Lady’s role in guiding us toward her Son, the Lord Jesus. You can listen to Archbishop John’s video message on the diocesan [YouTube channel](https://www.rcsouthwark.co.uk/news-events/news/like-mary-be-a-eucharistic-disciple-says-archbishop-john/) or read the message in full at <https://www.rcsouthwark.co.uk/news-events/news/like-mary-be-a-eucharistic-disciple-says-archbishop-john/>.

**Jubilee 2025.** The Archdiocesan Jubilee preparations and celebrations continue, for all the latest info head to [rcaos.org.uk/jubilee2025](https://rcaos.org.uk/jubilee2025).

**Parish Garden Mornings** on the First Friday of each month, after the 10am Mass. The team continues the good work improving the church / hall grounds. Volunteer(s) are needed to mow the grass areas—you can do it at your convenience—no set day / time—just bring your lawnmower when the grass is in need of a cut. You can be part of team / on a rota if this suits. Please speak to Simon & Sarah Heywood or contact the church office to find out more or to volunteer your time. Many thanks.

**Spark in Park Appeal:** Spark in the Park has been taking place each year for more than 20 years in Danson Park, but costs continue to escalate and funding sources prove harder and harder to access. To ensure the longevity of Spark into the future, we have decided to invest in some equipment as a one-off capital purchase, rather than rent each year. We are asking individuals for a one-off donation. This can be any amount of course – every £1 will help, but with a target of £3,000 we are in need for 100 people to donate £30 each. The donation link is available here: [Click here to donate to the Spark In the Park Campaign](https://www.sparkinpark.org.uk/donate) For others ways to donate please email [sparkparkbexley@gmail.com](mailto:sparkparkbexley@gmail.com). See poster for QR code. Thank you for your continued support of this great community event for all.

**Priest Training Fund:** Second collection this weekend (10th / 11th May).

The priesthood has always been essential to the life of the Church, from the time of Jesus until today. The Priest Training Fund pays for the formation of men to become priests in our Archdiocese. After their ordination, our priests dedicate their lives to serving Christ and His people in our parishes, hospitals, schools, chaplaincies, prisons and in service to the needy, throughout South London, Kent and Surrey. We are blessed to have 9 men in formation to the Priesthood for our Archdiocese. However, it costs £30,000 a year to sponsor each seminarian. They study for 6 years before being ordained a Catholic priest. We therefore rely on your generous support and prayers. Please support our priests of the future with a gift today. Thank you!

- Donate Online: [www.rcaos.org.uk/donate/PTF](https://www.rcaos.org.uk/donate/PTF)
- Or Scan QR Code on the poster on the noticeboard.
- 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) advised by the Archdiocese for a Mass Intention is £10. Please give plenty of notice to avoid disappointment if you would like specific date for your intention as we may not always be able to accommodate your request at short notice. Thank you.

**Bexley Foodbank Volunteers** needed to join a rota to answer their voucher line. Telephone lines are operational Monday—Friday 9am to 12noon and can be answered from your own home—the Foodbank telephone line is transferred to your own number (the client does not have access to your number). No travel necessary! You will be given full access and training to the Trussell system and have the full support of the Foodbank management team. If you are interested in the role and would like to find out more please contact Kate 07387 312393.

**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/> Donations of strong ‘bags for life’ are urgently needed—please put any spare bags you have in the donation box. Thank you.