Parish Coffee Morning on Sunday in the parish hall between the 2 morning Masses. Please join us for a cuppa & chat. Donations welcomed.

Christmas Carol Service on *Saturday 20th December at 3pm* in church followed by refreshments in the parish hall. This is always a very joyful occasion. Please mark the date in your calendar. Please feel free to speak to the Sunday Mass choir leaders for more information.

Southwark Catholic Youth Autumn Newsletter can be read here Southwark Catholic Youth Newsletter, Autumn 2025 for the latest news and events for youth and young adults in our diocese.
For regular updates on forthcoming events, sign up to its network at www.tinyurl.com/scysnetwork.

Holy Father Pope Leo has appointed Bishop Nicholas Hudson as the next Bishop of Plymouth. Please keep Bishop Nicholas in your prayers. Details of his Installation Mass will be shared once arrangements have been finalised.

Catenian Association *Public Speaking Competition*: We are delighted to invite schools in Kent and SE London to participate in this exciting opportunity for young people to hone their public speaking skills and compete at a regional and national level. This competition provides a unique opportunity for Year 12 students to develop their confidence and analytical skills. Full details and entry form on Public Speaking Competition - Bromley Catenians See poster. Please email Deacon Duncan Aitkins foe more info duncan@duncanaitkins.co.uk

Job vacancy: Aid to the Church in Need (ACN). ACN is hiring a community fundraiser, see here for more details on the role - including how to apply.

Ecumenical pilgrimage to Rome & Assisi 2026. Join Bishop Paul Hendricks, Canon Michael Branch and Anglican Bishop Christopher Chessun on a joyful 8 day pilgrimage from 2 March - 9 March 2026 to Rome and Assisi. Click here for more details, including costs and how to book your place.

Many Thanks for your donations to Pact on Prisoners' Sunday which came to £540.28.
To find out more about the work of *Pact* and ways for you to get involved and to donate online please go to https://www.prisonadvice.org.uk/faith/events/prisoners-sunday/

David Wells Seminar on Saturday 1st November in St Stephen's parish hall 10am—3pm. *''Your will be done! Learning to let God have the last word. A brief look at how our Faith can grow, transform and redeem us"* **Please sign up on the list at the back of the church to confirm your attendance.**

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.

Mass for Deceased Clergy of Bexley will be at St Lawrence of Canterbury Church, Sidcup on Friday 7th November at 12pm. Please join the other parishes to remember and pray for our past clergy, who built and served our communities. All welcome. 1 Hamilton Road, Sidcup, Kent. DA15 7HB.
If you would like to attend the lunch after the Mass please let Lorraine in the office know or email sidcup@rcaos.org.uk as soon as possible for catering purposes. Thank you.
Please note there will not be a morning Mass at St Stephen's on 7th November.

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.

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.

Bexley Foodbank: Donations can be left in the box in the porch. Your support and generosity is much appreciated. A list of urgently wanted items can be found at https://bexley.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food/ as well as a list of not needed items—thank you. Donations of strong 'bags for life' are wanted—please put any spare bags you have in the donation box. Thank you.

Cheques: If you write a cheque for your church collection, hall hire, mass stipends etc. please could you write the payee as **RCAS WELLING** and not 'St Stephen's Church'. This is due to a change of our bank account name. NatWest bank will no longer accept cheques that do not match our account name. Thank you for your cooperation.

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

Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year C)

Saturday 25th October
5pm Mrs Anna Hang Ngo RIP

Sunday 26th October
9.30am Errol Vertanness RIP (A& J Carrolan)
11.30am People of the Parish

Mon 27th **Feria**
10am Oliver Robinson-Cooper—birthday

Tues 28th **Sts. Simon & Jude, Apostles**
10am Brooke Robinson-Cooper—birthday
7pm ***Novena Mass***

Wed 29th **Feria**
10am Fraser Robinson-Harris—birthday

Thurs 30th **Feria**
10am Holy Souls (G Robinson)

Fri 31st **Feria**
10am Maggie McMannus—birthday blessings

Sat 1st November **The Blessed Virgin Mary**
No Morning Mass

Sacrament of Reconciliation
4pm—4.30pm

Solemnity of All Saints (Year C)

Saturday 1st November
5pm Matthew Thuy Vu RIP
Sunday 2nd November
9.30am Living & Deceased Pupils & Staff of St Joseph's Convent, Abbey Wood

11.30am People of the Parish

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 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

We are coming to the end of Luke's account of Jesus' journey to Jerusalem. However, the next two Sundays, the Gospel readings from Luke will be replaced as we celebrate the solemnity of All Saints and the Dedication of the Basilica of St. John Lateran. What we will miss on those two Sundays will be the account of Jesus meeting Zacchaeus and the Luke's account of the cleansing of Temple.

One of the interesting things to note in the scriptures is that when people travel from Galilee southwards to Jerusalem, they never say that they go down to Jerusalem. They refer the journey or the pilgrimage as going up to Jerusalem. In a way it is true as Galilee is situated below sea level and Jerusalem is above sea level. On this journey the pilgrims would have sung the pilgrim psalms. And I am sure Jesus and the disciples too would have prayed these psalms.

On this journey to Jerusalem, Jesus has been teaching the disciples how to pray as they requested of him. The last two Sundays, we heard the two parables about persistent in prayer. Today, we have the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector. They both go up into the temple to pray. The two characters represent the two extremes of Jewish society at the time of Jesus.

For the Jews at the time of Jesus, the tax collector was seen as an agent of Rome and thus a traitor to his own people. Like Zacchaeus he was a despised person. Just as those who first heard the parable of the Good Samaritan would have expected the Samaritan to be the villain in the story, those who listened to today's parable would have thought the same of the tax collector. But what we find is Jesus turning the stereotypes upside down. The Samaritan is the true neighbour and the tax collector is truly humble before God and goes home at rights with God.

As we listen to this parable today, we can ask ourselves what is my prayer like.

God Bless you and love you all.
Canon Edward

Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

Scripture Insights
The Scriptures focus our attention on prayer. The first reading, from the Book of Sirach, and the responsorial psalm remind us that God hears the cry of the oppressed, the orphan, the widow, the lowly, and the poor. This does not mean that God does not listen to the prayer of all people, but God is especially attentive to people in great need, people who know that they rely on God for their very existence.

The parable in today's Gospel represents us with two contrasting figures, a Pharisee and a tax collector. Members of the Pharisaic sect identified themselves as strict observers of the law, while tax collectors were understood as individuals who collaborated with the Roman establishment. The Pharisee in this parable thanks God that he is not like other people, particularly those whom he would consider "lowlifes." Meanwhile, the tax collector recognises that he is a sinner and pleads for God's mercy. Which prayer is more sincere?

Reflections
• In our daily examen or night prayer, which voice do we resemble? Is it the Pharisee or the tax collector from today's Gospel, or perhaps St Paul in the second reading? On a daily basis we can evaluate how our awareness of our own brokenness has opened the doors to act on behalf of solidarity and justice.

• As God hears the cry of the poor, the widow, and the orphan, so we are called to imitate God. We can tune into their voices through our choice of media, professional and leisure activities, and community. Analyse your current lifestyle. Where do you hear the cries of the poor?

Introduction to Mass
In the first reading we will hear that God listens to the cry of the poor. Poverty doesn't just have to do with material things, but with the recognition that we need and depend on God. In the Gospel we hear two different approaches to prayer. One person acts self-righteously and the other acknowledges his unworthiness and asks for God's mercy. Humility is a virtue to which we are all called, and one in which we must all grow. When arrogance takes over our hearts and minds, we are stunted in our ability to see, hear, and respond to our Lord in prayer and in action. We pray that our hearts be humble so that we may grow closer to God and receive his healing mercy.

Liturgy of Life
As Jesus and his disciples travelled closer to Jerusalem, the cost of discipleship became clearer. Jesus never wanted his disciples to forget that God's salvation, grace, and love were gifts. Following Jesus had to be a freely chosen response without expectation of reward. How do you use your gifts for the common good?

LTP Sourcebook 2025

'Missionaries Of Hope Among All Peoples'
Thank you for your donations to the *World Mission Sunday* appeal last weekend which came to £790.61. Your prayers and support will help missionaries work alongside communities worldwide, regardless of background or belief. Please continue to pray for all who share the love and hope of Christ with our sisters and brothers in need throughout the world. To support mission year-round, visit https://missio.org.uk/ or call 020 7821 9755 (office hours).

Missio Red Boxes: If you are a red box holder, please bring your box to church during the month of October and leave it in the sacristy. If you find yourself collecting less change these days, please consider putting a note (or even 2!) in your box. There are some booklets about the work of *Missio* in the porch.

CAFOD's World Gifts cards are available on the table in the porch. Every purchase helps families overcome poverty, build brighter futures and celebrate Christmas with dignity. To order and discover the full range of gifts visit https://worldgifts.cafod.org.uk/ or scan the QR code on the cards or call 0300 777 0030. Please take a card home.

Mass Intentions: If you would like to offer a Mass for an intention, please use the Mass Intention Envelopes available 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 (at least 6 months notice is recommended). If you are a UK tax payer please complete the Gift Aid declaration on the reverse of the envelope. Cheques made payable to '*RCAS Welling*'. Thank you.

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 find out more and receive information on Will writing and estate planning contact the team on 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 https://rcaos.org.uk/donate/leave-a-legacy/

Exposition of The Blessed Sacrament weekdays from 9am. Please join us.

Feast of Saint Jude on 25th—28th October. The programme of activities during the feast includes regular celebrations of the Eucharist, blessings with the oil of Saint Jude, and other devotions. During the celebrations there is a piety stall, a display of Carmelite books, and light refreshments available. Please see poster for the full programme of events and times. All are welcome. For more info please call 01795 539214 or visit https://www.stjudeshrine.org.uk/events/feast-saint-jude-25 or email shrineoffice@stjudeshrine.org.uk The Shrine of Saint Jude is at 34 Tanners Street, Faversham ME13 7JW.

Blessing of the Graves at *Hillview Cemetery* will be on Saturday 8th November 11.30am—1pm.
Details of other local cemetery blessings to follow.

Unity Service to be held at Welling Methodist Church, Bellegrove Road, on Sunday 9th November at 6.30pm. This is in place of the traditional 5th Sunday service which used to be held for Unity when there were 5 Sundays in the month. A chance to pray with our fellow Christians in Welling. You will be made very welcome.

Reception 2026: Open Meetings and Tours at St Stephen's Catholic Primary School for parents/carers of children due to start school in September 2026 (*children born between 1st September 2021 and 31st August 2022*) on:
Thursday 13th November 9:30am
Thursday 13th November 1:30pm
Tuesday 25th November 9:30am
There will be a talk from the Headteacher and the opportunity to tour the school.
School Address: Ruskin Avenue, Welling DA16 3QG.
https://www.st-stephens.bexley.sch.uk/

A Day With Mary on Saturday 15th November at St Saviour Church, Lewisham High Street, SE13 6AA. Starting at 9.20am, finish at 5pm. During the day: Confession & Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. See poster for full details of the day or go www.adaywithmary.org. Please bring a packed lunch.

Sidcup Debt Advice: If you are struggling with debt or money worries Sidcup Debt Advice may be able to help. For a *free* confidential conversation contact us on 0208 269 8621 or email at sidcupda@gmail.com
Leaflets available on the table in the porch—please take a copy home to read.