

Repository: Please take the time to visit the Repository after Saturday evening & Sunday morning Masses to browse the wide range of cards for *every occasion*, plus a lovely section of religious gifts available. Baptism, First Holy Communion & Confirmation cards and gifts are on sale now! Cash only please.

Parish Garden Morning on Friday 1st May (& the first Friday of each month), at 10.30am. Everyone welcome to help if you have a spare hour or two. Please bring your own equipment. Refreshments provided.

2026/2027 Gift Aid Envelope Boxes are on the table at the back of the church. First envelope of the box (for the new financial year) to be used for this Sunday, 12th April.

New subscribers to our Gift Aid scheme are welcomed. Please take a *Gift Aid Declaration* form from the back table. Once completed, please post it through the presbytery letterbox. Alternatively, you can sign up online by clicking the link <https://forms.rcaos.org.uk/giftaid>

If you have questions regarding the Gift Aid scheme please contact the church office via email wellingsecretary@rcaos.org.uk

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

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.

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.

Flame is the largest Catholic gathering for young people in the UK and is on Sat 6 March 2027 at the OVO Arena Wembley. The theme is: *“Take courage! I have overcome the world.”* (John 16:33) Flame is open to those in school Year 9 to university age. Tickets are £30pp. Leaders from parishes & schools can now book to join the Archdiocesan group led by Archbishop John at [Flame 2027 Leader Booking Form](#)

The Confirmation team warmly invites all parishioners—especially former Confirmation candidates and their parents—to join them for a special session on **Sunday, 19 April at 9:20am** in the parish hall. The session, titled *“Forgiveness, Peace, and Hope,”* will be led by Margaret and Barry Mizen, who sadly lost their son Jimmy in 2008. Since then, they have dedicated themselves to honouring his memory by promoting a message of forgiveness, peace and hope, and empowerment among young people and communities. All are welcomed to join this session.

Parish Coffee Morning on Sunday in the meeting room attached to the church (while the Confirmation classes are taking place in the main parish hall). Please join us for a cuppa & chat. Donations welcomed

Summer Celebration of Saint Jude on Saturday 30th 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. More information at www.stjudeshrine.org.uk
34 Tanners Street, Faversham ME13 7JW

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.

Guild of Altar Servers rally 2026. The annual rally for Southwark Altar Servers is taking place at Aylesford on 4 May 2026.

Southwark Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes: Bishop Paul Hendricks warmly invites everyone to join the pilgrimage on 21st to 28th August. A pilgrimage is a great opportunity to refresh and renew our relationship with the Lord Jesus, with the help of Our Lady’s prayers. Details for booking travel and accommodation can be found at <https://www.tangney-tours.com/diocese-pilgrimages/diocese-ca/> For more information, please contact Canon Edward Perera (edwardperera@rcaos.org.uk) or Bishop Paul Hendricks (paulhendricks@rcaos.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 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

Second Sunday of Easter (Year A)

Saturday 11th April

5pm J&S Fernandes—Wedding Anniv & Thanksgiving

Sunday 12th April

9.30am People of the Parish

11.30am Tony Califano RIP—22nd anniv

Mon 13th Feria

10am Lisa Abreo—birthday

Tues 14th Feria

10am Amelia Gomes RIP—anniv

7pm Novena Mass

Weds 15th Feria

9.30am Mrs Muriel Yates RIP—30th anniv

Thurs 16th Feria

10am Rebecca Curtin

Fri 17th Feria

10am Margaret Merrick

Sat 18th Feria

10am Priest Ints

Sacrament of Reconciliation

10.30am—11am & 4pm—4.30pm

Third Sunday of Easter (Year A)

Saturday 18th April

5pm Ellen Kelly

Sunday 19th April

9.30am John Colaco RIP (Lobo Family)

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.myдона.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,
 On second Sunday of easter we read the story of Thomas, who is unfortunately known as doubting Thomas. Actually, when we read the Resurrection narratives, we notice that he was not the only one who was doubting!

The Gospel of today gives us two Resurrection stories. The first story is about the appearance of Jesus to the disciples on the evening of the first Easter Sunday. The second is about the appearance of Jesus to Thomas eight days later. This second part is the one we very much take notice of.

In the first story, the disciples are behind closed doors for fear of the Jews. In spite of what Magdalene, Peter and John have said the disciples are still unsure. Jesus comes to them and greets them with the words 'Peace' and shows them the scars of the crucifixion. Having greeted them Jesus breathes on them and sends them on a mission.

The second story is what happened eight days later. Thomas was with the disciples this time. Thomas wanted personal and tangible proof and experience of the resurrection of Jesus. Seeing Jesus, he is now transformed, and makes a profession of faith, 'My Lord and my God.' The blessing Jesus gives to Thomas is for us too.

Like Thomas, we too often demand visible proof before we believe. The words of Jesus are addressed to us too today—'blessed' those who have not seen but yet have come to believe. We ask God to give us the grace to live in that belief all our days.

God Bless and love you all.
 Canon Edward

Second Sunday of Easter

Scripture Insights

The first reading, from Acts, provides a snapshot into the four ways the early Church lived the Good News. First, they learned about the life, ministry, and teachings of Jesus, as remembered and passed down from the apostles. Second, they shared a "communal life" in which believers sold possessions and shared resources in order to make sure that nobody was in need. Third, they broke break together, which means that they ate together, sharing life over meals in their homes; it also means that the celebrated the Lord's Supper together as part of those meals. Fourth and finally, they devoted themselves to "the prayers," which likely means both the prayers they inherited from their Jewish traditions as well as the Lord's Prayer, the prayer given to them by Jesus.

The second reading and the Gospel focus on the nature of faith, or what it means to trust and believe without seeing. When the risen Jesus appears to his disciples, he offers to his doubtful disciple Thomas the proof that it is really he, by showing the nail marks in his hands and the wound in his side. Thomas responds with wonder and worship: "My Lord and my God!" (Jn 20:28). Jesus then blesses "those who have not seen and have believed" (Jn 20:29). This blessing is echoed in Peter's first letter, when he writes to those who have not seen Christ for themselves but love him and believe in him anyway. Perhaps we might think that Thomas was blessed because he saw, but Jesus blesses all of us who have not seen and still have believed.

Reflections

Thomas missed seeing Jesus because he wasn't with the other apostles. Maybe Thomas' reaction to grief and fear was to isolate himself. Whatever his reasons, Thomas is

skeptical of the testimony of his fellow disciples.

Although he has no reason to believe his friends are lying about seeing the risen Christ, Thomas declares that he will not believe until he sees what they have seen.

Why doesn't Christ appear to each of us as he did to the disciples (and Thomas)? Perhaps the lesson here is that faith is not meant to be individualistic. Our faith rests on the unbroken chain of testimony stretching from the disciples to today, as well as on the witness of our community of faith.

Introduction to Mass

Christ taught us that mercy is not only something we receive from God, but it is also something we are called to practice. Mindful of the times when we have not shown mercy let us humbly ask for the Lord's forgiveness.

Liturgy and Life

"Peace be with you." Christ's closest friends had run away in fear at his time of greatest need. The risen Christ begins not with scolding, but with the gift of peace. We know that human being are prone to hurting one another, failing one another, falling short of their own ideals when it comes to love of God and love of neighbour. Until Pentecost, strive to carry out a corporal work of mercy each week. The corporal works of mercy are to feed the hungry, to give drink to the thirsty, to clothe the naked, to shelter the homeless, to visit the sick, to visit the imprisoned, and to bury the dead.

Many thanks for your donations to the Holy Places of Palestine collection on Good Friday which came to £669.54.

Missio Red Boxes: Thank you to all those who give to *Missio* through the Red Boxes or directly to the charity. Last year St Stephen's raised £984. Sadly, as less people use cash these days, the number of boxes being handed in for emptying is decreasing. If you are still using yours, please bring it to the sacristy **by the end of April**. If you are not collecting many coins now, please consider putting a note or two in your box. The spring magazine is available on the table in the church porch.

Come Cheer with CAFOD at the London Marathon on Sunday 26 April. With 35 CAFOD runners taking part, your encouragement will make a big difference. The cheer station will be outside St Edmund's RC Church, 297 Westferry Road, E14 3RS (nearest station: Mudchute), around mile 16 of the course – a great spot to see the runners. People are welcome to drop by at any time, but most runners are expected to pass between 1pm and 4pm. If you are able to join in with the cheering, please let CAFOD know at events@cafod.org.uk. It would be great to have our parish support the runners on the day.

Public Lecture: Overseas Development and Debt Justice: You are warmly invited to hear Christine Allen, Director of CAFOD, speak on Overseas Development and Debt Justice, followed by a panel discussion and Q&A with Jess Hall of Christian Aid on Thursday 16 April, 7–9pm (refreshments provided) at the University of Kent, Grimond Lecture Theatre 3, CT2 7NG. All welcome – please come along and bring a friend. See poster.

The FAITH Summer Break 2026, which will take place from 10–13 August 2026 at St Mary's School, Ascot, SL5 9JF. This is a residential event for young Catholics aged 11–15, intended to offer a few days in which participants may grow in faith, make friends, and enjoy time together in a lively and supportive Catholic setting. The programme includes daily Mass and prayer, age-appropriate talks, small-group discussion, sports, arts and crafts, and a trip to Thorpe Park. The event is led by trained helpers. The cost is £250, inclusive of accommodation, meals, and the Thorpe Park visit. Further information, together with booking details, may be found at: <https://www.faith.org.uk/events/faith-summer-break-2026>

AI Evangelisation Conference on Saturday 6th June 9.30am–4pm at Our Lady of the Rosary Church, 330a Burnt Oak Lane, Blackfen DA15 8LW. An inspiring day featuring guest speakers covering a variety of subjects on how Artificial Intelligence can promote evangelisation within the Catholic Church. All welcome. For more details and to book a place please email blackfen@rcaos.org.uk

St George's Cathedral: The Living Heritage is a magazine issued quarterly showcasing the history and living heritage of St George's Cathedral, the Mother Church of the Archdiocese. Each edition brings St George's Cathedral's story to life through heritage features and in-depth articles, inviting our community to explore its traditions and stay connected to its living history and rich legacy. To subscribe, a full year of four issues costs £18, including postage & packing, contact the cathedral office via email cathedralenquiries@rcaos.org.uk The spring edition is available on the table in the porch to view.

World Youth Day will take place from Monday 2 August - Monday 9 August 2027 in Seoul, South Korea. Archbishop John will lead the Archdiocesan group (ages 18 to 35). Initial registration of interest is now open: www.tinyurl.com/wyd2027 The final cost is still to be confirmed, but is expected to be approximately £2,500

Vacancy -Part Time Caretaker at St. Mary of the Crays Church, Old Road, Crayford DA1 4DN. Hours: 8 hours per week, flexible schedule. Salary: £12.71 per hour. Start Date: Monday 4th May 2026 To apply for this post, please send your CV to crayford@rcaos.org.uk by Wednesday 15th April 2026, for the attention of Fr. David Gummert. Date of interview to be advised. More details about the role can be found on the notice board.

Job Vacancy: Primary Religious Education Adviser. Are you passionate about Religious Education and committed to strengthening the Catholic mission in our primary schools? The Southwark Catholic Education Service are seeking to appoint an exceptional Primary Religious Education Adviser on a seconded basis (2 days per week) to support the implementation of the Religious Education Directory (RED) and Lighting the Path across our primary schools. To apply and find out more, visit <https://www.rcaoseducation.org.uk/primary-religious-education-adviser-education-service/>

Closing date: Monday 13th April 2026 at 12noon. Interviews: Week beginning 20th April 2026.