

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.

First Saturday (of the month) Devotions including praying the Rosary together at 9.20am in church. Please join us on 2nd May.

Eucharistic Adoration in church will be on Mondays to Fridays 9am to 9.30am.

Missio and the Mill Hill Missionaries invite all Red Box supporters and the wider Diocesan community to come together for two important events in 2026.

St Simon Stock Church, Bleakwood Rd, Walderslade, Kent ME5 0NF on Saturday 6th June at 11am.

Join Fr Joseph Donkor (Missio Diocesan Director for Southwark) and the Mill Hill Missionaries for Mass, followed by lunch and sharing of mission work.

St Elizabeth of Portugal Roman Catholic Church, The Vineyard, Richmond TW10 6AQ on Saturday 3rd October at 11am.

Join us for this special World Mission month mass with Missio National Director, Fr Anthony Chantry MHM, and Fr Joseph Donkor.

Our Mission Masses are an opportunity to hear about how missionaries share the Gospel throughout the world and how we can be missionary disciples in our own parishes. Everyone is welcome to attend. Please email redbox@missio.org.uk or visit <https://missio.org.uk/mission-masses-and-events/> for further information.

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.

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/>

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

Rosary For Life. Archbishop John Wilson is calling on all of us to join him in praying the *Rosary for Life* this May (Month of Mary). Together, we will pray through the Joyful, Sorrowful, Glorious and Luminous Mysteries, each one offered for the most vulnerable facing growing threats to life: unborn children at risk of abortion, victims of war and persecution, people with disabilities, and the elderly and vulnerable. For video, audio and written versions of the Rosary for Life, visit rcaos.org.uk/rosaryforlife.

Pray the Rosary. Encounter Christ. Defend life.

Encounter Pentecost on 23rd May. Join the Southwark Archdiocese Catholic Charismatic team for a day of worship, prayer, and fellowship at St George's Cathedral to celebrate Pentecost. The day, open to all, concludes with the Vigil Mass of Pentecost. Full programme at encounterpentecost.com/programme.

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 expected to be approximately £3,000.

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.

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



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

Fifth Sunday of Easter (Year A)

Saturday 2nd May

5pm Maureen Penfold & Bob Burton

Sunday 3rd May

9.30am People of the Parish

11.30am Golden Book Subscribers

Mon 4th English Martyrs, Feast

10am Holy Souls

Tues 5th Feria

National Day of Prayer for Survivors of Abuse.

10am Thanksgiving Charlotte Fernandes

Birthday

7pm Novena Mass

Weds 6th Feria

10am Rowena Govia RIP—anniv

Thurs 7th Feria

10am Hilda Johnson

Fri 8th Feria

10am George & Annie Jessop

Sat 9th Feria

10am Priest Ints

Sacrament of Reconciliation

10.30am—11am & 4pm—4.30pm

Sixth Sunday of Easter (Year A)

Saturday 9th May

5pm Mrs Josefa Rego RIP & Anthony Fernandes RIP

Sunday 10th May

9.30am Bradley Budd RIP (A Sceeny)

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,

Gospel text of today is from the last of the great discourses in the Gospel of John, better known to us as the farewell discourse of Jesus. It is called the farewell discourse of Jesus at the Last Supper is simply because it is the last of the teachings of Jesus in John, and it is given specially to the disciples. The last discourse is very long, covering five chapters out of twenty-one of the Gospel and ending with the great prayer in chapter 17, known as the high priestly prayer of Jesus. It is almost quarter of the gospel.

Farewell discourses are rather common in the bible. They generally looked to the future and gave advice how to live when the leader had gone. We read how Jacob said farewell to his twelve and sons and tells them what the future will hold for them. David gives his final instructions to Solomon his son and heir. They had no expectation of meeting again in the future.

Jesus' farewell also looks to the future and offers a message of comfort to those left behind. However, when Jesus makes his farewell speech to his disciples at the Last

Supper, as we find in today's gospel, he assures them that they will see him again. He first promises them that he is going ahead of them to prepare a place for them. He will meet them once more after their death, because they too will have a room in his Father's house.

Then Jesus deals with questions from two of his disciples. Thomas wants to know the way they are to take. Thanks to his question we have an 'I am' saying— 'I am the way.' Then with the question of Philip we have a lesson on the relationship between Jesus and the Father.

The key word in the gospel is 'living.' When the disciples first met Jesus at the beginning of the gospel, they asked, 'Rabbi, where do you live?' Now they are given their answer. The Son lives with the Father, the Father lives in the Son.

God Bless and love you all.
Canon Edward

Fifth Sunday of Easter

Scripture Insights

Peter's sermon in Acts continues from last Sunday. His listeners have been moved by his testimony, and they ask what they can do. Peter instructs them to repent and be baptised, and he assures them that the promise of the Holy Spirit is both for them (the descendants of Abraham) and for "those far off" (the other nations).

The other three readings turn to the metaphor of the shepherd. The most well-known psalm in Scripture imagines God as a gentle, strong shepherd who refreshes and protects his people. Peter invokes this image in his letter when he writes, "you have now returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls" (1 Pt 2:25). It's unclear whether the shepherd is the Father or Christ. Both are possible, since Jesus takes on this divine metaphor and calls himself the good shepherd. But 1 Peter 2, Jesus is primarily described as the suffering servant from the prophet Isaiah. Like Isaiah's servant, Jesus does not return evil for evil, and bears our sins in his body despite having no sins of his own. He absorbs the world's violence and transforms it into our salvation. Peter's instruction was originally given to Christian slaves and turned the world's logic upside down: the slaves, not the masters, are like Christ.

The reading from John's Gospel takes the metaphor of the shepherd in a surprising direction. Not only is Jesus the shepherd who guards the sheep, he is the gate by which the sheep enter into the sheepfold. The sheep follow him, recognising his voice, and then they enter

into the fold through him: "No one comes to the Father except through me" (Jn 14:6). As in the psalm, those who trust in their shepherd "find pasture" - places of safety and abundance.

Reflections

- If Jesus is the gate through which we all enter, then it follows that we must listen to his teachings and embody them in our lives. We desire to have eternal life with God, and in order to enter through that gate, we begin with our belief in God. This faith leads us to a deeper understanding of what it means to be a follower of Christ. It inspires us to find more ways to encounter him and to share his presence with others.
- We are to care for our brothers and sisters, feed the hungry, visit the sick, and perform works of mercy. We are to pray unceasingly for the needs of others, the needs of the world, and our own needs.

Liturgy and Life

The life of Christian discipleship is not always easy. We might sometimes secretly judge those people whom we think pick and choose only some parts of Church teaching to follow while we valorise or excuse our behaviour. But the Truth is a person, a person who "came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly." Walk through your neighbourhood and notice the abundance of life that spring has brought to it.

LTP Sourcebook 2026

Baptism Preparation Classes for parents living in the parish and who regularly worship at St Stephen's church wishing to baptise their child(ren) on Thursday 7th May, Monday 1st June and Wednesday 1st July at 7.30pm in church. Please note that parents must attend **all** classes.

Safeguarding Sunday 2026. Sunday 3 May is Safeguarding Sunday. In line with today's Gospel, we are called to protect, called to care, called to act. Safeguarding is not the work of a few; it is a shared responsibility. You can find out more about Safeguarding Sunday at [Safeguarding Sunday: Archdiocese of Southwark](#) or via the QR code. Please take a leaflet from the table in the church porch for more information.



National Day of Prayer for Survivors of Abuse on Tuesday 5th May. We pray for all those who are living in fear in their own homes, subjected to physical, psychological or spiritual harm from the very people who are meant to protect and love them. To mark this day we are sharing a *Caritas Westminster* initiative which offers faith-informed support for survivors of domestic abuse within faith communities [NDoP-Survivors-2026-Safe-in-Faith-Prayers.pdf](#)

Grace Explorers – Preteens Fellowship (Ages 9 –12): *Grace Explorers* is an initiative by Jesus Youth UK, started to support children aged 9–12 in their faith journey. We meet once every three to four months at Stephen's Parish church hall for a day of prayer, friendship, fun activities, and simple, engaging reflections on the Kerygma — the basic message of God's love. Children enjoy games, action songs, creative sessions, and time in prayer including Eucharistic Adoration. Our next programme is on 30th May 2026. The full-day event (10:30 am – 4:30 pm). A small registration fee of £10 includes pizza at lunch. **We warmly invite this year's First Holy Communion group to join us on their path as Grace Explorers.**

A Day with Mary at St Anselm Church, Dartford DA1 2HJ on 30th May 9.20am – 4.30pm. Confession & Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament during the day. Please go to <https://adaywithmary.org/> for the full day programme or see poster. Please bring a packed lunch. Livestream link www.churchservices.tv/dartford

Many Thanks for your donations to the *Priest Training Fund* last weekend which came to £789.37. You can still donate by;
• Donate online: [Priest Training Fund: Archdiocese of Southwark](#)
• Call: 020 7960 2504 (weekdays, 9am–5pm)
• Or use the envelopes at the back of church—please gift aid your donation if possible.
Leave a lasting legacy to the Church: Please consider remembering our church or the Priesthood in your Will. Find out more at [Leave a Legacy: Archdiocese of Southwark](#)
Thank you for your prayers and support.

Capital Ring Rosary on Saturday 23rd May. Join Catholics across London for a powerful day of prayer as pilgrims walk the Capital Ring, praying the Rosary and placing our city under Our Lady's care. St Stephen's, Welling will be one of the starting locations and it would be wonderful to have some of our own parishioners praying with this event. Please meet at church at 1pm for a short opening prayer. We will walk Section 2 of the Capital Ring: [Falconwood to Grove Park](#) 4.4miles. A Radio Maria volunteer will lead our group. Please go to [Capital Ring Rosary - Radio Maria England](#) or call 0300 3021251 for more details and to register your attendance. The Capital Ring is divided into 15 sections. For more details about the Capital Ring walk – please visit: <https://tfl.gov.uk/modes/walking/capital-ring>

Caritas Southwark is on Radio Maria with a new discussion series titled *POV: Point of View*. The series brings together guests to explore contemporary issues through the lens of faith and personal experience. The first episode asked the question "*Can we live without social media today?*". The Caritas Operations Coordinator, Michael Heaney, joined the panel and reflected on how social media has become part of everyday life. While it can present real challenges, he emphasised that it's ultimately a tool that, when used intentionally, can support faith formation and even serve as a means of evangelisation. The next episode will air on Wednesday 27th May at 5pm, so do tune in! A link to the previous episode is [here](#).

An Opportunity to Pray for World Peace: St John's Church welcomes other Christians from Welling to join them in praying for peace each Saturday morning on Zoom from 9.30am to 10.10am. Come and join us regularly or occasionally - participants can pray out loud, or just listen and pray quietly. Zoom Code: 715 685 8747 Password: prayer "*Pray continually.*" 1 Thessalonians 5:17