



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

First Holy Communion 2027: For the parents who missed the registration meeting, there will be another opportunity to do so on Wednesday 2nd September at 7.30pm in the parish hall. This will be the last opportunity to register before the preparations begin in September. The registration forms, preparation programme and details will be shared and explained on the day. Please also note that parish First Communion preparations are only for those who attend Sunday Mass at St. Stephen's, Welling.

Sea Sunday is this weekend (11th / 12th July) and there will be a second collection for **Stella Maris** (formally The Apostleship of the Sea). Stella Maris is a Catholic charity supporting seafarers worldwide who play a vital role in all of our lives, but they often work in difficult, hazardous conditions. Sea Sunday 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 or by visiting www.stellamaris.org.uk/donate or by texting 'SEA' to 070460 to donate £5 or scan the QR code on the poster. Donation envelopes are available on the table at the back of church—please take one and complete the gift aid declaration on the back of the envelope. *Please note we are unable to gift aid donations made on the DCP & from the second collection in church.* Gift aiders please use the Stella Maris envelopes or donate directly to the charity to boost your donation as no extra cost to you. This collection is vital to enable Stella Maris to continue its important work, so please give generously. Thank you.

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 & Confirmation cards and gifts are on sale now! Cash only please.

SPARK in the Park runs from 17th to 21st August in Danson Park from 1pm to 4.30pm. A *free* community event for all the family. Each day will feature a range of free activities for children of all ages.

- Games & Stories
- Craft
- Under 5s Area
- SEN Quiet Area
- Bouncy Castles
- Sports

There will also be 3 family focused evening events on the Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings, details to be confirmed.

<https://www.sparkinthepark.org.uk/>

Bexley Winter Shelter which seeks to help and serve the rough sleepers of Bexley Borough, now operates a drop-in day centre based at the Sea Cadets Hall in Trinity Place, Bexleyheath on Mondays and Tuesdays. Please keep the staff, volunteers and "guests" in your prayers.

At this time, we would greatly value gifts of *new* men's underwear, toiletries - shampoo, shower gel, dental floss, toothpaste, deodorant, shaving foam and soap—and sleeping bags. **Please bring your donation(s) to church on the weekend of 25th/26th July.** There will be a box in the porch for donations. Alternatively, please email melvynfrench7@gmail.com to arrange collection or go to Trinity Place during opening days & times (Monday & Tuesday 10am – 2pm) to drop off your donation(s). Thank you so much for being part of this outreach to some of the less fortunate in our Borough.

Pilgrimage to Assisi: A walking pilgrimage to Assisi from September 18th- 26th 2026: one night in Florence then six days along the beautiful 'Way of Francis'. Contact Eddie Gilmore for more information: gileag@gmail.com www.eddiegilmore.org

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 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.

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.

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A)

Saturday 11th July

5pm Helen Klimkowicz & John Reilly

Sunday 12th July *Parish Patronal Feast*

10.30am People of the Parish

Mon 13th **Feria**
10am Christopher Lobo —thanksgiving birthday

Tues 14th **Feria**
10am Ehimare Akhilomen —birthday
11.15am **Funeral: Patrick O'Moore**
7pm **Novena Mass**

Weds 15th **St Bonaventure, Bishop**
10am Josie Pace RIP (M Harrison)

Thurs 16th **Our Lady of Mount Carmel**
10am Michael Derven RIP (A McGowly)

Fri 17th **Feria**
10am Della Maria Baker

Sat 18th **The Blessed Virgin Mary**
10am Priest Ints

Sacrament of Reconciliation
10.30am – 11am

Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A)

Saturday 18th July

5pm **Confirmation Mass**

Sunday 19th July

9.30am People of the Parish

11.30am Andrew Eisabor—memorial

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,

As I have mentioned earlier, Matthew arranges the teachings of Jesus into five great sermons or discourses. Today we read from the third discourse which is the parable discourse, which is a collection of parables. We need to keep in mind that there are parables elsewhere in the gospel, but this chapter contains a collection of seven parables. Hence the term 'parable discourse.'

Today's gospel can be divided into four distinct parts. Firstly, we have a short introduction, which sets the scene beautifully. Jesus goes out into the open countryside to speak to the crowd of people. Because of the large crowd he sits in a bat, the posture of a teacher.

Secondly, Jesus tells the parable of the sower going out to sow. Like most of the parables of Jesus, this parable draws from things and surroundings that would have been familiar to people living in the fishing and agricultural society.

Thirdly, the disciples ask Jesus why he speaks to the people in parables. This question seems to be a kind of an

interruption by the disciples. And finally, Jesus explains the reasons why he speaks in parables and the meaning of the parable.

St. John Chrysostom, reflecting on this parable, said, "three parts perished, one was saved. Since one part survived, he did not cease from working the land. I have scattered such a great quantity of seed it is impossible it should not bring forth some harvest for me. If not every-one listens, half will listen. If not half, then a third, or even a tenth and even one in ten listens, then let him listen. It is no small thing that even one sheep is saved. I do not despise anyone; even if he is only one, he is a human being."

The decisive question is not, 'have I heard the word?' The question or questions are, 'What has become of the word within me? Has it been snatched away? Has it withered? Has it choked or has it borne fruit?'

God Bless and love you all. Canon Edward

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Scripture Insights

Parables feature prominently in the Gospel reading of the next several Sundays. These short, concrete stories use images from daily life to help explain the deeper realities of the good news. This Sunday, Jesus compares God's Word to seeds—tiny things that grow into something greater than themselves. Under the right conditions, a small beginning yields a rich harvest.

The first reading from Isaiah and the responsorial psalm both describe God's Word as holding intrinsic power. Isaiah talks about God's Word as if it were a living thing. It can move and act on its own: "My word shall not return to me void, /but shall do my will, /achieving the end for which I sent it."

The psalm compares God's Word to Israel's wet season. With the of rain, scorched hills bloom, fields as hard as concrete soften to receive the plough, sluggish animals grow fat, and hungry people dream again of abundance. In the mind of the psalmist, every Word of God contains within it such transformative power.

Jesus likely considered these images when he offered his parable. He perhaps recognised that his Israelite ancestors had been too optimistic. God's Word might have immediate and dramatic effect in many places, but in the human heart it can encounter resistance. Jesus saw the vast crowds and knew that many people had been transformed; many others, he knew, were not. In this parable, Jesus offers a reason. Individuals are free to receive God's Word, but they must first prepare the

"soil" of their hearts. For those whose hearts are ready, a great harvest follows.

For many Christians, this change has already begun. In the second reading, Paul calls this the "first fruits of the Spirit." A heart ready for God's Word will quicken and flower like dry country after the rain. Such new life is but the beginning of eternal glory.

Reflections

• These days we expect a good return for our investment in everything, from planting to giving money to charities. We want to know that every bit of our seed money is making a practical difference. It can be hard to accept how little control we actually have over what happens. Even the most modern, tech-savvy farmer knows that weather, animal predation, and soil condition don't always co-operate to bring about a good crop.

• In this case, it is Jesus whose ability to control outcomes is limited. He tells his disciples that some who hear him will close their eyes and ears rather than be converted. God values our freedom so much that he allows his salvific acts that work in our lives to be limited by our acceptance. God can plant the seed and water it, but it is up to us to dig the rocks and thorns out of the fields of our hearts. God's Word can bring healing and growth to our lives. Do we have ears to hear?

• As we prepare to listen to God's Word, let us ask the Lord's forgiveness for the times we have been resistant to his presence in our lives.

LTP Sourcebook 2026

New Sanctuary Furnishings: We are pleased to announce that our new sanctuary furnishings have now been installed. They provide a beautiful and dignified setting for the celebration of the Holy Mass and other sacred liturgies of our parish. We extend our heartfelt thanks to all parishioners whose generous donations have enabled the purchase of these new sanctuary furnishings. May God bless you for your continued support and commitment to our parish.

Although the new sanctuary furnishings are now in place, donations towards their cost are still warmly welcomed. Anyone who wishes to contribute may do so by:

* Cash or cheque (made payable to 'RCAS Welling') in a sealed envelope with *Sanctuary Furniture* written on the front or use one of the Gift Aid Envelopes on the table at the back of the church.

* Card Readers at the back of the church or use the online link <https://portal.mydona.com/assets/webPay/index.php?cid=236>

* Bank Transfer—please use the church bank details on the front page of the newsletter & please reference your donation with '*Sanctuary*'

Your donation can be anonymous if preferred but if you are eligible, please consider gift aiding your donation to the church, which will increase your donation value by 25% at no cost to you. Your kindness and generosity is much appreciated. If you have any questions please speak to Canon Edward or contact the church office.

CAFOD-DEC Venezuela Earthquake Appeal:

You can help our neighbours affected by the 24 June earthquakes in Venezuela with emergency shelter, water and food. CAFOD is already working with local Church partners to support people who have lost their homes, but we need your support to help more survivors. Your donation will provide essential supplies and help families rebuild their lives. Donate to the CAFOD-DEC Venezuela Earthquake Appeal today: cafod.org.uk/Venezuela or call 0300 999 0030 or scan the QR code below. Please keep our neighbours in Venezuela in your prayers.



Centenary Celebration: St John's Church, Danson Lane, Welling 1926—2026. Saturday 18th July to Tuesday 21st July. All welcome. Please see poster for timetable of events or go to www.stjohnswelling.org.uk

Parish Of St Stephen, Welling: Patronal Feast Celebration is this **Sunday, 12th July:** The 9.30am and 11.30am Masses will be replaced with a single Mass (of St Stephen) at **10.30am**. Lunch and recreation activities to follow in the parish hall and outside garden areas until around 3pm.

We hope it will be a great day when the parish comes together to celebrate St Stephen and our parish community. All are welcome!

Helpers needed to prepare the hall & grounds for our celebration.

1. From 10.30am on *Saturday 11th July*, to decorate the church grounds.

4. From 8.30am on *Sunday 12th July*, to set up furniture and equipment outside.

Food and Drink Allergies: We cannot guarantee that the food & drinks available at the *Bring & Share Lunch* are free from allergenic ingredients. If you have any food / drink allergies you are advised to bring your own food & drinks and keep them separate as the donated food & drinks may contain or have come into contact with any or multiple allergenic ingredients. We are unable to guarantee that the food & drinks are free from any food allergens or meet specific dietary requirements.

Parents / Carers are responsible for their children and food & drink choices.

Diaconal Day: This weekend of 11/12 July we are celebrating the third Archdiocesan Diaconal Day, during which we pray for the Permanent Deacons serving in our Archdiocese, as well as for the new vocations to this ministry. If you are a man between 21 years to 58 years, prayerful, with the desire to love and serve God and His 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 your Parish Priest, or contact the Diaconate Formation Director via e-mail: ianblack@rcaos.org.uk or scan the QR code below. Please take a leaflet from the table in the porch.



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.