

First Holy Communion 2027: For the parents who missed the first registration meeting, there will be another opportunity to register your child(ren) 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 note that parish First Communion preparations are only for those who attend Sunday Mass at St. Stephen’s, Welling.

No Eucharistic Exposition and Benediction in church from Friday 21st to 28th August. Resumes on Monday 31st August.

Fr. John O’Donoghue’s 90th Birthday Celebration: A celebration to mark Fr. John’s 90th birthday will take place at 12noon on Saturday 19th September, at Our Lady Help of Christians, Mottingham SE9 4ST followed by a buffet lunch. All are welcome to join the celebrations. Parishioners may remember Fr John where he served as parish priest at St Thomas More Church, Bostall Park from 1998 to his retirement in 2018.

SPARK in the Park runs from 17th to 21st August in Danson Park from 1pm to 4.30pm next to the Boathouse. 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 & Infatables
- Sports

There will also be 3 family focused evening events on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 7pm –9pm.

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

SPARK in the Park - Please pray for the success of SPARK in the Park this year. On Sunday 16th August at 6.30pm we will be meeting in Danson Park for our SPARK Commissioning Service in the SPARK tent (next to the Boathouse). It would be great to see you all there. All welcome to join.

The Divine Mercy Apostolate is holding a Celebration of St. Faustina’s Birthday at Aylesford Priory, Aylesford on Bank Holiday Monday 31st August 2026 from 10:30am to 4pm. The reflection day will include teachings on the Message of Divine Mercy, Holy Mass, Hour of Mercy with Adoration and Benediction and Veneration of the Image of Merciful Jesus. All are welcome.

Parish Coffee Morning on Sunday after the 9.30am Mass in the meeting room attached to the church. Due to popular demand ‘*Café Stephen*’ will be open during August! Please join us for a cuppa & chat. Donations welcomed.

Right to Life: *Support not Suicide* is the campaign to stop assisted suicide. On Friday 11 September 2026, Kim Leadbeater’s revived assisted suicide Bill, which has been brought back to Parliament by Lauren Edwards MP, will have its pivotal Second Reading vote in the House of Commons. Join people across the country in asking MPs to vote NO on 11 September. To find out who is your MP go to [Write to MP to vote NO on the new assisted suicide Bill on 11 Sept – Easy tool](#) Please write to your MP and ask them to vote NO to the revived Leadbeater assisted suicide Bill on 11 September 2026.

Statement on the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill. Ahead of the Bill's Second Reading on 11 September, Archbishop John Sherrington has issued a statement opposing it, citing inadequate safeguards and risks to palliative care. Parishioners are urged to contact their MP via [Right to Life UK](#). More info on the [Catholic Bishops’ Conference website](#).

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. A list of wanted items can be found at <https://bexley.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food/>



ST. STEPHEN’S CHURCH

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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
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The Assumption of The Blessed Virgin Mary	
Saturday 15th August	
5pm	Jennifer D’Cruz RIP—anniv
Sunday 16th August	
9.30am	Anne Carolan
11.30am	People of the Parish
Mon 17th	Feria
10am	Dudley McDonagh RIP —month’s mine & Annie Mullen RIP
Tues 18th	Feria
10am	John Colaco
7pm	Novena Mass
Weds 19th	Feria
10am	Philu D’Costa—thanksgiving birthday
Thurs 20th	St Bernard, Abbot & Doctor of the Church
10am	Richard Fernandes
Fri 21st	St Pius X, Pope
10am	Chloe Coutinho—prayers for GCSE results
Sat 22nd	The Queenship of The Blessed Virgin Mary
10am	Priest Ints
<u>Sacrament of Reconciliation</u> 10.30am –11am & 4pm–4.30pm	
Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A)	
Saturday 22nd August	
5pm	Mary Ellen & Patrick Reilly
Sunday 23rd August	
9.30am	Maura McCormack RIP—anniv
11.30am	People of the Parish

Mass Times and Intentions	
Mon 24th	St Bartholomew, Apostle
10am	Amelia Rodrigues & Rafael Rodrigues—birthdays
Tues 25th	Feria
10am	Gertie Kennedy—birthday (McMorrow)
7pm	Novena Mass
Weds 26th	Feria
10am	John Murphy
Thurs 27th	St Monica, Memorial
10am	Frank Pace RIP
Fri 28th	St Augustine, Bishop & Doctor of the Church
10am	Maria Josephina DaSilva RIP—anniv
Sat 29t	The Passion of St John the Baptist, Memorial
10am	Priest Ints
<u>Sacrament of Reconciliation</u> 10.30am –11am & 4pm–4.30pm	
Twenty-Second Sunday in Ordinary (Year A)	
Saturday 29th August	
5pm	Linda Govia RIP—anniv
Sunday 30th August	
9.30am	Anne Paguntanlan—healing & recovery
11.30am	People of the Parish
Please remember in your prayers the sick and housebound; at home, in hospital or in residential care.	

My dear People,	
This weekend we celebrate the great Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.	
On the 1st November 1950, Pope Pius XII formally proclaimed the Dogma of the Assumption. In the apostolic constitution Munificentissimus Deus, the Pope said, ‘that the Immaculate Mother of God, ever Virgin Mary, having completed the course of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory.’ The emperor Mauritius introduced the fixed date of 15th August toward the end of the sixth century. In the Eastern Churches this feast is known as the Dormition of the Blessed Virgin Mary (the Falling Asleep) and is one of the great feasts in the liturgical year.	
The second Vatican Council affirmed the tradition in the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Lumen Gentium. It said, ‘the Immaculate Virgin, preserved free from all stain of original sin, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, when her earthly life was over, and exalted by the Lord as Queen over all things.’ (No. 59). Then towards the end it says, ‘the Mother of Jesus in the glory which she possesses in body and soul in heaven is the image and the beginning of the church as it to be perfected in the world to come. Likewise, she shines forth on earth, until the day of the Lord shall come.’ (No. 68).	
The Assumption must be seen in the light of discipleship and the redemption by Jesus. As the Scripture scholar Raymond Brown said, ‘Mary has received a privilege that will ultimately be given to all Christians. All believers in Christ will be raised from the dead and taken bodily to heaven.’	
Our feast today is a sign of hope that allows us to live in the world with faith and optimism. The Assumption reminds us that we are all pilgrims.	
There is a story about an American tourist visiting a famous Polish rabbi. The tourist was surprised to see that the rabbi’s house was a simple room filled with books. The only furniture was a table and a bench. The tourist asked, ‘Rabbi, where is your furniture?’ ‘Where is yours?’ replied the rabbi. ‘Mine? But I am only a visitor here, just passing through.’ To which the rabbi replied, ‘So am I.’	
In the gospel of today, with all our hearts we unite ourselves to the song of patience and victory, of struggle and joy, that joins our lives to the eternity towards which we journey.	
God Bless and love you all. Canon Edward	
Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary	
Today’s Solemnity At the end of her earthly life, Mary was taken up into heaven body and soul. Today’s solemnity is a source of hope for all of us, as it reveals that our full humanity is destined to be drawn into eternal life with Christ. We ask for the intercession of Mary, the first one to experience the fullness of Christ’s redeeming work, as we the pilgrim Church continue our journey through this earthly life, awaiting the glory that is to come. Scripture Insights The visitation of Mary to Elizabeth presents two pregnant women who have aligned themselves to God’s will, praising God for the great things that he has done and will continue to do in the birth of their children. Both children will be instrumental in establishing God’s reign. Mary’s Magnificat, her prayer of praise and thanksgiving to God, exalts his faithful covenant love towards the lowly. For Mary, God manifests that faithful covenant love by reversing human values, thought patterns, and ways of operating, and actualising God’s values, thought patterns, and ways of operating. Mary prophetically proclaims that God is at work in the world through her, Elizabeth, and their children, to establish a new way of thinking and acting. This was God’s plan from the beginning, brought to final fulfilment in these miraculous births. Today, we praise God for honouring Mary and us with such marvellous love and care. Introduction to Mass The Blessed Virgin Mary submitted body and soul to the will of God, and so at her earthly passing, she was assumed body and soul into the glory of heaven. As we prepare to honour Mary today, let us call upon her to pray for us, that we too may surrender our lives to God’s service so that his plan might bear good fruit through us. Liturgy and Life In the delightful story of Mary’s visit to her cousin Elizabeth, we see the meeting of two worlds: the world of hope and the world of love. Elizabeth’s ancestors waited for a messiah, and Mary’s child would be the loving response to that expectation. The marvellous revelation of God comes to us in the pregnancies of these two holy women. We are children of their hope and their love, and even more we are a sign of God’s hope for the world and a bearer of God’s love to the world. <i>LTP Sourcebook 2026</i>	

CAFOD: Global Debt Crisis: Many thanks to all who signed the CAFOD petition about the global debt crisis last weekend. Every signature on the petition will help to make a difference, as CAFOD call for more ambitious action from the UK government. For more information on the campaign, to sign the petition online & to write to your MP online please go to <https://cafod.org.uk/campaign/the-global-debt-crisis> Cards are available on the table in the church porch for you to write to your MP at the House of Commons (no stamp required) asking their support to pass a UK Debt Justice Law without delay & to lead urgent reform on the global debt system. Please take a card home with you to write and then post. CAFOD director, Christine Allen, has recorded a message explaining why this campaign is so important: [watch the message now](#). Cardinal Stephen Ameyu Martin Mulla from South Sudan has written to parishes in England and Wales. A copy of his letter is available on our noticeboard. Please take the time to read his message and lend your support. Thank you for helping to build a better world.

New Sanctuary Furnishings have provided 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. The ‘old’ baptismal font has been placed at the back of the church and parishioners are invited to pause at the font to bless themselves with the holy water upon entering and leaving church.

Family Faith have created a Summer Family Activity pack which can be downloaded using this link: [Online Family Activity Packs — CELEBRATE Trust](#). Families can choose from faith filled activities, support for family prayer, books for different ages and film suggestions. There is also a *Summer Psalm Walk* designed to help families explore Psalm 139 whilst they walk in their local park or on holiday, [Get your FREE Celebrate@Home Summer Psalm walk!](#)

Catholic Worker magazine (summer edition) is available (*free*) on the table in the porch. Please take a copy home to read.

Society for the Protection of Unborn Children (SPUC) National Conference 2026 returns to London (12 September) and Glasgow (19 September), gathering pro-life supporters to learn effective strategies for defending unborn life. Book here spuc.org.uk/spuc-national-conference.

RCIA: Anyone seeking to learn more about the Catholic Faith is invited to join the RCIA group which meet on Monday evenings in the small hall (attached to the church) from 7pm to 8.30pm. Our first session is on Monday 28th September. Former members are most welcome to join us and share their thoughts and experiences. Please make contact with one of the catechists if you intend coming so we have your name: Eileen at 5pm (Saturday) and 11.30am Sunday Masses. Peter & Maureen at 9.30am Sunday Masses and Canon Edward.

The Archdiocese of Southwark Education Service warmly invites you to an inspiring evening exploring the rewarding and varied opportunities available within Catholic education. This event is open to graduates, career changers, teachers, support staff, retired professionals, parishioners and anyone interested in supporting the mission of Catholic education on Tuesday 15 September, 6:30–8:30pm at St John Fisher Catholic Comprehensive School, Rochester ME1 2FA. Tea, coffee and light refreshments will be available. Details and booking at rcaoseducation.org.uk/actr

Bereavement Ministry Training on Saturday 19 Sep. This training day at Aylesford Priory, Kent, (9am –5pm) equips parishioners to offer sensitive, empathetic support to the bereaved. Contact Barbara Salamonzczyk to book: mflbereavement@rcaos.org.uk

March for Life UK: Join Archbishop John Wilson at the March for Life UK on Saturday 5 September, 10am –5pm in London, including the Pro-Life Family Summit and Youth Summit. Find out more at marchforlife.co.uk.

The Year of St Francis: To mark the eighth centenary of the death of St Francis of Assisi, Our Lady of the Angels Church, Erith, has organized a programme of celebrations and devotional events. From Saturday 1 August to Saturday 26 September, the parish will hold nine novena themes based upon Franciscan spirituality. These will be accompanied by exhibitions of relics of Franciscan saints and of the Eucharistic Miracles exhibition devised by St Carlo Acutis. On Saturday 3 October, the 17:30 Mass will include the special liturgy of the Transitus, commemorating the passing of St Francis from this life to eternal life. On Sunday 4 October, Archbishop John will celebrate Mass for the Feast of St Francis at 10:30am. Further information is available from [Our Story — OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS RC CHURCH](#)