Parish Memorial Mass: ***Remembering Our Loved Ones*** on Thursday 26th November at 7pm. All parishioners, family and friends are warmly invited to join us for a special Memorial Mass as we come together to remember and pray for our loved ones who have passed away. This will be a special opportunity for us, as a parish community, to unite in prayer, give thanks for the lives of those we have lost, and cherish their memories. We invite everyone attending to bring a photograph of their departed family member or friend, which can be placed on the table in front of the altar during the Mass. Let us come together in faith, love and remembrance as we hold our loved ones in our prayers.

Christmas Food Bank: Our Parish Liturgy Committee has suggested that our Advent Sunday Masses could be an opportunity to make special Christmas donations to the Bexley Food Bank. Donations to make Christmas more festive for those who need support from the Food Bank could be special treats such as biscuits, sweets, puddings (alcohol free), toiletries, small decorative items, soft drinks & chocolates (but strictly no alcohol content).
A labelled container will be available by the table at the back of the church before each Sunday Mass. This will be brought to the sanctuary as part of the offertory procession. If you are able, please prepare to make some festive donation for the Food Bank on one or more of the four Advent Sundays, starting on November 28th/ 29th.
We will still continue to collect non Christmas food items for the Food Bank. Urgently wanted items are tinned potatoes, packets of instant mash potato, tinned custard, tinned rice pudding, long life juice, small jars of coffee & male & female deodorants. These donations can be left in the box in the porch. Your support and generosity is much appreciated.

Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) Appeal next weekend (28th and 29th November). Benjamin Loughnane will make an appeal for Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) which supports over 5,000 projects world-wide, helping the Church's mission in regions facing persecution, conflict, and poverty. There will be a collection at all Masses to support this important work. If you would like to get involved or become an ACN volunteer, please contact:
Aloma Do Rozario
☐ 07908 033 878 or aloma.dorozario@acnuk.org
☐ www.acnuk.org
Donations can also be made by scanning the QR code below.

Parish Coffee Morning on Sunday after the 9.30am Mass in the meeting room attached to the church. Please join us for a cuppa & chat. Donations welcomed.

World Youth Sunday: This weekend there is a second collection to support the work of the Southwark Catholic Youth Service, which provides a variety of activities for youth and young adults, helping them to grow in faith. Visit our website https://scys.org.uk/
Join the Southwark Catholic Youth network for regular updates at www.tinyurl.com/scysnetwork.
Please take a leaflet from the table in the porch with activities for Youth & Young Adults.

Advent Prayer Service in church on Monday 7th December at **7.30pm** followed by refreshments in the small hall. A spiritual preparation for the Feast of Christmas. All welcome.

Daily Reflection for Advent: As an aid to personal prayer during Advent, the Spirituality Commission have produced a helpful daily reflection based on the readings for the day. Each is short, practical and calls us to action. All who register will receive an email each morning directly to their inbox! To sign up - click on the link http://eepurl.com/dcNmsv or you can take a look at their website www.southwarkdsc.org.uk and click on the box marked ADVENT REFLECTIONS.

Unwrap Advent with Radio Maria UK: This Advent, prepare for Christmas with the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. From Monday 23 to Friday 27 November, call Radio Maria UK on 0333 444 1211 to have your personal Gift drawn live on air, or register online and we will email it to you with a Bible quote to pray with. Register before Advent begins on Sunday 29 November to enjoy the whole journey, with special programmes and weekly emails with programme times and podcasts. Sign up at **www.RadioMaria.uk**. Call 0300 302 1251 for more information.

CAFOD Advent Carol Service at St George's Cathedral on Wednesday 2nd December at 7pm followed by drinks and mince pies. All welcome. Details at CAFOD's Advent Carol Service 2026

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.

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.



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

Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe (A)

Saturday 21st November

5pm Mr Vu's Family Intentions

Sunday 22nd November

9.30am Danzal D'Costa—thanksgiving birthday

11.30am People of the Parish

Mon 23rd **St Columban, Abbot**
10am Deceased Members of Abreo & DeBraganca Families

Tues 24th **Sts. Andrew Dung-Lac & Companions,**
10am Peter Ward RIP—anniv
7pm Novena Mass

Weds 25th **St Catherine of Alexandria, Martyr**
10am Robert Lobo RIP—birthday

Thurs 26th **Feria**
10am Santana Demello RIP
7pm Deceased Family & Friends of the Parish

Fri 27th **Feria**
10am Savio Rodrigues—birthday

Sat 28th **The Blessed Virgin Mary**
10am Priest Ints

Sacrament of Reconciliation
10.30am—11am & 4pm—4.30pm

First Sunday of Advent (Year B)

Saturday 28th November

5pm Living & Deceased Members of the Lobo / D'Costa & D'Souza / D'Silva families

Sunday 29th November

9.30am Mrs Ann Shirley Fernandes (B Fernandes)

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 Please gift aid your donation, if possible, by completing a digital Gift Aid Declaration—name, address and email address required.

To set up a standing order to make regular monthly donations please contact the office via email for the church bank details—wellingsecretary@rcaos.org.uk

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. If you have any questions please contact the church office.

My dear People,

As we celebrate the feast of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the universe—better known as the feast of Christ the King, we come to the end of another liturgical year. Some of you may remember in the days gone by, we used to celebrate this feast on the last Sunday of October. Pope St. Paul VI with the liturgical reforms of the Vatican II moved the celebrations to the last Sunday of the liturgical year sometime around 1969/1970. Placing it at the end of the liturgical year, it highlights Christ's eternal reign and the second coming.

The feast of Christ the King is a recent feast added to the liturgical calendar. Pope Pius XI instituted this feast in 1925 with the encyclical Quas primas.

Why did he institute this feast? The first World War has ended seven years earlier. As a result of the war millions were dead and Europe was devastated. The old political order has collapsed and new powerful movements were beginning to emerge. In Russia the communist state was established, in Italy Mussolini came to power in 1922, in Germany a political movement was gathering momentum.

Behind all this Pope Pius XI saw a deeper problem. The modern society of the day was attempting to organise life without reference to God. Religion began to be pushed to a private matter and political ideologies made greater headlines.

Four years after the end of the war Pope Pius XI addressed this problem with his first encyclical, Ubi acarno Dei consilio. He wrote, '*since the close of the Great War……the nations of the earth have not as yet found true peace.*' In 'Quas primas' the pope returned to the same theme saying, *'the evil present in the world was due to the fact that the majority of people had thrust Jesus Christ and his holy law out of their lives……As long as individuals and States refused to submit to the rule of our Saviour, there would be no really hopeful prospect of a lasting peace among nations.*'

The feast of Christ the King therefore was not simply to give Jesus another title. It made a much larger claim. No nation, no government, no political leader and no ideology possesses the absolute authority. There is a sovereignty higher than all of them. Christ is King.

God Bless and love you all. Canon Edward

Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ the King (Year A)

About Today's Solemnity

On this final Sunday of the liturgical year, this liturgy celebrates Jesus as Lord of love, revealing God' love for all people and calling his followers to live in that love. We are reminded in today's readings of the biblical imperative to care for the most vulnerable in society.

Introduction to Mass

Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, reigns over his kingdom not as a distant, harsh ruler, but as a merciful servant-king who dwells among his people. He is the Good Shepherd who knows each of his sheep by name and tends to their needs. If we are to follow him into his eternal kingdom, Jesus expects us to follow his ways of compassion and to care for others as if they were the Lord himself.

Scripture Insights

As the first reading and psalm reveal, the God of Israel always had a special interest in the needs of the poor. Time and again, God instructed Israel not to let the poor suffer, to render just judgments for widows and orphans, to feed the hungry, and—as the prophet Ezekiel writes in this Sunday's first reading—to seek out the lost and heal the injured. As this Sunday's psalm shows, biblical literature turns repeatedly to images of God as shepherd. People recognised the care that shepherds provided their flocks, and many people experienced a similar care in the love of God.

Paul reminds Christians that those who belong to Christ must follow his example with their actions.

The Church as a body leads us in caring for the poor and tending the sick, but individual Christians have a responsibility to do the same as far as their means allow. It is easy to think that concern for the least is merely one good way to symbolise an interior salvation, but that is not what this Sunday's Gospel teaches. Matthew insists that care for the least is an encounter with Christ himself, and that it prepares us for the day when we meet Christ face to face. In Matthew's mind, only those who seek Christ in gritty and painful realities like homelessness, hunger, illness, and imprisonment will be recognised by him when he comes in glory.

Reflections

- Today's Gospel reading is part of Jesus' final teachings to his disciples before the events of his passion and death. They ask Jesus what will happen when he comes at the end of time. He gives a long series of teachings, some of which we have heard over the past several weeks, with today's passage concluding them.
- Today's reading challenges us to look at our lives and honestly evaluate how well we are doing taking care of the most vulnerable people in our society. Look around your community: Are there people who are hungry or afraid? Are there people who are deemed different and therefore not treated well? We hear Jesus identify with the poor and vulnerable. Those whom society rejects are the very people that Jesus is most concerned about.

LTP Sourcebook 2026

Church Christmas Flowers: There will be a retiring collection as you leave church at our Masses on the first & second weekends of Advent (28th/29th November & 5th / 6th December). Money collected will be used for the flower displays during the Christmas season. Thank you for your generosity.

Parish Christmas Carol Service on *Saturday 19th 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 & come along. There will be a collection for *Friends of the Holy Land*. https://www.friendsoftheholyland.org.uk/
If you would like to join the choirs for this merry event, Please attend the practice sessions on Wednesdays at 7pm. There will also be practices on most Saturday mornings. Please speak to one of the choir leaders for more information.

Reception 2027: Open Meeting and Tour at St Stephen's Catholic Primary School for parents/ carers of children due to start school in September 2027 (*children born between 1st September 2022 and 31st August 2023*) on Monday 30th November at 9:30am & 1.15pm. There will be a talk from the Headteacher and the opportunity to tour the school. Booking is not required. School Address: Ruskin Avenue, Welling DA16 3QG. https://www.st-stephens.bexley.sch.uk/

Missio Red Boxes: Many thanks to all those that brought their red boxes to be emptied. Please remember to collect your box from the porch, if you haven't already done so. There are 2027 calendars & Missio booklets on the table for you to take home. Many thanks.

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.

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.

SVP & Ink Cartridges: Recycle your old ink cartridges and raise funds for the St Vincent de Paul Society by placing them in the box on the table in the porch (no large cartridges). Many thanks.

November Remembrance – A bowl is in front of the altar for the month of November in which you can put names of the departed to be prayed for.

The Synod Implementation for the Parish of St Stephen, Welling: To continue our parish conversations on the Final Document, there is another opportunity for you to share your thoughts and suggestions about ways in which our parish could improve in the light of the Final Document. On the table at the back of the church are slips of paper with three topics which you can comment upon on / make suggestions—*Sunday Masses, Support for Parish Members & Participation in Parish Planning*. Please take one or more of the papers and write your comments in the space provided. There is a box on the table to post your paper(s) in.
Once we have collected the responses there will be some small group meetings to discuss implementing the suggestions to improve our parish. Your thoughts, ideas and suggestions are valuable, and we warmly invite you all to share your views and contribute towards shaping the future of our parish. Many thanks.

Repository: Advent candles and calendars, Christmas cards, calendars, candles, children's Christmas books and Christmas Mass Bouquet cards on sale now in the Repository. Please take time to visit after weekend Masses. (cash only please).

Blessing of Graves at *Hillview Cemetery, Welling* on Saturday 21st November at 11am.

Joan Mythen RIP: Sad news that Joan, a member of St Stephen's parish along with her family for many years, sadly died. Please keep Joan and her family in your prayers. Joan's funeral at St Stephens's will be on Tuesday 1st December at 11am.

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.