



This parish is served by the Spiritans

**THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT Parish Mass Book Year A Vol 1, Page 88**

**GAUDETE SUNDAY**

Today is the Third Sunday of Advent. It is often called Gaudete, or 'rejoicing' Sunday. The name comes from the Entrance Antiphon to the Mass: 'Rejoice in the Lord always: again I say rejoice! The Lord is near.'

The Lord is near! Two weeks of our Advent preparation have already passed – today the priest may wear pink vestments, the third candle on the Advent Wreath is lit, and during the next few days the Church's liturgy will turn more attentively to the coming of the Lord at Bethlehem.

But what about us? Half of Advent is already gone. Have we made any spiritual progress, given any more time to prayer, are we really any better prepared to greet the birth of Jesus on Christmas Day? Once again today, the Gospel reading focuses on John the Baptist, the faithful witness, challenging us too to 'prepare the way of the Lord' and to make a home for him in our hearts.

'What does "to prepare the way" mean, except to pray as you ought, to be humble minded? Take an example of humility from John himself. He is thought to be the Christ, but he says he is not what people think. He knew where his salvation lay. He understood that he was a lamp, and he was afraid of being quenched by the wind of pride.' (St Augustine).

**On this Gaudete Sunday, we are reminded that amidst this time of preparation, we must not lose sight of the one we are preparing for – Our Lord and Saviour.**

**PARISH ADVENT RECONCILIATION SERVICE**

**SATURDAY 17th DECEMBER 11.00am**

**We are encouraged to set aside this short time next Saturday morning for some prayer and reflection in preparation to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation as we draw closer to celebrating the birth of our Saviour.**

**THE CHURCH IS OPEN**

**Tuesday-Friday**

08.45am-4.00pm

**Sat** 10.00am-6.30pm

**Sun** 7.45am-12noon

**SUNDAY MASSES**

**Sat Vigil 5:30pm**

Int: All Parishioners

**Sunday 08.30am**

Int: Mary Law, R.I.P.

**Sunday 10.15am**

Int: Frances Mary  
Doherty, R.I.P.

**WEEKDAY MASSES**

**Tues 13th: 9.30am**

Int: Wilfred, Edith, John  
Fr. Tom and John Jnr -  
Goodfellow, R.I.P.

**Wed 14th : 9.30am**

Int: Arthur & Eileen Fox,  
family & friends R.I.P.

**Thurs 15th: 9.30am**

**NO MASS**

**Fri 16th: 9.30am**

Int: Maureen Smith,  
Anniversary, R.I.P.

**CONFESSIONS**

**Tues-Fri** 8.40 -9.20am

**Sat** 4.30-5.20pm

or by appointment

**PARISH OFFICE OPENING HOURS: TUES, THURS, FRI 10.00am-2.00pm - Tel 01474705361**

**Parish Priest:** Fr Alphonsus Beni CSSp

**Email:** [alphonsusbeni@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:alphonsusbeni@rcaos.org.uk) (**Day off: Mon**)

**PLEASE CALL OR EMAIL THE PRIEST**

**DIRECTLY FOR AN APPOINTMENT**

**Tel: 07500262446**

**Parish Secretary:** Jane Pemberton

**Parish Council Chair:** Chris Pieroni

[hartleypcc@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:hartleypcc@rcaos.org.uk)

**Safeguarding representative:** Judith Stephens

**Email:** [hartleysg2safeguard@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:hartleysg2safeguard@rcaos.org.uk)

## **MASS FOR THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD:**

**24th December CHRISTMAS VIGIL MASS: 5.30pm.** *This Mass is intended for families with young children.*

**24th December MIDNIGHT MASS: 8.00pm**  
with the adult choir singing

**25th December CHRISTMAS DAY: 9.30am**

### **PARISH NOTICES**

**YOUTH CHOIR PRACTISE SUNDAY 11th DECEMBER**  
Please bring your child to the church at 2pm to practise for the Carol Service and the Christmas Vigil Mass. All children are welcome to come along

#### **PARISH FAMILY CAROL SERVICE**

A final reminder that the Parish Carol Service is this Sunday at 3 o'clock. There will be Mince Pies and Teas in the Meeting Room after the service!

#### **PARISH ANNUAL CHRISTMAS RAFFLE**

Tickets are on sale this weekend and up to the day of the **Raffle Draw, Sunday 18th December.**

#### **CWC MEETING ON WEDNESDAY 14th DECEMBER**

'Will be held at the earlier time of 1pm. I would ask anyone wishing to join us, kindly bring a small plate of food to share so we can enjoy a lunchtime together. We can assure you of a couple of hours of good company, pleasant chat, tea and cake to finish. Looking forward to seeing you on the 14th'.  
*Margaret Walsh, for the CWC.*

#### **CELEBRATING ADVENT**

All are invited to the meeting room from **8 pm to 9 pm on Friday 16th December.** We will consider the readings for the fourth Sunday in Advent and reflect on what the texts meant to the early Christians, what they mean to us now, and what the Holy Spirit might be saying to us through them. Please try to come as part of the parish Advent preparation for Christmas.

#### **JOB VACANCY AT OUR LADY OF HARTLEY SCHOOL**

**Caretaker Vacancy** – 25 hours per week-

<https://www.kent-teach.com/Recruitment/Vacancy/VacancyDetails.aspx?VacancyId=110230>

**Teaching Assistant Vacancy** – 30 hours per week-

<https://www.kent-teach.com/Recruitment/Vacancy/VacancyDetails.aspx?VacancyId=109962>

Deadline to apply: Monday 12th December 2022

**For the latest information and school news, visit us at [www.ourladyhartley.kent.sch.uk](http://www.ourladyhartley.kent.sch.uk)**

## **CHRISTMAS OFFERING TO THE PARISH PRIEST**

As is customary, our Offertory Collection on 24th and 25th December will be our Christmas gift to our parish priest. There are special envelopes on the table in the entrance porch. If you will not be attending Christmas Mass in the parish, you may leave your offering in the Collection basket or post it through the door at the presbytery. If you use Gift aid envelopes for your donations, please write your GA number on the envelope. Alternatively, you may donate by bank standing order, Nat West 60-06-33 Acc 34143580, noting **Christmas Offering** to your donation. Thankyou for your kind support.

#### **ST FRANCIS DE SALES 200 CLUB**

To become a 200 Club member, the relevant information is available in the church porch and on the website, to download. **The December Draw will take place after 8.30am Mass on Sunday 18th December. There will be 3 prizes of £100, £70, £50. There is still time to join before the Draw.**

#### **PARISH SAFEGUARDING VOLUNTEER NEEDED**

If you could assist Judith Stephens in the area of Parish Safeguarding and would like to discuss the role, please speak with Fr Alphonsus for guidance.

### **CATACHETICAL PROGRAMMES**

Parishioners are asked to first check the **SACRAMENTS** section on the parish website; it has general information on the programmes. Please speak with Fr Alphonsus for any further advice. Sacramental programmes for school-aged children are lead by the parish, and are not school lead programmes. **Families wishing to enrol for Sacramental programmes must be registered parishioners of St Francis de Sales.**

#### **SACRAMENTS OF FIRST RECONCILIATION AND FIRST HOLY COMMUNION - 2023 PROGRAMME.**

Parents whose children who have reached school Year 3 or above, and who are registered parishioners attending Mass at St Francis de Sales, are invited to enrol their child on the parish programme which will begin on Friday 20th January 2023. Lessons will take place in the church meeting room on Fridays 3.30-4.30pm, during term time. Weekly Mass attendance is a requirement for enrolment on the programme and throughout. **Application forms will be available in the church after Mass next weekend, 17th/18th December.**

## BAPTISM FOR BABIES AND INFANTS

Parents of infants and those seeking Baptism, please attend a weekend Mass and speak with Fr. Alphonsus afterwards to register for the Baptism course. **If you have not yet registered your family on the parish database, you need to complete and submit a Parish Registration Form, thankyou.**

## CHILDREN'S LITURGY – FOR CHILDREN YR TO Y2

Will take place this Sunday 11th December, at the 10.15am Mass. Please bring your child to the meeting room **before** the start of Mass. Thankyou

## CONFIRMATION IN 2023

**Confirmation Classes will continue on Tuesday 13th December at 6.30pm in the meeting room.** Any young person in school year 8 or above who would like to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation in 2023, Application Forms are available in the church porch or on the parish website. Parents should speak to Fr Alphonsus as soon as possible and return completed forms to the parish office.

## RECEIVING COMMUNION

Any adult who does not receive Communion, please do speak with Fr Alphonsus for guidance.

## RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults)

Are You Interested in Becoming a Catholic? If you have never been baptized, if you were baptized in another Christian denomination and would like to become Catholic, or if you were baptized Catholic, but never received the Sacraments of Eucharist or Confirmation, you are welcome to join the RCIA programme, the process by which adults become Catholic. Likewise, if you are Catholic and interested in learning more about the Faith, you are welcome to join. **Lessons are currently take place on Saturday mornings in the church meeting room.**

## REGULAR NOTICES

### PARISH REGISTRATION

We welcome all new parishioners to St Francis de Sales, Hartley. We want you to feel at home in the parish. **The first thing to do is to register yourself/ your family on the Parish Registration Database.** Parish Registration Forms are available in the porch, or on the parish website to complete and return to the parish office.

## PLANNED GIVING AND GIFT AIDED DONATIONS SUPPORTING THE RUNNING COSTS OF THE PARISH

Please choose one of the following options:

- (i) Set up a Bank Standing Order
- (ii) Donate Online
- (iii) Use Weekly Envelopes (
- iv) Cash/Cheque payable to RCAS Hartley (
- v) One off Donation (vi) Contactless Giving.

**Online donations to: Nat West Account RCAS Hartley: 34143580 sort code: 60-06-33**

*If you are a taxpayer, please consider joining the Gift Aid Scheme, 25p in every £1 can be claimed back by the parish.*

You can use our JustGiving page

[www.justgiving.com/St-Francis-de-Sales-Hartley](http://www.justgiving.com/St-Francis-de-Sales-Hartley)

## VISITING THE SICK AND HOUSEBOUND

If you or someone in your family is housebound and would like a priest to visit, please do contact Father Alphonsus directly or call the parish office, thankyou

## BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP

We have a small, friendly group here at St. Francis de Sales whose members can visit to meet up and chat or maybe just to lend a listening ear. Contact Fr. Alphonsus and he will put you in touch with us.

## DONATION BOX FOR GRAVESEND FOODBANK

Non perishable items can be left in the Food Bank Box in the Meeting Room or in the porch. Thankyou.

## ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY (SVP)

'We are a small group of people who offer confidential support through phone calls, house visits, accompany to local medical/dental appointments. We also offer confidential financial support to families. Contact via the parish office'.

## DIOCESAN NOTICES

*'Advent can be such a busy demanding time, but we encourage you to make some space to reflect and pray this advent.'*

To aid your prayer, Sign up for our free Southwark Diocesan 'Daily Advent Reflections'.

You will receive an email with a very brief thought for the day based on the daily reading. It is an opportunity to listen to God's invitation to you this advent. Sign up: <http://www.southwarkdsc.org.uk/> by clicking on the Advent Reflection box'.

*Bishop Paul Hendricks*

## PARISH GROUP MEETINGS

### ADULT CHOIR

Every Thursday at 7:30pm in the church, unless stated otherwise in the newsletter. New members welcome.  
Contact: Yvonne Hegarty at [yhegarty@talktalk.net](mailto:yhegarty@talktalk.net)

### ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY (SVP)

Contact confidentially through the parish office.

### KNIGHTS OF ST. COLUMBA

Third Wednesday each month at 7:00pm in the church meeting room. New members welcome.  
Contact: William Rons [williamrons@hotmail.com](mailto:williamrons@hotmail.com)

### CATHOLIC WELCOME CIRCLE (CWC)

Second Wednesday each month in the church meeting room at 2:00pm unless stated other wise. Contact Margaret Walsh for more details.

### YOUTH GROUP

Leaders' meetings will take place in the meeting room.  
Contact: Laura Bourne through the parish office.

## TEXTS FOR THIS SUNDAY'S MASSES

### THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT YEAR A

**Isaiah 35: 1-6,10** He judges the wretched with integrity

**Psalms Response** *Come, Lord and save us*

**James 5: 7-10** Do not lose heart, for the Lord's coming will be soon

**Matthew 11: 2-11** Repent for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.

## TEXTS FOR NEXT SUNDAY'S MASSES

### FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT YEAR A

**Isaiah 7: 10-14** The maiden is with child

**Psalms Response** *Let the Lord enter! He is the King of glory.*

**Romans 1: 1-7** Jesus Christ, descendant of David, son of God.

**Matthew 1: 18-24** Jesus is born of Mary who was betrothed to Joseph, son of David.

**FOR DAILY PRAYERS AND MASS READINGS ONLINE, VISIT** <https://www.universalis.com/>

## OFFERTORY COLLECTION 4th DECEMBER 2022

Envelopes: £55.50 Loose Plate: £140.00

Contactless: £65.00

2nd Collection 4th December: £ 93.70

Thatch Fund: £63.60

2nd Collection this weekend 11th December:

**CHRISTMAS FLOWERS**

*Thankyou for your generosity and support*

2nd Collection 18th Dec: New Fire Extinguishers

Christmas Offertory Collection 24th/25th December: Gift to the parish priest.

## THATCH FUND

Our funding stands at **£35,529.96** of the **£45,000.00** Target to reach in 2023. Thankyou for your **£1 weekly donation**. You may deposit your £1 in one of the Thatch Fund Boxes at the back of the church OR set up a £4 monthly/ £52 annual standing order at: **Nat West RCAS Hartley Acc 34363181 Sort Code 60-06-33**. If you are a tax payer using the parish Gift Aid scheme, please note your GA number to your donation.

## PRAYER FOR THE SICK & HOUSEBOUND

*Father, we thank you for the gift of your Son in the Eucharist. We now place before you all the sick and housebound of our parish.*

*As they share in this Eucharist with us, we pray that they may come to know the depth of your love for them and, the joy, the peace and healing of your presence.*

*We make our prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

**Pope Francis's prayer Intention for December: for Volunteer Not-for-Profit Organizations**

'We pray that volunteer non-profit organizations committed to human development find people dedicated to the common good and ceaselessly seek out new paths to international cooperation'

For a newsletter emailed weekly, or to suggest articles/additions, contact the parish secretary:  
[hartley@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:hartley@rcaos.org.uk). **Newsletter items received after 11:00am Friday may not be included that week.**  
Editor reserves the right to edit articles. A parish of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark.  
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