



This parish is served by the Spiritans

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT Parish Mass Book Year A Vol 1, Page 90

PARISH ADVENT RECONCILIATION SERVICE

SATURDAY 17th DECEMBER 11.00am

We are encouraged to set aside this short time on 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.

To go before a priest in Confession and personally, bodily, and vulnerably own up to our sins certainly stands in sharp contrast to the airbrushed and flawless facade we are expected to keep up online. We live in an age of disconnection, in which we can hide behind phone screens and digital barriers and block anything uncomfortable. We can manicure our social media presence to make sure we're portrayed as spotless with the perfect filters. We can delete our flaws, block annoyances, and delete browser histories so we look as if we have nothing to hide.

There's a human need to repent and conform ourselves to what is true. More often today, we attempt to do so through incomplete, imperfect and even distorted means, such as therapy and reveal-all moments on daytime talk show. People post way-too-revealing details of their lives online because of a sincere need for human connection and for the truth to be known. We desire to be seen and loved for the wholeness of who we are, no matter how we try to bury the details.

Often when Jesus encountered the sick, He would bring healing to the soul just as readily as to the body. When men brought their paralyzed friend to Jesus to be healed, Jesus first forgave the man's sins (Matt. 9:1- 8). The Apostle James encouraged the sick, "Confess your sins to one another and pray for another, that you may be healed" (James 5:16). Confession brings a real interior and exterior healing.

Only God can forgive sins, of course. The Pharisees were horrified when Jesus claimed the authority to forgive sins, because He was essentially equating himself with Yahweh, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Such a claim intimated the fantastic idea that God would deign to take on crude flesh to live in our grit and grime and walk among us.

That was precisely what God deigned and did for sinful humanity.

THE CHURCH IS OPEN

Tuesday-Friday

08.45am-4.00pm

Sat 10.00am-6.30pm

Sun 7.45am-12noon

SUNDAY MASSES

Sat 17th Vigil 5:30pm

Int:

Sunday 18th 8.30am

Int: People of the Parish

Sunday 10.15am

Int: Robert Ekpo and

Rosemary Ekpo R.I.P.

WEEKDAY MASSES

Tues 20th: 9.30am

Int:

Wed 21st : 9.30am

Int: Peter Laiser, R.I.P.

Thurs 22nd NO MASS

Fri 23rd: 9.30am

Int:

Sat 24th DECEMBER

CHRISTMAS EVE

5.30pm: Vigil Mass

8.00pm:Midnight Mass

Sun 25th DECEMBER

CHRISTMAS DAY

MASS AT 9.30am

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 **(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

Safeguarding representative: Judith Stephens

Email: 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
This will be our only Mass on Christmas Day**

PARISH NOTICES

OUR YOUTH CHOIR WILL SING AT THE 5.30pm VIGIL MASS ON 24th DECEMBER. All children attending this Mass are welcome to sit with the choir & join in the singing.

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 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 THIS Sunday 18th December. There will be 3 prizes of £100, £70, £50. Membership is still open for the Draw on Sunday.**

PARISH CHRISTMAS RAFFLE DRAW THIS WEEKEND

Tickets are still on sale in the Foyer until the Draw takes place after 10.15am Mass on Sunday. Please see the flyer attached to the newsletter, for more.

OUR LADY OF HARTLEY RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

For the latest information and school news, visit us at www.ourladyhartley.kent.sch.uk

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 this programme and throughout. Application forms will be available in the church after Mass this weekend, 17th/18th December.

Completed Forms to be returned in person when you attend a weekend Mass with your child, by Sunday January 8th, 2023 at the latest.

Please do not submit an application form before speaking to Fr Alphonsus if your family are not parishioners of this parish, thankyou.

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 18th December, at the 10.15am Mass. Please bring your child to the meeting room **before** the start of Mass.

Children's Liturgy will resume after Christmas on 15th January 2023. Thankyou

CONFIRMATION IN 2023

Confirmation Classes will continue in January 2023 for any young person in school year 8 or above who would like to receive the Sacrament of

Confirmation in 2023. Parents should speak to Fr Alphonsus as soon as possible if your child would like to join.

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 will resume in January 2023 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

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 for your kindness and support to those who are struggling at this time. God bless you.

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'.

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

PARISH GROUP MEETINGS

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.

YOUTH GROUP

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

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

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

CATHOLIC WELCOME CIRCLE (CWC)

Second Wednesday of the month in the church meeting room at 2:00pm unless stated other wise.

NB. Our next meeting will be in February 2023.

Contact Margaret Walsh for more details.

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 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*

TEXTS FOR THIS SUNDAY'S MASSES

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT YEAR A

Isaiah 7: 10-14 The maiden is with child

Psalm 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.

TEXTS FOR CHRISTMAS VIGIL MASS

Isaiah 62: 1-5 The Lord takes delight in you

Psalm response *I will sing forever of your love O Lord*

Acts 13: 16-17, 22-25 Paul spoke of Christ, the Son of David

Matthew 1: 1-25 The ancestry of Jesus Christ, the son of David

TEXTS FOR CHRISTMAS MIDNIGHT MASS

Isaiah 9: 1-7 A Son is given to us

Psalm Response *Today a saviour has been born to us, he is Christ the Lord*

Titus 2:11-14 God's grace has been revealed to the whole human race

Luke 2:1-14 Today a saviour has been born to you

TEXTS FOR CHRISTMAS DAY MASS

Isaiah 52: 7-10 The maiden is with child

Psalm Response *All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God*

Hebrews 1: 1-6 God has spoken to us through His Son

John 1: 1-18 The Word was made flesh and lived among us.

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

OFFERTORY COLLECTION 11th DECEMBER 2022

Envelopes: £66.00 Loose Plate: £43.00

Contactless: £30.00

2nd Collection 4th December: £ 73.00

Thatch Fund: £53.00

2nd Collection this weekend 18th December:

New Fire Extinguishers

Thankyou for your generosity and support

Offertory Collections on 24th and 25th December:

Christmas Offering to the parish priest

NO 2nd Collection 24th/25th December

'Christmas Crib' Donations 2022

The Christmas Crib box will be placed by our Nativity Scene at the Altar during the Christmas Season. All donations will go to the charity, The Catholic Children's Society. Thankyou for your generous support

THATCH FUND

Our funding stands at **£35,577.96** 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. Thankyou for your continuing generous support.

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.

For a newsletter emailed weekly, or to suggest articles/additions, contact the parish secretary: 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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