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StFrancisDeSalesHartley

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<https://tinyurl.com/vc7w838m>

St. Francis de Sales Live Stream: www.churchservices.tvhartley

THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME YEAR A Sunday of the Word of God Mass Book page 127

REFLECTION ON THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

January 18-25, 2023

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is a response to Christ's prayer "that they all may be one" (John 17:21). It is an eight-day period of prayer in which all Christians are invited to participate. The week is celebrated each year from January 18-25, concluding on the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul.

Theme: Each year, a different theme is chosen for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The theme for 2023 is "Do good; seek justice" (Isaiah 1:17). It was chosen by a working group from the Minnesota Council of Churches, which chose the verse from the first chapter of the prophet Isaiah, which reads "learn to do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow" (1:17).

In choosing the theme, the group reflected:

Isaiah taught that God requires righteousness and from all of us, all the time in all spheres of life. Our world today in many ways mirrors the challenges of division that Isaiah confronted in his preaching. Justice, righteousness and unity originate from God's profound love for each of us and are the heart of who God is and how God expects us to be with one another. God's commitment to create a new humanity "from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages" (Rev 7:9) calls us to the peace and unity God has always wanted for creation

The group spoke of the sin of racism, saying that separation and oppression continue to be manifest when any single group or class is given privileges above others. It said all division has its roots in sin and said that God expects us to unite in a "shared responsibility for equality for all God's children." The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, the group said, is an ideal time to reflect on that responsibility.

Learning to do right requires the decision to engage in self-reflection.

The Week of Prayer is the perfect time for Christians to recognize that the divisions between our churches and confessions cannot be separated from the divisions within the wider human family. Praying together for Christian unity allows us to reflect on what unites us and commit ourselves to confront oppression and division amongst humanity. ➡

THE CHURCH IS OPEN

Tues-Fri 8.45am-4.00pm

Sat 10.00am-6.30pm

Sun 7.45am-12noon

SUNDAY MASS

Sat 21st January

5.30pm: Int: Nerina Tidey, deceased

Sun 22nd January

08.30am: Int: Miss Rachel Wheeldon R.I.P.

10.15am Jacqueline Rons, R.I.P

WEEKDAY 09.30am

Tues 24th: 09.30am

St. Francis de Sales (celebration on 29th)

Wed 25th: 09.30am

Conversion of St. Paul

Int: Jim Regan R.I.P.

Thurs 26th: 9.30am

Sts Timothy and Titus

Int: People of the parish

Fri 27th: 9.30am

St Angela Merici

Int: Angela Jones, in Thanksgiving.

CONFESSIONS

Tues-Fri 8.40 -9.20am

Sat 4.30-5.20pm

or by appointment

PARISH OFFICE 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

Email: hartleypcc@rcaos.org.uk

Safeguarding representative: Judith Stephens

Email: hartleysg2safeguard@rcaos.org.uk

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is an opportunity to ask God to help Christian Churches seek common ground and appreciation for each other. Prayer is the key which opens our hearts to Christ's desire for unity. In opening ourselves to prayer we remember that we share a common baptism and faith in the Trinity. Our practice of faith begins in our shared appreciation for Scripture as the Word of God where we encounter the saving truth of Jesus.

In this, we are reminded of an important teaching of Pope Benedict XVI: "Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a Person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction." That person is, of course, Jesus. Our common witness to our faith in Him calls us to work together on those issues which unite us: caring for the sick, the needy, migrants, and refugees, and confronting religious persecution. Through these shared experiences, the discovery of further common ground can come to pass. This week, remember the truth that as disciples of Jesus, we seek to follow him in doing the will of the Father. Together.

History

The history of the week dates back to late 1800s and early 1900s. In 1894, Pope Leo XIII encouraged the practice of a Prayer Octave for Unity and encouraged Catholics to recite the rosary for the intention of Christian unity. A little more than a decade later, two Americans, Father Paul James Wattson and Sister Lurana White, co-founders of the Franciscan Friars and Sisters of the Atonement, started a prayer movement to pray for the return of non-Catholic Christians to the Holy See. The two were Episcopalians who converted to Catholicism. In 1907, a conversation between Father Wattson and an English clergyman, Reverend Spencer Jones, led Reverend Jones to suggest that a day be set aside for prayer for Christian unity. Father Wattson agreed but proposed an octave of prayer between the Feast of St. Peter's Chair on January 18 and the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul on January 25.

The first "Church Unity Octave" was observed in 1908. After Father Wattson and Sister Lurana became Catholic, Pope Pius X gave his blessing to the Church Unity Octave, and in 1916, Pope Benedict XV extended its observance to the universal Church.

While the Catholic Church adopted the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, it was Abbé Paul Couturier, a priest of the Archdiocese of Lyons in France, who, in 1935, helped extend its reach to other Christian faiths. He promoted a "Universal Week of Prayer for Christian Unity" on the basis that it was the Lord's will - "Our Lord would grant to his Church on earth that peace and unity which were in his mind and purpose, when, on the eve of his Passion, he prayed that all might be one." It was a successful way of uniting all Christians in the same prayer.

Prayer

Loving God, we ask that you grant us the spirit of wisdom and unity, so that we may be one, even as you are one with our Lord Jesus Christ - and he with you.

Enable all the members of the body of Christ to live together in unity and fellowship with one another and lead us into the paths of peace and righteousness so that we may be well pleasing in your sight.

We ask you to teach us how to love one another as Christ loved us and help us to show one another the unusual kindness that can only come from knowing your Son, Jesus. May the Spirit stir up in our hearts a desire to be united as one, in the bond of peace and fellowship. This we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

PARISH NOTICES

CELEBRATION FOR FEAST OF ST FRANCIS DE SALES, SUNDAY 29th JANUARY 2023.

At the 10.15am Mass on Sunday 29th January with refreshments in the school hall. All parishioners and visitors are warmly invited to join us regardless of which Mass you attend next weekend.

If you could maybe help with setting up, serving or clearing up afterwards, please add your name to the list in the Meeting Room, or speak to Kate Whittaker. Likewise, if you might like to provide a cake or some buns, please let us know. Thankyou

ST FRANCIS DE SALES 200 CLUB

Membership for the 200 club is open. To become a member, you will find information and forms in the porch area of the church or on the parish website. **Our January Draw will take place Sunday 29th after 8.30am Mass. There is still time to join and enter this month's Draw. Please contact Tina Shirley or Kate Whittaker for any assistance.**

TEXTS FOR SUNDAY MASS

THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (A)

Isaiah 8:23-9:3 In Galilee of the nations the people has seen a great light

PSALM response *The Lord is my light and my help*

1 Corinthians 1: 10-13,17 Make up the differences between you instead of disagreeing among yourselves

Matthew 4:12-23 He went and settled in Capernaum: in this way the prophecy of Isaiah was to be fulfilled

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

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.

CATECHETICAL PROGRAMMES

Parishioners are asked to first check the **SACRAMENTS** section on the parish website for 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. **Families wishing to enrol adults or children for Sacramental programmes must be registered parishioners, attending Mass.**

SACRAMENTS OF FIRST RECONCILIATION AND FIRST HOLY COMMUNION - 2023 PROGRAMME

Enrolment for the 2023 program is now closed.

PLEASE NOTE Parents will be notified when the Preparation Classes are due to begin. 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 will need to complete and submit a Parish Registration Form, available in the porch area or on the parish website, thankyou.

CHILDREN'S LITURGY – FOR CHILDREN IN YR TO Y2

10.15am Sunday 22nd January. Please bring your child into the Meeting Room before Mass begins.

CONFIRMATION IN 2023

Confirmation preparation classes take place on Tuesdays during term time in the church meeting room 6.30-8.00pm, unless otherwise notified.

RECEIVING COMMUNION

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

RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) 2023.

Lessons take place on Saturday mornings in the church meeting room, unless otherwise notified.

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 introduce yourself to the parish priest and register yourself/your family on the Parish Registration Database.** Forms are available in the porch, or on the parish website to complete and return. Please consider how you can support the parish community with your time, talents and resources.

OUR LADY OF HARTLEY RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

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

DONATION BOX FOR GRAVESEND FOODBANK

Non perishable items can be left in one of the Food Bank Boxes, in the Meeting Room or in the porch. Thankyou for your kind support.

'SEEKING SANCTUARY' - support for migrants

Donations of warm clothing and toiletries, can be placed into the blue box in the Meeting Room. Please visit <https://seekingsanctuary.weebly.com/>

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY (SVP)

'We are a small group of people who offer confidential support through phone calls, house visits, accompanying 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 to arrange a time. Thankyou

MARRIAGE PAPERWORK PROCESS

You are required to give 6 months notice of Marriage—whether it is taking place here or abroad. Couples wishing to be married should speak to Fr Alphonsus as early as possible to begin the process. Thankyou

DIOCESAN NOTICES

CYMFED FLAME: SATURDAY 4th MARCH 2023

At the OVO Wembley Arena, an inspirational day of worship, top-rated speakers, fantastic music and the chance to join together in prayer, for Year 9 (14 years) through to university age. Visit The Catholic Youth Ministry Federation website cymfed.org.uk
To book your tickets (either as an individual or group) go to: <https://aec.rcaos.org.uk/store/p/flame2023>

PARISH GROUP MEETINGS

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP

We have a small, friendly group whose members can visit to chat or just to lend a listening ear. Contact Fr. Alphonsus and he will put you in touch with us.

YOUTH GROUP

Meetings take place in the meeting room. Contact: Laura Bourne through the office.

ADULT CHOIR

Thursdays at 7:30pm in the church. New members are welcome. Contact: Yvonne at yhegarty@talktalk.net

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY (SVP)

Contact us confidentially via 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 otherwise.
NB. Our next meeting will be in February 2023.

Catenians (Meopham Circle)

The Local Catenians Circle meet on the first Wednesday each month at 7.30pm at Hartley Country Club. To learn more about our organisation, please contact **Les Bober** our Membership Officer 07811 407386 or **Steve Lewis** our Secretary 07305 360305.

OFFERTORY COLLECTION 15th JANUARY 2023

Envelopes: £71.50 Loose Plate: £49.70

Contactless: £20.00

Pax Christi 15th January: £67.40

Thankyou all for your support to the parish

Our 2nd Collection this weekend:

Livestream costs for 2023

THATCH FUND

Our funding stands at **£36,034.40 of the **£45,000.00** Target to reach in 2023.**

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. Or go to our JustGiving page:

www.justgiving.com/St-Francis-de-Sales-Hartley

'PLANNED GIVING' and GIFT-AIDED DONATIONS

The parish relies on contributions to maintain the church building and presbytery, supporting the priest in his ministry which is the Church's Mission.

If you have not already, please consider setting up a Monthly Bank Standing Order. This is most helpful to the parish for budgeting and planning projects for the future – it is non-binding and you may cancel at any time.

Other ways to contribute are: (i) Weekly Gift Aid Envelopes (ii) Use the Contactless Machine in the church (iii) Cash or Cheque payable to RCAS Hartley (iv) One-off Donation envelopes (v) Online transactions to Nat West Bank, Account: RCAS Hartley. Acc 34143580 sort code: 60-06-33

If you are a taxpayer, all donations, however you choose to make them, can be Gift-Aided at no cost to you by joining the Gift Aid Scheme—for every £1 you contribute, an extra 25p can be claimed back for the parish.

Bank Standing-Order and Parish Gift-Aid information can be found on the parish website www.stfrancisdesales.org.uk Hard copies can be found on the shelf in the porch. Or please make enquiries through the parish office. Thankyou

For a newsletter emailed weekly, or to suggest articles/additions, contact the parish secretary:
hartley@rcaos.org.uk. **Newsletter items received after 11:00am Thursday 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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