



Oratory of St. Francis de Sales Parish Newsletter 10th December 2023

Roman Catholic Parish
Archdiocese of Southwark

White Friars Church Road, Hartley, Kent DA3 8DW

Tel: 01474705361 Email hartley@rcaos.org.uk

Web: <http://saintfrancisdesales.org.uk>

StFrancisDeSalesHartley

sfdhartley sfdhartley

<https://tinyurl.com/vc7w838m>

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



This parish is served by the Spiritans

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Mass Book Year B Vol 1 page 85

On this second week of Advent, we continue our waiting and preparation for the Lord's coming. Today in a special way the Church calls us to reflect on the good news that this season brings – that Christ is coming. In light of this, we are also to reflect on what we ought to be doing while we wait for him.

Why is Christ coming? The answer is simple: He is coming because he loves us, he is coming in order to forgive, console, and to save us, and he is coming to make all things (including us) new. He has a mission and that mission is all about us and our world. Last week, the prophet Isaiah lamented and wished that the Lord would tear down the heavens and come down, but today his tone is more optimistic, like someone who is beginning to see the response to his previous plea. It is a sign that we are going to make it, however, it is not yet over, as the fulfillment of this hope still lies in the future, though not too far away from us.

In the second reading, Peter assures us that Christ will certainly come. He encourages us not to lose hope in the prophetic promises about the coming of Christ. What we conceive as a long period of time is nothing in God's time, as there is a difference between God's time and ours.

In the Gospel this Sunday, John the Baptist, like Isaiah, brings us the good news about the Lord's imminent coming. He makes an explicit call to us to repent for the forgiveness of our sins. What is there to repent from? Those moments we have denied God through our words and actions, those moments we have failed ourselves and our neighbours, failed to live saintly and holy lives, neglected the good we ought to do, and those times we have not been true to our selves. This season is a time to say, God we are sorry, forgive us. Then the salvation that Jesus brings will be ours, and we will be part of the new generation that he comes to transform and redeem by his love.

Anticipation of the coming of the Lord should motivate us to respond with repentance, and of course, in joyful expectation of our salvation.

Humbly we pray "Let us see, O Lord your mercy, and give us your saving help".

THE CHURCH IS OPEN:

Tue-Fri 8:45am-4:00pm

Sat 10:00am-6:30pm

Sun 7:45am-12noon

SUNDAY MASS

Sat 9th December

5:30pm Vigil Mass

Int. For the young people of our parish.

Sunday 10th December

8:30am

10.15am Int. Deceased Moran family members

WEEKDAY MASS

Tues 12th December

Our Lady of Guadalupe

9.30am

Wed 13th December

St. Lucy, Virgin and Martyr

9.30am

Thurs 14th December

St. John of the Cross, Priest and Doctor of the Church

9.30am Friday 15th

December 9.30am

Int. Maureen Smith R.I.P. Anniversary

CONFESSIONS

Tues-Fri 8:40-9:20am

Saturday 4:30-5:20pm

or by appointment

MASS OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD 2023

Sunday 24th December at 5:30pm: Vigil Mass. Seating at this Mass is reserved for families with infants & school aged children. **Sunday 24th December at 8:00pm:** Mass during the Night with Choir singing.

Monday 25th December at 9:30am: Mass during the Day.

Please note, we will not have a 10.15am Mass on Sunday 24th December, 4th Sunday of Advent.

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: hartleysg2@safeguardrcaos.org.uk

TEXTS FOR THIS WEEK— 2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Isaiah 40: 1-5, 9-11 Prepare a way for the Lord.

Psalms: *Let us see, O Lord, your mercy and give us your saving help.*

2 Peter 3: 8-14 We are waiting for the new heavens and new earth.

Mark 1: 1-8 Make his paths straight.

Communion Antiphon: Jerusalem, arise and stand upon the heights, and behold the joy which comes to you from God.

For Daily Prayers and Mass Readings online, visit <https://www.universalis.com>

VISITING THE SICK AND HOUSEBOUND

If you or someone in your family is housebound and would like a priest to visit, please contact Fr Alphonsus or the parish office to arrange a visit.

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

PARISH NOTICES

ADVENT AND THE JESSE TREE

The Jesse Tree helps us unite the tradition of decorating Christmas trees with the biblical events that led to Jesus' birth. The name comes from Jesse, the Father of the great Jewish King David. For each day of Advent, there is a symbol to match the biblical events from Creation to Christmas.

If you would like to make your own Jesse Tree and 'ornaments' this Advent, you are very welcome to take home the sheets with the templates for the symbols etc, which are in the porch.

YOUTH MASS AND SOCIAL THIS WEEKEND

St. Francis De Sales

Youth Mass

*Year 4 and over
Sign up at church*

*Join us for
pizza
afterwards*

**Saturday 9th December
From 5.30pm to 8.30pm**

If your child would like to attend this evening but has not yet signed up, please contact Laura Bourne or email the parish office. Thankyou

ST FRANCIS DE SALES PARISH CHRISTMAS RAFFLE

We have pleasure in announcing that the Annual Parish Christmas Raffle will take place on the 24th December 2023.

Tickets will be on Sale from this Weekend and all through Advent: £5.00 for a Strip of Tickets or a £1.00 a Ticket. All Proceeds will go to our Church.

The Prizes are Fantastic Hampers full of Goodies to suit all Ages.

If you are unable to attend Mass and would like to take part, please contact the Parish Office on 01474 705361 or by e-mail at hartley@rcaos.org.uk and Tickets will be arranged.

The Draw is open to everyone and all can enter. We are currently taking Cash or Online Payments.

**Please give Generously
and Good Luck.**

CATHOLIC WELCOME CIRCLE

CWC will meet on 11th December at 1pm, just for this month. We will have a lunchtime celebration when we all bring a plate of food to share. As ever, all are welcome. Please come along and join our friendly circle for a relaxing afternoon of friendship.

DECORATING THE CHURCH FOR CHRISTMAS

The church will be decorated for Christmas this Tuesday, 12th December, after the 9:30am Mass. Even if you can only spare one hour it would be much appreciated. Many thanks in advance for your help.

CAROL SERVICE SUNDAY 17th DECEMBER AT 3pm

Please come to our lovely annual parish family Carol Service. Our church choir will be singing. The children will present a Nativity Scene. You can join in the carols and enjoy a mince pie after the service organised by the Mini Vinnies. The event is organised by the Saint Vincent de Paul Society to raise funds for local families in need. We look forward to seeing you!

MASS TIMES FOR 4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT.

With Christmas Day being on Monday this year, and with our Vigil Mass for Christmas being at 5:30pm on Sunday 24th December, Masses for the weekend of 23rd/24th will be Saturday 5:30pm and Sunday 8:30am. Therefore please note, there will be NO 10.15am Mass on Sunday 24th December. Thankyou

ST FRANCIS DE SALES 200 CLUB

Our Christmas Draw will take place on Sunday 24th December after the 8.30am Mass. There will be 3 prizes of £100, £70, £50. Membership for the 200 Club is open to anyone over 16yrs and costs £24 per draw number for the chance to win a prize each month. All necessary information and forms etc can be found in the church porch or on the parish website. Speak to Tina or Kate for any assistance.

CHILDREN'S LITURGY AND YOUTH GROUP TEAMS- ADULT VOLUNTEERS ARE URGENTLY NEEDED.

If you would be interested in joining the Leaders' Team for Children's Liturgy or the Youth Group, please speak with Fr Alphonsus who will then pass your details to the parish Safeguarding Rep and put you in touch with Victoria or Laura to explain more about these ministries. Anyone wishing to volunteer must first have completed a DBS Check for Ministry with Children/Youth Group in the Catholic Church. You will be guided through any necessary training.

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 then register on the Parish Database.** Registration Forms are available in the porch, or on the parish website. Please consider how you can support the parish with your talents, skills and resources and submit a **'Sharing my Time & Talents'** leaflet, also found in the porch area.

MASS INTENTIONS

If you would like to have a Mass offered for an intention, please take a brown Mass Offering envelope the porch, fill in the details and return it to Fr Alphonsus directly.

SOCIETY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL (SVP)

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

SVP FUNDRAISING NO CASH INVOLVED.

We would like your used computer printer ink cartridges, as we can turn them into money. Please put used cartridges into a collection box either in the meeting room or (via a pupil at Our Lady of Hartley) at the school. Thank you.

The SVP and Minnie Vinnies

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. Those wishing to enrol for Sacramental programs should be registered parishioners, attending Mass.

BAPTISM FOR BABIES AND INFANTS

Parents of infants and those seeking Baptism, please attend weekend Mass and speak with Fr. Alphonsus afterwards to register for the Baptism Course.

CHILDREN'S LITURGY – FOR CHILDREN IN YR-Y2

On Sundays at the 10.15am Mass. Please bring your child into the Meeting Room before Mass begins and **remain with your child until both leaders have arrived.** In compliance with Diocesan Safeguarding Guidelines, no other adults can remain in the Meeting Room during the session.

SACRAMENTS OF RECONCILIATION and EUCHARIST

There will not be a class on Friday 15th December. Class will resume on Friday 5th January 2024.

SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION 2024

Any young person in school Yr8 or above who would like to be confirmed next year, please speak to Fr Alphonsus for an application form, thankyou.

RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) 2024.

Journey in Faith: 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 program, the process by which adults become Catholic. Please speak with Fr Alphonsus to discuss the program or anything about RCIA process.

DIOCESAN NOTICES

'ADVENT GIVING CALENDAR' supporting those in need this Christmas. Please pick up a copy of the resource sheet from the church or visit the website [rcsouthwark.co.uk/mission/caritas-southwark/](https://www.rcsouthwark.co.uk/mission/caritas-southwark/)

SOUTHWARK SPIRITUALITY ADVENT REFLECTIONS 2023

To help us in our Advent preparation, the Southwark Spirituality Commission is offering daily Advent Reflections to subscribers. Participants will receive the suggestion of a Bible passage, followed by a short reflection and prayer suggestion. Please visit:

<https://www.rcsouthwark.co.uk/mission/southwark-spirituality-commission/> to subscribe.

OFFERTORY COLLECTIONS 3rd December 2023

Envelopes: £109.00 Loose Plate: £52.00

Contactless: £67.00 Online banking: £427.50

2nd Collection: £43.50 Thatch Fund: £99.60

Thank you for your contributions to support the parish.

Please check that your GA Envelope number & the correct date are written clearly on your envelope. Thankyou

This week's 2nd Collection: Christmas Flowers

CHRISTMAS OFFERING TO THE PARISH PRIEST

Please use the Christmas Offering envelopes that are in the porch and note your Gift Aid number on the envelope. If you donate by Bank Standing Order, please mark your donation 'Christmas Offering.' You may also use the Cashless Machine in the porch or via *Givealittle* on the parish website Donate options.

THATCH FUND

Funding raised: £40,198.79 of our Target £55,000.00

Thankyou for your continued support! Please keep depositing your £1 weekly donation in the Thatch Fund Box at the back of the church OR use the Contactless machine in the porch. You can also set up a £4 monthly/£52 annual, Bank Standing Order at:

Nat West Bank. Account name St Francis. Account number 34363181 Sort code 60-06-33.

If you are a UK tax payer, please submit a Gift Aid declaration form - **online** (follow directions below) or **hard copy** (on the shelf in the church porch) If you already use the parish Gift Aid scheme, *please* note your GA number against any donation. If you do not know your GA number, please contact the parish office for assistance.

You can also donate via our parish ***Justgiving*** page at www.justgiving.com/St-Francis-de-Sales-Hartley OR via *Givealittle* on the parish website front page by clicking on the 'Donate' button. Thankyou for all your support.

Are you a UK Taxpayer?

Please consider joining the Parish Gift-Aid Scheme.

Simply scan the QR code with your phone and fill in the form or visit the web link. Please contact the parish office for any assistance. Your support is greatly appreciated. Thankyou

SUPPORT OUR PARISH
**Sign up to
Gift Aid &
Planned Giving**



Scan QR code
or visit: forms.rcaos.org.uk/giftaid/

Our parish is part of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark CIO registered charity number 1173050

FUNDRAISING THROUGH SHOPPING ONLINE

Do you shop online? If you do, you can raise donations for the parish at no extra cost to you!

Please visit www.easyfundraising.co.uk

'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. Please consider setting up a Monthly Bank Standing Order. This is most helpful to the parish for budgeting and planning projects.

Other ways to support the parish financially are:

- (i) Weekly Gift Aid Envelopes (via Parish office)
- (ii) Through *Givealittle* on the parish website
- (iii) Using the Contactless Machine in the church
- (iv) Cash, or Cheque payable to **RCAS Hartley**
- (v) Using the One-off Donation white envelope
- (vi) Online transaction to Nat West Bank Account St Francis de Sales Acc: 34143580 S.C. 60-06-33.

PARISH GROUP MEETINGS

YOUTH GROUP

All young parishioners are welcome members. Contact: Laura Bourne via hartley@rcaos.org.uk

ADULT CHOIR

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

KNIGHTS OF ST. COLUMBA

Third Wednesday each month at 7:00pm in the meeting Room. New members very welcome. Contact: William Rons williamrons@hotmail.com

CATHOLIC WELCOME CIRCLE (CWC)

Second Wednesday of the month in the Meeting Room 2:00pm. Contact: Margaret Walsh.

BEREAVEMENT GROUP

Please contact the parish priest to arrange a visit.

ST VINCENT DE PAUL (SVP)

Monthly meetings arranged by the SVP group. Contact can be made through the parish office.

CATENIANS (Meopham Circle)

First Wednesday each month at 7.30pm at Hartley Country Club. Contact Les Bober on 07811 407386 or Steve Lewis, on 07305 360305 if you would like to learn more about us.

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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