



Oratory of St. Francis de Sales *Parish Newsletter 31st 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>



This parish is served by the Spiritans

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

THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH

Mass Book Year B Vol 1 page 105

Archdiocese of Southwark

Pastoral Letter for the Solemnity of the Holy Family 2023



Dear brothers and sisters in Christ

A Saviour has been born for us who is Christ the Lord! (Lk 2:11) I am so pleased to be able to greet you with Christmas good wishes - for you and your family and friends - in this holy season of hope. Each year we rejoice in celebrating the changeless truth that God sent his Son into our world because he loves us. More specifically, in the Lord Jesus God loves you, in the reality of your life here and now, in your tears and in your smiles. This is why, individually and together, we can look to the future with confidence.

Dear friends, I pray that something of God's love touches your heart this Christmastime, even if you face challenge or suffering. In Christ, no one is ever alone. God really is with you. Whatever happens, God will never abandon you.

As the family of the Church, within all our relationships, it's so important that we try to make the love of God we have received something tangible for others. We do this by imitating the example of the Holy Family: through sensitivity, kindness, and generosity, and, especially, through our faith. A famous song once declared '*love is all around us.*' This is true; but love can only be all around us if, first, it comes from within us. It is God's love in Christ, born into our hearts again this Christmas, which compels us to put love in action. Faith and love are inseparable. We seek to love others in faithfulness to Christ who was born, died, and rose again.

Loving relationship is at the heart of our faith: the loving relationship of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, who live eternally as one God in three persons; the loving relationship of the Father who sent his Son to take flesh in the womb of the Virgin Mary; the loving relationship of Our Blessed Lady and St Joseph to the Lord Jesus; the loving relationship, through the Holy Spirit, by which we share the gift of faith as disciples. (continued overleaf)

THE CHURCH IS OPEN:

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

Sat 10:00am-6:30pm

Sun 7:45am-12noon

SUNDAY MASS

Sat 30th December

5:30pm Vigil Mass

Int. of Sue Gregory

Sunday 31st December

8:30am R.I.P. Edith

Goodfellow

10:15am Int. People of the Parish

WEEKDAY MASS

Monday 1st January

Mary, the Holy Mother of God, Solemnity.

9:30am Int. Peace in our world

Tues 2nd January

Sts Basil and Gregory

9:30am

Wed 3rd January

9:30am

Thurs 4th January

No Mass

Fri 5th January

9:30am

CONFESSIONS

Tues-Fri 8:45-9:20am

Saturday 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: hartleysg2@safeguardrcaos.org.uk

According to God's plan for humanity, According to God's plan for humanity, we are created in God's image and likeness for loving relationship. This is shown so beautifully in family life.

It was faith in God, and fidelity to God's word, that enabled Abraham and Sarah to believe God's promise. It was faith in God, and fidelity to God's word, that made Our Lady and St Joseph capable of cooperating so uniquely and beautifully with God's purpose for their lives and our salvation. It is our Catholic faith that gives identity and meaning to the Sacrament of Marriage and to family life as the domestic church. The family, in the closer and wider senses, remains the most important building block of the Church and of society. When the family flourishes, the Church flourishes. When the family flourishes, society flourishes. Catholic faith is intrinsic to our understanding of marriage and family life, supported by our parishes and schools.

I have been privileged over the past year to witness so many inspiring examples of husbands and wives, with their children and extended families, living and celebrating their Catholic faith, passing it on, and making it central to their day-to-day life. We know that every family has its difficulties. Sometimes, sadly, we also know there is breakdown, both in marriage and in family life. To anyone who is wounded by damaged or broken relationships, please know that the Church is your home, a compassionate 'hospital' of healing and mercy. I want to say a very sincere 'thank you' to every family which forms part of our Archdiocese. Thank you for your commitment to your faith and for making your homes holy places where the values and virtues of the Holy Family of Nazareth are put into practice.

Our relationships with each other matter. They matter in the family, in our Church, and in our society and world. It's so necessary that we take time to listen to each other and to walk beside one another as we journey on the way together with Christ in faith. As a child, in his family home with Mary and Joseph, the Lord Jesus grew in maturity. He was filled with wisdom and God's favour was with him.

This is our desire for every disciple, for every family, and for our Church in the Archdiocese of Southwark.

As we look to all that 2024 will bring in God's providence, we commit ourselves to fulfilling our mission to share the Gospel of salvation in Christ through words and actions that build relationships in service of a civilisation of faith, love, and peace.

With every blessing for this Christmas Season and the New Year, and the assurance of my prayers and gratitude

Yours devotedly in Christ

+ John Wilson

Metropolitan Archbishop of Southwark

TEXTS FOR THIS WEEK - THE HOLY FAMILY

Ecclesiasticus 3: 2-6, 12-14 Whoever fears the Lord honours his parents.

Psalms: *O blessed are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways!*

Colossians 3: 12-21 Family life in the Lord

Luke 2:22-40 The child grew, filled with wisdom

Communion Antiphon: *Our God has appeared on the earth, and lived among us.*

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.

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.

PARISH NOTICES

SOUTHWARK CATHOLIC DIRECTORY 2024

2 copies remain for sale on the table in the porch-£6.75 per copy. Please put money in the wall box or use the cashless machine under 'Repository'

ST FRANCIS DE SALES 200 CLUB

Christmas Draw Winners: 1st Prize £100 no. 122 M. Halpin. 2nd Prize £70 no. 23. 3rd Prize £50 no. 54 Membership for the 200 Club is open to anyone over 16yrs and costs £24 annually per number. All necessary information & forms can be found in the church or on the parish website.

CHRISTMAS RAFFLE WINNING TICKETS

Many thanks to all of you who took part. The Raffle sold and made £830.00 for the Parish.

Congratulations to all of you, in particular the holders of the Winning Tickets which are as follows:

Hamper 1 - Yellow Ticket Number 212

Hamper 2 - Yellow Ticket Number 456

Hamper 3 – Yellow Ticket Number 426

Tub of Miniature Heroes -Yellow Ticket Number 409

Box of Crackers – Yellow Ticket Number 187

CHURCH CLEANING ROTA - VOLUNTEERS NEEDED.

Please could you spare 1-2 hours each month on a rota basis to help with light cleaning & vacuuming? You can form your own team of helpers and assistance will be at hand. Please contact the parish office to sign up and for further details. Any help would be greatly appreciated by the few people who clean the church at the moment. Many hands make light work! Thankyou very much.

CHILDREN'S LITURGY AND YOUTH GROUP.

The Children's Liturgy and Youth Group Teams both require adult volunteers to be able to continue. Please speak with Fr Alphonsus who will then put you in touch with the parish Safeguarding Rep. as anyone wishing to volunteer must first have completed a DBS Check for Ministry with Children/ Youth Group in the Catholic Church. No previous experience is necessary and you will be guided through any training to help your role. Thankyou.

CATHOLIC WELCOMING CIRCLE

The CWC will NOT be meeting in January, but do hope to resume in February. Thankyou.

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 also consider how you can support the parish with your time, talents and resources and then submit a **Sharing my Time & Talents** form, also found in the church porch

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.'

CATECHETICAL PROGRAMMES

Parishioners are asked to first check the **SACRAMENTS** section on the parish website for general information. 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 ONLY

Resumes Sunday 7th January 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, parents/adults cannot remain in the meeting during the session.

SACRAMENTS OF RECONCILIATION and EUCHARIST

Classes will resume on Friday 5th January 2024.

SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION 2024

Any young person in school Yr8 or above who would be interested in joining the program, please speak to Fr Alphonsus for further information, 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. **RCIA Enquiry forms** are available in the church or on the parish website. Please speak with Fr Alphonsus to discuss anything further.

DIOCESAN NOTICES

SOUTHWARK MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE

As part of the preparation for the 2025 Jubilee year, the MFL team will be running a one day **Building a Better Marriage Course** for any married couples throughout the Archdiocese from February 2024. It seeks to help husbands and wives make their marriage better and improve their communication skills. There is no group sharing and private information remains private to each couple.

For details, contact the MFL team through the Archdiocese website

<https://www.rcsouthwark.co.uk/mission/marriage-and-family-life>

OFFERTORY COLLECTIONS 24th December 2023

Envelopes: £43.50 Loose Plate: £27.40

Contactless: £20.00 Online banking: £646.50

2nd Collection: £43.00 Thatch Fund: £85.65

Thank you for your contributions to the parish.

Please check that your GA number with the correct Date & Collection name are noted on your envelope. Thankyou

This week's 2nd Collection: Electrical Inspection Costs

CHRISTMAS OFFERING TO THE PARISH PRIEST

If you were away from the parish for Christmas Mass and would like to make your Christmas Offering, please use the envelopes that are in the porch and if you use Gift Aid, please note your number on the envelope. To gift by online banking, please note 'Christmas Offering' against the transaction. You may also use the Cashless Machine in the porch. Thankyou

THATCH FUND

Funding raised: **£40,521.70** 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 by clicking on the 'Donate' button. Thankyou.

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/

This 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 envelopes
- (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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