



Oratory of St. Francis de Sales
 Roman Catholic Parish
 Archdiocese of Southwark

Parish Newsletter 7th January 2024

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

EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

Mass Book Year B Vol 1 page 115

As we celebrate the Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord, we are reminded that Jesus, who was born in the stable at Bethlehem is revealed to us all. He is revealed to the rich and the poor. He is revealed to kings, shepherds and wise people. He is revealed to saints and sinners. This is God's desire, to reveal himself to us in a personal relationship rooted in the love of God that has come into the world, our Lord Jesus Christ.

We are all in the process of coming to know Jesus as Lord and each of us is at a different place in our faith journey. Today, we might ask ourselves, how has Jesus' presence in my life made a difference? In order to answer this question, our relationship with Jesus, rooted in prayer, must be the source of our strength and the peace and hope that comes into the world.

The Magi followed the star and found Christ. May we too, find the Lord who continues to search for us. A blessed Feast day to you all.

FR ALPHONSUS WRITES

Beloved in Christ, I have recently been given the news by my Provincial that I am being transferred to another parish and so I will be leaving the parish on Tuesday 30th January 2024.

Fr Clement Eru CM, a priest of the Congregation of the Mission (The Vincentians) will be coming to Hartley as your new parish priest. Fr Clement was Ordained on 12th August 2016 and is currently working at Sacred Heart RC church, Camberwell, London. I am sure you will all warmly welcome Fr Clement and fully support him as he settles into his new role as your parish priest.

THE MEMORIAL OF ST FRANCIS DE SALES - AND PARISH CELEBRATION SUNDAY JANUARY 28th 2024.

In our Liturgical Calendar, the Memorial of St Francis de Sales is normally celebrated on 24th January each year, but where, as in the case of our parish, a Saint is the Patron or named Saint of a parish, the Memorial can be moved.

This year, our celebration of the Memorial of St Francis de Sales will take place on Sunday 28th January, with one parish Mass at 11.00am. We will then have a celebration with lunch from 12:00am – 3:00pm at Our Lady of Hartley School. All are invited and our hope is that everyone will come along at some point in the afternoon. **Our Mass and Celebration will also be the perfect occasion to say Farewell and Thank You to Fr Alphonsus. Please save this date in your diary.**

THE CHURCH IS OPEN:

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

Sat 10:00am-6:30pm

Sun 7:45am-12noon

SUNDAY MASS

Sat 6th January

Epiphany of the Lord

5:30pm Vigil Mass

Sunday 7th January

Epiphany of the Lord

8:30am Int. People of the Parish

10:15am

WEEKDAY MASS

Tues 9th January

9:30am

Wed 10th January

9:30am

Thurs 11th January

9:30am NO Mass

Friday 12th 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

THE FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY: HOUSE BLESSING

In various parts of the world, the Epiphany is marked with the time-honoured tradition of “chalking the doors.” The formula for the ritual is simple: take chalk of any colour (ideally blessed by a priest on the Feast of the Epiphany) and write above the entrance of your home:

20 + C + M + B + 24

The letters have two meanings. First, they represent the initials of the Magi - Caspar, Malchior and Balthazar - who came to visit Jesus in the place where he was born. They also abbreviate the Latin phrase, *Christus mansionem benedicat*, which translates as “May Christ bless the house.”

The “+” signs represents the cross, and the “20” at the beginning and the “24” at the end, mark the year.

This inscription is a request for Christ to stay with those who dwell or work therein throughout the entire year.

TEXTS FOR THIS WEEK– EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

Isaiah 60: 1-6 Above you the glory of the Lord appears.

Psalms: *all nations shall fall prostrate before you, O Lord.*

Ephesians 3: 2-3, 5-6 It has now been revealed that pagans share the same inheritance.

Matthew 2: 1-12 We saw his star and have come to do the Lord homage

Communion Antiphon: *The brightness of God illumined the holy city Jerusalem, and the nations will walk by its light.*

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

CHURCH CLEANING ROTA - VOLUNTEERS NEEDED.
Please could you spare just 1-2 hours a month, or with enough volunteers, every other month, on a rota basis to help with light cleaning & vacuuming? You can form your own team and assistance will be at hand. Please contact the parish office to join up and for details. ***Any assistance would be greatly appreciated by the few people who keep the church clean for us– please consider helping.***

CHILDREN’S LITURGY AND YOUTH GROUP.

To enable our Children’s Liturgy and Youth Group to continue, **Victoria and Laura urgently need some adult volunteers to help them in their roles– you would not be asked to bear equal responsibility, just to assist.** Please speak with Fr Alphonsus and he will then put you in touch with Judith, our parish Safeguarding Rep, as all volunteers must first have completed a DBS Check for Ministry with Children/Youth Group in the Catholic Church. No experience is required and you will be guided through any necessary training,

TAKING DOWN THE CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS

The Season of Christmas comes to an end on Monday 8th January with The Baptism of the Lord. Help will be needed and greatly appreciated with taking down the Christmas decorations and tidying up the church afterwards. **If you can spare an hour or so on Monday morning from 9.00am, please come along and join Brendan and Tina. Thankyou.**

PRAYER SERVICE FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

On Friday January 19th at 10.30am, our parish will be hosting this year’s Ecumenical *Service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity*. All are welcome Please join us after the service for refreshments and a chance to chat. For catering purposes, please let Carol Wilton know if you will be attending. Email carolwilton0@gmail.com

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. There is no group sharing and information remains private to each couple. For details, contact the MFL team at <https://www.rcsouthwark.co.uk/mission/marriage-and-family-life>

#GivePrayerAGo

To mark the New Year and the Year of Prayer, as designated by the Holy Father, the Archdiocese of Southwark will be encouraging people to #GivePrayerAGo through an online campaign.

The activities will be varied and will include:

- sharing testimonies of prayer, from how prayer has helped people overcome difficult situations to how prayer has enriched their lives.
- helping people overcome perceived barriers to prayer, by showing the various ways you can welcome Christ into your hearts.
- giving people ideas, resources and tips to pray. From quotes from Saints to simple steps to follow to turn your mind to the Lord Jesus.
- advertising prayer events across the Archdiocese, highlighting prayer groups, adoration and the rosary. As well as explaining what it all means! Visit:

<https://www.rcsouthwark.co.uk/faith/giveprayerago/>

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.

PARISH DATABASE - ARE YOU REGISTERED?

If you did not submit a Parish Database Form in 2020, at please do so now - you/your family may not otherwise show in the parish records as being parishioners. This is important especially if you wish to enrol for Sacramental programs.

ST FRANCIS DE SALES 200 CLUB

Membership for the 200 Club is open to anyone over 16yrs and costs £24 annually per draw number for the chance to win a prize each month. All necessary information & forms can be found in the church or on the parish website.

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.'

DONATION BOX FOR GRAVESEND FOODBANK

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

'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/>

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 regularly.

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 Course.

CHILDREN'S LITURGY-FOR CHILDREN IN YR-Y2

Sunday at the 10.15am Mass. Please bring your child into the Meeting Room before Mass and **remain with your child until both leaders have arrived.** In compliance with Diocesan Safeguarding Guidelines, adults cannot remain in the meeting during sessions

SACRAMENTS OF RECONCILIATION and EUCHARIST

Classes will resume on Friday 5th January 2024.

RECEIVING COMMUNION

Any adult who does not receive Communion please speak with the parish priest for guidance.

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.

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. Please speak to the parish priest for further details.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION 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.

OFFERTORY COLLECTIONS 31st December 2023

Envelopes: £57.00 Loose Plate: £84.70
Contactless: £15.00 Online banking: £825.00
2nd Collection: £99.40 Thatch Fund: £35.70
Christmas Offering: £1,641.50

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: Health & Safety Inspection THATCH FUND

Funding raised: **£40,611.82** 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.

'EASYFUNDRAISING' - DO YOU SHOP ONLINE?

Please use **easyfundraising** when you shop online! Over 7,000 brands will give back small donations to registered charities, so you can raise funds for the parish, no matter what you're buying. **It is easy & FREE to sign up. Please visit www.easyfundraising.co.uk** Thanks for 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/

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

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

BEREAVEMENT GROUP

We have a small, friendly group whose members can visit to chat or just to lend a listening ear.
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.

CIO Registered Incorporated Charity Number 1173050