



ST MATTHEW CATHOLIC CHURCH, WEST NORWOOD

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West Norwood

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London SE27 9JU

01 FEBRUARY 2026

Parish Newsletter

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (A)

TODAY'S MASS READING: Parish Mass Book, from page 130

1st Reading (Zeph. 2:3;3:12-13) **2nd Reading** (1Cor 1:26-31) **Gospel** (Mtt.5: 1-12a)

Readings Next Sunday: 1st Reading (Is58:6-10). 2nd Reading (1Cor 2:1-5). Gospel (Mtt.5:13-16)

Today's Gospel presents us with one of the most familiar and yet most challenging passages of Scripture: the **Beatitudes**. Jesus goes up the mountain, sits down like a teacher, and opens his mouth to teach his disciples.

What he teaches is not simply good advice; it is a **new way of living**, a new vision of what it means to be truly blessed. The world often tells us that happiness comes from success, wealth, power, recognition, or being strong and self-sufficient. But Jesus turns this thinking upside down. He says: *Blessed are the poor in spirit... the meek... those who mourn... those who hunger and thirst for righteousness*. In other words, blessed are those who know their need for God, those who are gentle, compassionate, patient, and faithful even when life is hard. "**Poor in spirit**" does not mean having nothing; it means **not putting our trust in what we have**. It is the attitude that says, "Lord, without you I am nothing." Such people are open to God, and that is why the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to them. "**Blessed are the meek**" does not mean weak. Meekness is strength under control. It is choosing love over revenge, patience over anger, forgiveness over bitterness. In a world that rewards loudness and aggression, Jesus calls us to quiet strength rooted in love. "**Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness**." This is a deep desire to live rightly before God and others — to stand for truth, justice, and compassion even when it costs us something. God promises that such people will be satisfied, not always immediately, but ultimately in Him. The Beatitudes remind us that **Christian joy is not the absence of suffering**, but the presence of God in the midst of it. Jesus himself lived the Beatitudes fully. He was poor in spirit, meek, merciful, persecuted — and through the cross, God brought resurrection. As we gather around this altar today, we are invited to examine our hearts. What does "being blessed" mean to me? Where do I place my security? What kind of life am I striving for? Let us ask the Lord for the grace to live the Beatitudes not just as beautiful words, but as a daily way of life — in our families, our workplaces, our parish, and our community. Then, even in an uncertain world, we will discover the deep and lasting joy that only God can give. Amen.

Parish Priest: Fr Celestine Ekwueme

Email: celestineekwueme@rcaos.org.uk

PARISH INFORMATION AND FAITH NEWS

Pope's February prayer intention: For children with incurable diseases. Let us pray that children suffering from incurable diseases and their families receive the necessary medical care and support, never losing strength and hope.

PARISH NOTICES

Racial Justice Sunday - 1st February, the theme is: "Whoever loves God must also love his brother" (1 John 4:21): Promoting Racial Justice in our Parishes. Archbishop John Wilson will celebrate Mass for Racial Justice Sunday at St George's Cathedral on Sunday 1 February 2026, at 10am. It is a time for the Church to pray, reflect and take action against racism, while celebrating the diversity of our Archdiocese. Everyone is invited to take part, and those who wish may wear national or cultural dress as a sign of unity and pride. If you would like, please gather outside the cathedral at 9.45am to join the procession of national flags. After Mass, all are welcome to gather in Amigo Hall for refreshments — a chance to meet one another, share experiences and continue the conversation about faith and inclusion. You are warmly encouraged to attend in person, but if you cannot make it you can watch the livestream through the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/live/fdmGwmESS>

A Prayer for Justice: Lord Jesus Christ, in your ministry you were approached by people of many different nations and cultures. You listened to their cry for help, treated them with love and compassion, and brought them healing and wholeness. In our own time may we provide to all those who are suffering the help that they need and the care that they require. May we respond to the invitation of the Holy Spirit to dream of a world made new where the poor are not forgotten but are given the opportunity to live and flourish with good health and equal prospects. We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord. Amen



Pope's World Day of the Sick message: Love by bearing another's pain. Pope Leo XIV releases his message for the 34th World Day of the Sick, 11th February, and invites the faithful to consider the Samaritan's compassion and how we too can offer love by bearing the pain of others. Read full message on parish website.

Cheque Payments to the Parish: Parishioners who wish to make donations or payments to the parish by cheque are kindly asked **not** to write *St Matthew's Catholic Church* as the payee name. Please make all cheques payable to:

Account Name: RCAS Norwood West

Account Number: [44115369] Sort Code: [60-23-19]

This will help ensure that all cheques are processed correctly and without delay.

Thank you for your continued generosity and support of the parish.

Confirmation Programme – Notice: Due to the low number of candidates registered for the Confirmation programme this year, confirmation classes will **not** be running in the parish at this time. We encourage parents and young people who are interested in future Confirmation programmes to register their interest with the parish office, as this will help us plan effectively for the coming year. We thank you for your understanding and continued support.

Parish Secretary Role: The parish will be recruiting a Part-Time Parish Secretary to assist with general administration, correspondence, record-keeping, and support for parish activities. Further details will be shared in due course. Parishioners who may be interested are encouraged to contact the parish office. Please keep this in your prayers

Marriage Week is an annual celebration from 7-14th February, offering the opportunity to support and promote marriage and family life. Marriage Care Invitation: "Growing Together" Saturday 7th February 1.45 - 4.45pm (free), Sacred Heart Church Hall, Sittingbourne, ME10 1AN. Relaxed afternoon to focus on each other & your marriage. Please join us. For more information contact: Christine: christine.bergess@marriagecare.org

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK**PARISH MINISTRY**

| | |
|--------------------|------------------------------------|
| Saturday 31 | Vigil, 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time |
| 6:30pm | Holy Souls |
| Sunday 1 | 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time |
| 9am | Oliver Kelly, RIP |
| 11am | Pro Populo |
| Monday 2 | Presentation Of The Lord, Feast. |
| 9:30am | No Mass |
| Tuesday 3 | St Laurence of Canterbury |
| 9am | No Adoration |
| 9:30am | No Mass |
| Wednesday 4 | Feria |
| 9:30am | Clara D'sa, RIP |
| Thursday 5 | St Agatha |
| 11am | No Mass. |
| Friday 6 | St Paul Miki & Companions |
| 9:30am | Holy Souls |
| Saturday 7 | Vigil, 5th Sunday Ordinary Time |
| 6:30pm | Holy Souls |
| Sunday 8 | 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time |
| 9am | Clara D'sa, RIP |
| 11am | Pro Populo |

READERS:

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| 31/01 | 7th/8th |
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| 6:30pm | Preetha |
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| 9am | Savio |
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| 11am | Marie-France/Nana |
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Eucharistic Ministers

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|--------|-------|---------|
| 6:30pm | Jenny | Annabel |
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| 9am | Zena | Zena |
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| 11am | Patience | Patience |
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Church Cleaning:

ORDINARY TIME BEFORE LENT: In Ordinary Time no particular aspect of the mystery of Christ is celebrated, but rather the mystery of Christ itself is honoured in its fulness, especially on Sundays.

CYCLE OF PRAYER - Intentions for Ordinary Time before Lent:

Peace on Earth - especially on the Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Openness to the Word of God - especially on the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

For Justice and Peace in the World - especially on Racial Justice Day

Christian Unity - especially during the Church Unity Octave

The Victims of Trafficking & Those who Work to Combat it - especially on 8th February

The Sick & Those who Care for them - especially on World Day of the Sick 11th February

The Unemployed - especially on the First Sunday of Lent the Day for the Unemployed

WE REMEMBER IN OUR PRAYERS THOSE WHO HAVE RECENTLY DIED IN OUR PARISH COMMUNITY ,
AND THOSE WHOSE ANNIVERSARY OF DEATH OCCUR AROUND THIS TIME, MAY THEY REST IN PEACE.
AMEN.

Anthony Walsh RIP

HOSPITAL CONTACTS: If you or a member of your family are admitted to our local hospitals, do please let the hospital's Catholic chaplain know.

St George's Hospital: 02087253069 / 02086721255)

Kings Hospital: If outside hospital—02032993522. inside the hospital call extension 33522

Croydon University Hospital: 02084013105

St Thomas' Hospital: 02071881187/02071881186

Guy's Hospital: 02071881185/02071889576



PARISH SCHEDULES

Sunday Mass Times :

6:30pm (Sat), 9am and 11am

Week Day Mass Times:

Tuesday ; 7pm

Wednesday & Friday; 9:30am

Thursday; 11am @ British Home

First Fridays; 12noon.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament:

Tuesdays; 6:00pm

Baptisms, Marriage, Funerals: Contact the Parish Office.

Youth Club:

4:30pm Every 3rd Saturday

RCIA: Contact Parish Office

RECONCILIATION/CONFESSIONS

Saturdays: 5:30pm to 6:15pm and on call.

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

Open Office: Fridays 10am to 12:30pm and
2:30pm to 4:30pm.

Other days with appointment, please.

UCM:

12noon Every First Friday

CHOIR REHEARSALS:

Wednesdays; 7:30pm @ the Church.

DIVINE MERCY GROUP

Sundays; after 11am mass @ the Divine Mercy Altar

We are grateful for all you do to support the parish.

Setting up a Standing Order is the most efficient way to make a donation to the parish without incurring fees. You can use the following details for one-off donation or to set up a Standing Order or Direct Debit. NatWest Bank: Account Name: RCAS Norwood West, Sort Code: 60-23-19; Account Number: 44115369. Thank You!