

ST MATTHEW CATHOLIC CHURCH, WEST NORWOOD

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2 March 2025

Parish Newsletter

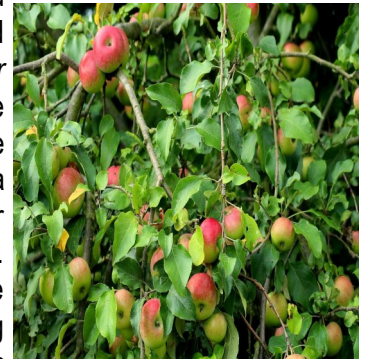
EIGHT SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (C)

TODAY'S MASS READINGS: Parish Mass Book, from page 145

Next Sunday's Reading: 1st Reading (Deut 26:4-10). 2nd Reading (1 Rom 10:8-13) Gospel (Lk 4:1-13)

1st Reading(Sir 27:4-7). 2nd Reading (1 Cor 15:54-58). Gospel(Luke 6:39-45).

Today's readings give us a powerful opportunity to reflect on how we live our lives and how we place our trust in God. In the Gospel, Jesus uses the image of a tree to remind us of an essential truth: *"A good tree does not bear bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit."* (Luke 6:43). This simple statement is loaded with meaning for us as we strive to live out our faith in everyday life. Jesus tells us that the fruit we bear — the actions, words, and choices we make — flow from the condition of our hearts. Just as a tree's fruit comes from the soil it's rooted in, the way we live reflects the state of our inner life. If our hearts are rooted in love, mercy, and kindness, the fruit will reflect that. But if our hearts are full of bitterness, greed, or anger, our actions will mirror those qualities. This calls us to examine where our hearts are truly placed. The first reading from Sirach echoes this truth, saying: *"The fruit of a tree shows the care it has had; so too does one's speech disclose the bent of one's mind."* (Sirach 27:6). Our speech and actions are like the fruit of the tree, showing what we have allowed to take root in our hearts. If we want to bear good fruit, we must first nourish our hearts with what is good and holy — God's Word, prayer, acts of charity, and a spirit of humility. It's not enough to simply try to do good; we must allow God's grace to transform us from the inside out. In the second reading, St. Paul reminds us that God has given us the gift of the Holy Spirit. This Spirit dwells within us, guiding us to live according to God's will. When we nurture our relationship with the Holy Spirit, we can better discern how to bear good fruit. St. Paul invites us to trust in God's providence, knowing that we are not left to our own devices, but are empowered to live in a way that reflects God's love in the world. But there's another important point Jesus makes in the Gospel: *"Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I command?"* (Luke 6:46). This challenges us to examine whether our actions truly reflect the faith we profess. Jesus doesn't want empty words; He wants hearts and lives that are committed to following Him. The Gospel teaches us that the foundation of our lives must be solid, rooted in His teachings. Just like a house built on rock will withstand storms, a life rooted in Christ will endure the difficulties and challenges that come our way. This week, let's reflect on the fruit we are bearing. Are we letting God's Word take root in our hearts? Are we nurturing that relationship with Him through prayer, through good actions, and through love? If we find areas where we're bearing bad fruit, let's ask for God's grace to heal those parts of us and help us grow into better disciples. May we all strive to be trees that bear good fruit, grounded in the love and mercy of God, so that our lives may give glory to Him and bless those around us. Amen.



Parish Priest: Fr Celestine Ekwueme

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PARISH INFORMATION AND FAITH NEWS

PRAY WITH THE POPE

Pope's March Prayer Intention : For families in crisis; Let us pray that broken families might discover the cure for their wounds through forgiveness, rediscovering each other's gifts, even in

Prayer For Month of March

Almighty God, grant us the strength to endure the challenges we face this March. Help us to remain steadfast in our faith and resilient in our spirit. May Your power sustain us through every trial. Amen.

PARISH NOTICES

ASH Wednesday: Wednesday 5th March is Ash Wednesday, which ushers in the season of lent. Three masses will be available in our parish on Ash Wednesday; **9:30am, 1:45pm and 6:45pm**. The 1:45pm mass is for the pupil's of St Joseph College.

In this period of lent, we will have our usual **Stations of the Cross every Friday by 6:30pm**. The **holy mass will take place immediately after the stations of the cross. There will be no Friday weekday masses all through the Lenten season**. Also, there will be adoration of the **Blessed Sacrament immediately after the 11am mass**, to conclude with **Divine Mercy prayer and benediction by 3pm** all through the Lenten season. Be part of the parish Lenten programmes, a good opportunity to intensify our spiritual life, and deepen our relationship with God.

Remember that Ash Wednesday is a day of **fasting and abstinence**.

Archdiocesan Jubilee Celebration Day at The Friars, Aylesford 7 June 2025. Led by Archbishop John Wilson, we will gather as an Archdiocese at The Friars, Aylesford for a day of prayer, reflection, celebration, and fun. There will be lots of activities, for children as well as for adults. This will be the centre-piece event of the 2025 Jubilee in the Archdiocese of Southwark. There will also be a walking pilgrimage from St George's Cathedral in Southwark to The Friars (2-6 June 2025). **The event itself is free.** Our parish is putting on a coach for the day itself, so to join our parish coach, please contact **norwood-west@rcaos.org.uk**. The cost of the coach per person will be confirmed and communicated. You can find out more about the event, including how to join the walking pilgrimage, and the wider Jubilee Year plans in the Archdiocese at rcaos.org.uk/jubilee2025.

A Year of Hope: Introduction to the Jubilee Year: How can we respond to Pope Francis' call to be "tangible signs of hope" in this Jubilee Year? Find out by watching [this inspirational event](#) (find it and other Jubilee resources at cafod.org.uk/jubilee). Featuring Fr Jan Nowotnik, Director of Mission at the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, CAFOD Director Christine Allen and more. Discover how we can act in faith and in love as pilgrims of hope this Holy Year.

First Holy Communion and Confirmation Classes: The classes will commence on Sunday March 2nd(today) after the 11am mass at the parish hall. All the catechism classes will be running concurrently, including the RCIA.

Hope in Adoration. As part of the Jubilee Year, Archbishop John is [encouraging people](#) to turn to the Lord Jesus in Eucharistic adoration and have their hopes "fulfilled by Christ". The campaign, Hope in Adoration, will share testimonies from parish priests and laity throughout the year on how Eucharistic adoration has helped them build a closer relationship with the Lord Jesus. Resources will also be made available for free and there is a comprehensive list of times of Eucharistic adoration in parishes across the Archdiocese. Find out more about the campaign at rcaos.org.uk/hopeinadoration

CAFOD Family Fast Day is on Friday 14th March. By Praying, eating simply and giving you'll be supporting local experts to provide simple effective solutions to the toughest problems facing people around the world.

World Day Of Prayer 2025: This will hols on Friday 7th March at Chatsworth Way Baptist Church London, SE27 9HN. Time is 1:30pm. Please join. See details in the flyers places in narthex.

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK

Saturday 1 Mar:	Vigil of 8th Sunday	Thursday 6 Mar:	Feria
6:30pm	Edward RIP	11am@ B/H	HMT Currie
Sunday 2 Mar:	8th Sunday Ord Time	Friday 7 Mar:	Feria
9am:	Pro Populo	9:30am:	Mary O'Connor RIP
11am:	Maritha Onyeocha RIP & T/g	Saturday 8 Mar:	Vigil of 1st Sunday, Lent.
Monday 3 Mar:	Feria	6:30pm:	Canon JP Devane RIP
9:30am:	No Mass	Sunday 9 Mar:	1st Sunday, Lent.
Tuesday 4 Mar:	Feria	9am:	Cecilia Vaz RIP
6:00pm:	Adoration	11am:	Noelie Kouadio; W/being
7:00pm	Jenny/Russell; w/being.		
Wednesday 5 Mar:	Ash Wednesday		
9:30am:	Margret & Michael McGee RIP		
6:45pm	Pro Populo		

JUBILEE 2025

*The Jubilee is a special year of grace in the Catholic Church. It is a time for renewal of faith, forgiveness and reconciliation. It is a time for their faithful to give themselves more fully to the Lord Jesus and feel His mercy and forgiveness. The tradition of a Jubilee can be traced to the Bible, with a Jubilee year to be marked every 50 years (Leviticus 25:8-13). The intention was to re-establish a proper relationship with God and each other. In 1300, Pope Boniface established the first Jubilee - also known as the "Holy Year" - as it is a time where the faithful can be transformed by God's holiness. Initially, Jubilees were celebrated every 100 years but in 1343 Pope Clement VI changed it to 50 years. Another change took place in 1470, when Pope Paul II reduced the gap to 25 years. With the exception of "extraordinary" Holy Years - the year of Jubilee has remained every 25 years since. A Jubilee year is always rooted in prayer and reconciliation. It is a time when people can focus their minds on the Lord Jesus and seek His loving mercy and forgiveness. Pilgrimages to "**Holy Doors**" has also been a key feature. To mark the start of the Jubilee, the Pope will open a Holy Door so throughout the year pilgrims can cross the threshold and be reminded of when Jesus said, in John 10:9, "I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture". By taking part in the Holy Year, the faithful are granted a **plenary indulgence**. This means those taking part receive a grace, granted by the Church, which removes the temporal punishment of sins already forgiven (CCC1471). Archbishop John Wilson has designated **15 Jubilee churches** within the Archdiocese of Southwark, for the faithful to visit during the year. The theme of Jubilee 2025 is "pilgrims of hope", with Pope Francis calling on the world to "fan the flame of hope that has been given us". The Holy Father said: "Let us pray that this upcoming Jubilee may strengthen us in our faith, helping us to recognise the Risen Christ in the midst of our lives, transforming us into pilgrims of Christian hope." The Archdiocese of Southwark will be running a series of events and publishing a wide range of resources, from prayer materials to a major event in **Aylesford on Saturday 7 June 2025**.*

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.

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 MINISTRY

READERS:

Date:	1st/2nd	8th/9th
6:30pm	Preetha	Liane/Ann
9am:	Brenda	Dorothy/Maria
11am:	Jenniffer/Michel/JessicaMarie/Juliana/Daniel	

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS

6:30PM	Jenny	Russell
9AM	Albertina	Lawrence
11AM	Yvonne	Kereine
Chika/Patience/Juliana Justine/Justina		

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!