

St Thomas of Canterbury Sevenoaks

Sunday Mass times:

Saturday
6:00pm

Sunday
8:00am (Latin)
9:15am (Children's Liturgy of Word)
11:15am
6:00pm

Adoration:

Monday 8:30am - 9:30am
Tuesday 6:00pm - 7:00pm

Weekday Mass times:

Monday 8:00am
Tuesday 9:30am
Wednesday 8:00am
Thursday 12:00noon
Friday 8:00am
Saturday 9:30am

Sacrament of Reconciliation:

Saturday 10:00am - 10:30am
5:15pm - 5:45pm

Fathers' day off:

Assistant Priests: **Monday**
Parish Priest: **Tuesday**



12 Granville Road,
Sevenoaks TN13 1ER

Parish Secretary: **Silvana Wuttke**

Parish Office: **Monday-Friday**
9.00am-12:00noon

Tel: 01732 454177
sevenoaks@rcaos.org.uk
www.sevrccparish.org



High Street, Otford
TN14 5PH

MOST HOLY TRINITY OTFORD

Mass times: Sunday 9:30am
(with Children's Liturgy of the Word)
Wednesday 10:00am
Holy Days of Obligation 10:00am
Adoration: Thursday 7:30pm - 8:30pm
Friday 11:00am - 12:00noon

Church contact:

Barry Authers
Tel: 01959 524362
sevenoaksmht@rcaos.org.uk



Western Rd, Borough Green
TN15 8AG

St Joseph's BOROUGH GREEN

Mass times: Sunday 9:30am
(with Children's Liturgy of the Word)
Thursday 10:00am
Adoration: Thursday 10.30am-11.00am
Holy Days of Obligation 6:00pm

Church contact:

Antoni Offert
Tel: 07513 041075
sevenoaks@rcaos.org.uk



Fawkham Rd, West Kingsdown
TN15 6JP

St Bernadette's West Kingsdown

Mass times: Sunday 11:00am
Friday 10:00am
Holy Days of Obligation 11:00am
Adoration: Wed 12:00noon- 1:00pm

Church contacts:

Jill & John Gobel
Tel: 01474 853676
sevenoaks@rcaos.org.uk



St Thomas' catholic primary school

South Park,
Sevenoaks, TN13 1EH
www.saintthomas.co.uk

Headteacher:
Ms Geraldine Leahy
Tel: 01732 453921

GIVE A LITTLE



GIFT AID FORM



Archdiocese of
Southwark

PARISH OF ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY SEVENOAKS

CHURCHES IN SEVENOAKS, OTFORD,
BOROUGH GREEN AND WEST KINGSDOWN



Parish Newsletter

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

5th January 2025



Dear Friends,

We come to the final week of our joyful Christmastide, which concludes with the great Feast of the Epiphany and, on the following Sunday, the celebration of the Baptism of the Lord.

An "epiphany" is an appearance. In the readings for this Feast, with their rising stars and gleaming lights, we see the Child born on Christmas Day revealed as the promised Messiah. In the Gospel, Herod's question about the birthplace of the Messiah leads the chief priests and scribes to combine two Old Testament promises: the Messiah from the line of David, and a ruler who will shepherd His flock and whose greatness shall reach to the ends of the earth.

Those promises, long made to Israel's kings, find fulfilment in the newborn King of the Jews—adored today by the Magi. These wise men, likely Persian astrologers, followed a star that fulfilled Balaam's ancient prophecy (see Numbers 24:17). Their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh echo the pilgrimage of the Queen of Sheba and other kings who once visited King Solomon. Yet here, in Jesus, we encounter someone greater than Solomon—One who invites all peoples to share in His light and grace.

This revelation challenges us: will we welcome this Child, as the Magi did, or will we remain unmoved like the priests and scribes who missed God's living Word? Let us follow the signs to Him, keeping our eyes fixed on the brightness He brings to our world.

As we enter the New Year 2025, may the Lord bless you and your loved ones with good health, peace, and joy. Let us make this a year of drawing closer to Jesus, who continually offers us His abiding presence. One of my favourite Scripture verse comes from the Prophet Isaiah: "Arise, shine, for your light has come!" (Isaiah 60:1). May we arise with fresh hope and love in our hearts as we leave Christmastide, soon entering again the rhythm of Ordinary Time in the liturgical year with deeper faith and gratitude.

With every blessing for the days ahead,

Fr Peter

Contacts & organisations

Presbytery and Parish Office: 12 Granville Road, Sevenoaks, TN13 1ER
Website: www.sevrcparish.org.uk **Tel:** 01732 454177

Parish Priest: Fr Piotr Kucharski (piotr.kucharski@rcaos.org.uk)
Assistant Priest: Fr John Eyike (john.eyike@rcaos.org.uk)
Parish Deacon: Rev'd Neil Philipson (neil.philipson@rcaos.org.uk)

Parish Secretary: Silvana Wuttke (sevenoaks@rcaos.org.uk)
Parish Office Hours: Monday to Friday 9:00am-12:00noon
Webmaster: Barry Authers: sevenoakswebmaster@rcaos.org.uk

Safeguarding Rep: Ken Baines (sevenoaksg1@safeguardrcaos.org.uk)
Safeguarding DBS: Sally Kelly (sevenoaksg2@safeguardrcaos.org.uk)

The Diocesan Safeguarding Coordinator can be contacted on 020 7261 1606; in an emergency dial 999

PASTORAL & FINANCE COMMITTEES

Parish Finance Committee

Secretary: Mary Scott - 3maryscott@gmail.com

Holy Trinity, Otford

Secretary: Barry Authers - sevenoaksmht@rcaos.org.uk

St Joseph's, Borough Green

Secretary: John Foley - johnandmariefoley@gmail.com

St Bernadette's, West Kingsdown

Secretary: Jill Gobel - jill.gobel@btinternet.com

Gift Aid: Sean Corrigan: sevenoaksgac@rcaos.org.uk

Parish Lead for Formation:

Adrian Pinington

Parish Lead for Catechesis:

Trish Pinington

Parishes Lead for Evangelisation:

Andrew La Trobe & Sue Sylvester

LITURGY

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament Coordinator

Barry Authers: sevenoaksadoration@rcaos.org.uk

Altar Servers (St Thomas's)

Catherine Ingram: ingramfamily15@yahoo.com

Children's Liturgy of the Word, Sunday Mass

⇒ *Sevenoaks, 9:15am Mass:*

Mark O'Prey: sevenoaks@rcaos.org.uk

⇒ *Otford, 9:30am Mass:*

Catherine Bennett: sevenoaks@rcaos.org.uk

⇒ *Borough Green, 9:30am Mass:*

Fiona Newton: fionanewton321@btinternet.com

Choirs

Music Group: Lonnie Christophers lonniechr@hotmail.com

Traditional Choir: Barbara Page 01732 454729

Borough Green: Chris Hurll chris.hurll@outlook.com

Music Rota and Volunteers:

Kathleen Bouverie: kcbouverie@yahoo.com

Readers, Ministers & Welcomers Rota (St Thomas's)

Andrew Pembroke: st.thomas.rota@gmail.com

SACRAMENTS & CATECHESIS

Confirmation Programme

Gabrielle Ellis: sevenoaksconfirmation@rcaos.org.uk

First Holy Communion & Reconciliation Programme

Catherine Tan: sevenoaksfhc@rcaos.org.uk

RCIA (for adults becoming Catholic):

Andrew Wilkinson: sevenoaksrcia@rcaos.org.uk

PRAYER & WELLBEING

Mothers' Prayers

⇒ Mondays at 11:30am at Star House, Star Hill Road 01959 532505

⇒ Thursday after the 12noon Mass in the Parish Centre

Parent & Toddlers Group

Tuesdays 10:00am - 12:00noon MH Room

Mary Hunt 07890 229794

Lectio Divina

Kathie Gonzalez 01732 761253

Listening to you (Bereavement Support)

Third Monday, 10:30am until midday in Parish Room

Sarah Harrison, Kate Travers, Ann Livingston, Sally Haggarty.

Contact via sevenoaks@rcaos.org.uk

Retreats

Catherine Roger: c.rodger@btinternet.com

Scripture Fellowship

Reading a Gospel together

Andrew Wilkinson: andrewwilkos@gmail.com

Quiet Days

Gilly Ferner - gf58b@icloud.com

SOCIAL ACTION

Caritas Representative: Gina Hartnett

(gina.hartnett@hotmail.com)

Catenians (social club for Catholic men)

Mark O'Prey (markoprey@googlemail.com)

Knights of St Columba

Br David Havard: action.youth@kscsouthwark.org

Loaves and Fishes Foodbank

Isabelle Mercer: h.imercer@btopenworld.com

St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP)

Contact Paul Boyle 07918 808222

St Thomas' Coffee Morning

Thursdays 10:15-11:45am in our Parish Centre.

Contact Frances Smith at francesrsmith@hotmail.com

Union of Catholic Mothers (UCM) (West Kingsdown)

Ann Vallins: annvallins@yahoo.com

OTHER MINISTRIES

Church Cleaning (St Thomas's)

James McSharry: jamesmcsharry@hotmail.com

Church Flowers (St Thomas's)

Kate Travers: katetravers521@hotmail.com

St Thomas's Repository

Esther Ford: sevenoaksrepository@rcaos.org.uk

Please contact the Parish Office if you can help.

Epiphany: The Twin Feast of Christmas



Saint Augustine once remarked that the Feast of the Epiphany is like a twin to Christmas. In early Christianity, 6 January was celebrated in the East as the day marking not only Christ's birth, but also the visit of the Magi, His baptism, and the miracle at Cana. Over the centuries, these events came to be commemorated on different dates, yet the Epiphany retained its central theme: the revelation of Christ to the world. Epiphany completes the Christmas story by showing that the Incarnate God comes not for a select few, but for all nations.

A key question in the Epiphany narrative is why the Church honours these Eastern astrologers as protagonists instead of, say, the shepherds or learned scholars of Israel. In the Christmas narrative, we see how those who should have rejoiced first — like Herod or Jerusalem's religious leaders — were indifferent or hostile. By contrast, the Magi acted like genuine researchers, following the star and seeking to understand its meaning, even when confronted by hardship and danger. It makes perfect sense that the Incarnate God should first reveal Himself to wise men, for Christ is Divine Wisdom itself. When Christ was born, remarkably few people were truly glad: Mary, Joseph, and the shepherds. The rest of Jerusalem was alarmed.

Scripture does not actually specify the number of these Eastern visitors. The idea of there being three likely arose from the mention of three gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh — symbolising Christ's kingship, divinity, and future suffering. Tradition eventually supplied names and even royal titles.

Ultimately, the Magi's journey underscores God's universal call: both poor shepherds and wealthy sages bow before the same Saviour. No social class or background is beyond the reach of Christ's redemption. The 'three Magi', representing various regions or even different races, remind us that salvation is offered to all.

Epiphany also symbolises the eternal human quest for goodness, truth, and light. The Magi show us how faith (following the star) and reason (asking questions, avoiding Herod's trap) work together. Their journey reminds us that simply knowing Scripture is not enough; King Herod, well-briefed by experts, used his knowledge for destructive ends. Archbishop Fulton Sheen commented that King Herod was a mere 'researcher', while the true 'scholars' were the Magi, who knew that real wisdom points beyond itself to something higher — namely God. It is worth noting, then, that absolutely central to this feast is humility. Christ was born in a humble cave, so anyone who entered had to bow.

Epiphany used to be a great feast with festivities stretching over days, with processions and various liturgical celebrations, particularly in Jerusalem or Eastern Europe. The blessing of incense, water, gold, and chalk — practices dating back several centuries — was once seen as an integral part of the Christmas season. Marking doorways with the inscription "C+M+B" plus the year was a sign both of faith and of asking Christ's blessing. Some interpreted it as the Magi's names: Caspar, Melchior, Baltazar. Others read it as Christus mansionem benedicat ("May Christ bless this house"). In either case, it reminds us of the Passover tradition in the Book of Exodus, when Israelite homes were marked for protection.

Epiphany stands at the crossroads of Scripture, history, faith, and tradition. It invites us not just to recall an ancient journey, but to undertake our own daily search for God's presence. Like the Magi, we must be willing to follow divine signs wherever they lead and, with humility, bow low before the Christ Child. No matter how festively we celebrate it, or how quietly we reflect on the miracle of

God revealed to the nations, let us remember St Augustine's insight: Epiphany is truly the 'twin feast' of Christmas, reminding us that the Child born in Bethlehem is revealed as the light of the whole world — to you and me!



Parish and other NOTICES

THANK YOU! As we come to the close of the Christmas season, I would like once more to express my heartfelt thanks to everyone who made our celebrations so memorable. Whether you arranged flowers, prepared the Nativity, served at the altar, cleaned and decorated our churches, or offered joyful music, your dedication shone brightly. I am especially grateful for the generous Christmas offerings and gifts, which truly support and encourage us in our ministry. For those returning after the holidays, please know how much your contributions and prayers added to the wonder of Christ's birth. May the light of the Epiphany guide you into a blessed New Year.

WELCOME TO A SEMINARTIAN. This weekend, we extend a warm welcome to James Somerville-Meikle, who has recently completed his propaedeutic year at the English College in Valladolid. He is at the beginning of his priestly formation and will spend the rest of January among us, gaining pastoral experience in our parish. Please make him feel at home and keep him in your prayers as he continues his journey of discernment.

OUR YOUTH PROGRAMME - TRUTH SEEKERS will resume on Saturday 11th January 2025 at 7:00pm at St Thomas' Parish Centre. TRUTH SEEKERS is a program for teenagers who have completed their confirmation to reinforce their faith and knowledge of Christ and to help them sustain lifelong love of God and His Church. The program aims to encourage learning, debate and discussion on fundamental Catholic faith matters, whilst establishing a safe and supportive community, where teenagers feel comfortable exploring their faith. The program is run in blocks on Saturdays evening, and ideally it is encouraged that participants also attend the 6:00pm Mass at St Thomas'. A session runs for about an hour, starting with a light meal followed by a video & discussion. We encourage all those who participated before as well as any other teenagers who have completed their confirmation to consider joining. For queries and to register your child, email the Parish office at sevenoaks@rcaos.org.uk.

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT. On the third Monday of each month, two parishioners from the Bereavement Support team will be in the parish room next to St Thomas's church from 10.30am until 12noon for anyone who would welcome the opportunity to talk in confidence about a bereavement or other loss such as job, health, family pet. This month this will be on Monday 20th January.

PARISH PILGRIMAGE 2025. Following the successful pilgrimage to Medjugorje last May, we now have a reservation for June 2nd 2025, for up to 15 people for 7 nights. Medjugorje is an inspirational place when you will feel the presence of Our Lady leading you closer to Our Lord. Price is £756 and includes flights, transfers, a local guide, and half board hotel accommodation. If one pays a deposit of £150 before the end of January, a discount of £30 will be applied. It is expected that you will share, otherwise a supplement of £150 is required. If anyone is put off by the price, we may be able to help? Contact Barry Authers by text or phone 07773 658469.

SOUTHWARK ROSARY PRAYER PROJECT. Everyone is warmly invited to join this Archdiocese-wide prayer initiative, praying a decade of the Rosary each day for priests and parishes in their deanery.

BUILDING A BETTER MARRIAGE. This one day free retreat will be held in 9 Southwark deaneries during 2025. It starts at 9.30am and finishes at 4.30pm. The day will be open to other deaneries in 2026. To join, contact Carole on 07983 524 727 or email mflkent@rcaos.org.uk. Dates as follow: 25th Jan- St Stephen Church, Welling; 1st Feb - Our Lady Star of the Sea, Broadstairs; 15th Mar - Our Lady Queen of Peace, East Sheen; 12th April - St Mary Church, Croydon West; 28th June - St Raphael Church, Kingston Upon Thames; 5th July - St Thomas More, Dulwich; 13th Sept - Southwark Cathedral, London; 4th Oct - Holy Cross, Catford; 1st Nov - St James the Great, Petts Wood.

HELP YOUR MARRIAGE – Do you feel alone? Are you frustrated or angry with each other? Do you argue ... or have you just stopped because it only makes it worse? **Retrouvaille** has helped 10s of 1000s of couples experiencing difficulties in their marriage. For confidential information about the next programme which will be presented on Zoom 27th February to 2nd March 2025. Email: info@retrouvaille.org.uk or call/text 07887296983. Also see: www.retrouvaille.org.uk

REPOSITORY OPENING TIMES THIS WEEK:

Saturday 4th Jan: after 6:00pm mass
Sunday 5th Jan: after 9:15am mass
Thursday 9th Jan: after 12noon mass
Saturday 11th Jan: after 6:00pm mass
Sunday 12th Jan: after 11:15am mass
 Cards and copies of the new CTS Sunday Missal are on order. We also stock prayer and devotional books, rosaries, Holy water bottles and other gifts. Any queries, contact Esther Ford: sevenoaksrepository@rcaos.org.uk.

MASS INTENTIONS

All masses are at St Thomas' CHURCH unless otherwise stated

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| SUNDAY 5th JANUARY | THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD |
| 6:00pm (Sat) | People of the Parish |
| 8:00am (Latin) | Kathleen O'Neil RIP |
| 9:15am | John Rodrigues RIP |
| 11:15am | Josephine Bell RIP |
| 6:00pm | Happy Birthday Angela Micallef (in thanksgiving) |
| 9:30am Otford | Deceased members of the Mernock & Waite families |
| 9:30am Borough Green | Brian Relfe RIP and comfort of Janet & family |
| 11:00am West Kingsdown | For Norman and Peggy Good |
| Monday 6^h | |
| 8:00am | Intentions of Mrs Theresa Gould |
| Tuesday 7th | |
| 9:30am | Theodora Wilson RIP |
| Wednesday 8th | |
| 8:00am | Intentions of Sister Mary John |
| 10:00am Otford | Father Michael Cronin |
| Thursday 9th | |
| 10:00am Borough Green | Father Donald Clements |
| 12:00noon | Tonny Jansen-Vennik RIP |
| Friday 10th | |
| 8:00am | Timothy and Clea Andradi RIP |
| 9:30am | School Mass |
| 10:00am West Kingsdown | Gillian Lines - Happy Birthday |
| Saturday 11th | |
| 9:30am | Philip Holt RIP |
| SUNDAY 12th JANUARY | THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD |
| 6:00pm (Sat) | Bernadette Butterworth RIP |
| 8:00am (Latin) | People of the Parish |
| 9:15am | Charles Haggarty RIP |
| 11:15am (Trad. Choir) | Kathleen O'Neil RIP |
| 6:00pm | Agnes Laura Horsten RIP |
| 9:30am Otford | Father Dunstan Harrington |
| 9:30am Borough Green | Josephine Bell RIP |
| 11:00am West Kingsdown | Patrick and Josephine Coakley RIP |

PRAY FOR THE SICK

Micheal Bunton, Helena Kendrick, Milena Currall, Sue Spilstead, Elizabeth Sherratt, Philip Hardaker, Paulina Andrea, Zamora Hernandez, Mavis Mitchell Lambert, Toni Barrett, Lynne Stanley, Veronica Williams, Yvonne Bollen, Ann Steven, Sean Cloke, Ann Farren, Maureen Beadle and all in care and nursing homes in the Parish.

ANNIVERSARIES IN JANUARY

Josephine Goldsmith, Eileen Frith, Kathleen Drumm, Pat Mc Gowan. Sarah Parsons, Denes Pogany, Paul Bourquin, Mary Potter, Ena Authers, Leslie O'Brien, Margaret Rawlins, Mary Mileham, James Conney, Mary Perriam, Lisa Taylor, Martha Jeffrey, Derek Crofton, Marie Fitzgerald, Denise Hafford, Gertrude Firmin, Mary Hall, Clare Undy, John Fortune, Ida Stapleton, Esther Reekie, Winifred Jessie Chinnery, Erna Schwarz, Laura Coyle, Pat Edwards, Terence Beaumont

Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen.

RECENTLY DIED

Norma Ann Dalton
funeral on Friday 17th January 2025 (11:00am) at St Thomas'
Frank Easterbrook
funeral on Tuesday 21st January 2025 (12:00noon) in Otford
May they rest in peace



LATIN ANTIPHONS

AD INTROITUM:
 Ecce advénit Dominátor Dóminus; et regnum in manu eius et potéstas et impérium.
AD COMMUNIONEM:
 Vídimus stellam eius in Oriénte, et vénimus cum munéribus adoráre Dóminum.