Ambassadors for Christ: A Catholic apologetics *free* resource. The Archdiocese of Southwark has launched an exciting apologetics project to provide evidence-based answers to questions such as "*Is Jesus God?*" or "*Does prayer work?*". Ambassadors for Christ is designed to equip you with a deeper understanding of your faith, so you can confidently answer questions and be a joyful witness for the Lord Jesus and his Church. Every Monday, a new video will be posted on YouTube, along with a worksheet to enable parishes, schools, youth groups and families to use them as part of their faith formation. To watch the videos and take part in this exciting project, please visit: Ambassadors for Christ | Apologetics for Catholics | Archdiocese of Southwark .
Perfect for RCIA classes, parish study groups, confirmation classes, chaplaincies, families and many more. There will be 52 videos, posted every Monday on YouTube, with accompanying worksheets.

St George's Cathedral Second Collection 25th January: For over half a century, St George's Cathedral has been the Mother Church of the Archdiocese of Southwark, home to 175 parishes and over 50,000 Roman Catholics. For many Catholics living and working across London and the South East of England, St George's has been a beacon of light. Today, St George's Cathedral continues to attract thousands of worshippers and visitors each year, as well as serving a lively local parish community which proudly reflects the rich cultural and ethnic diversity of South London. The Cathedral frequently hosts important Diocesan and national celebrations, as well as concerts and events for various Catholic charities. There is a rich musical tradition, maintaining a choir of boys and men, as well as a girls' choir, both of which sing at Sunday Masses and on major feasts. In many respects, St George's Cathedral serves as a spiritual home and 'beehive' for Catholic evangelisation and mission across the Archdiocese of Southwark.
St George's Cathedral is entirely reliant upon the generosity of its parishioners, volunteers and the Archdiocese of Southwark to keep its doors open. It does not receive Vatican or government funding, nor has an endowment to rely on. Your support can enable the Cathedral to remain open daily to those seeking a place of peace, prayer and worship. Thank you!
· Donate Online: www.rcaos.org.uk/Cathedral
· Or Scan QR Code using telephone camera (below)
· Telephone weekdays 9 am – 5 pm: 020 7960 2504
· Digital Collection Plates at the back of the church.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
18th-25th January 2026
Churches Together in Welling are hosting the following services during the week. It is a great opportunity to visit the different local churches and meet fellow Christians, who are always very welcoming. Feel free to visit one or more churches as you are able. We hope to welcome other Christians to Mass on Friday 23rd and refreshments will be available afterwards in the small hall. Please join us.

Sunday 18th 6.30pm St John's (Danson Lane)
Monday 19th 5pm St Michael's (Upper Wickham Lane)
Tuesday 20th 7.30pm Wellspring Pentecostal (New Road)
Wednesday 21st 10am St Mary's (Wickham Street)
Thursday 22nd 10am Methodists (Bellegrove Road)
Friday 23rd *10am* *St Stephen's RC* (Deepdene Road)
Saturday 24th 10am Bishop Ridley (The Green, Falconwood)
3.30pm Seventh Day Adventists (Kelvin Road)

Join our Mailing List: To receive our weekly newsletter by email please email wellingsecretary@rcaos.org.uk to subscribe, include your name and confirm your consent to receive our newsletter. You can unsubscribe at any time by notifying the parish office. Your email address will not be shared and used only to receive our newsletter.

Grief in Loss Retreat: 20 - 22 March 2026. For anyone who has experienced bereavement, either recently or some time ago. Grieve, remember, hope and give thanks for your loved ones in the light of the Resurrection of Jesus. Call 01622 717272 or email reception@thefriars.org.uk to book and find out more.

Archdiocese of Southwark 2026 Directory:
The fully functional, searchable Online Digital Directory for public use is available here www.rcaos.org.uk/directory

SVP & Ink Cartridges: Recycle your old ink cartridges and raise funds for the St Vincent de Paul Society by placing them in the box on the table in the porch (no large cartridges). Many thanks.

ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH

26 DEEPDENE ROAD, WELLING, KENT DA16 3QL ✠ Telephone: 020 8303 4422
Parish Priest: Canon Edward Perera
website: www.saintstephens.co.uk. Email: welling@rcaos.org.uk
Secretary: Mrs. Lorraine Harris. email: wellingsecretary@rcaos.org.uk

School: St. Stephen's Primary School, Ruskin Avenue, Welling. Kent. DA16 3QG
Telephone: 020 8303 9738

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A)

Saturday 17th January
5pm Repose of the Soul of Rosie Barnes (F Fernandes)
Sunday 18th January
9.30am Roy Jenkins RIP (B Hebben)
11.30am People of the Parish

Mon 19th **Feria**
10am Sons of Patrick Hartley

Tues 20th **Feria**
10am Eileen Kearns RIP (K O'Halloran)
7pm ***Novena Mass***

Weds 21st **St Agnes, Virgin & Martyr**
10am Roy Hebben

Thurs 22nd **Feria**
10am Anthony Fernandes RIP

Fri 23rd **Feria**
10am Billy Corbett

Sat 24th **St Francis de Sales, Bishop & Doctor of the Church**
10am Priest Ints

No Sacrament of Reconciliation

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A)

Saturday 24th January
5pm Olive Reilly RIP—20th anniv

Sunday 25th January
9.30am People of the Parish
11.30am Roland Payne—wellbeing (R Steel)

Please remember in your prayers the sick and housebound; at home, in hospital or in residential care.

DONATIONS

All donations are greatly appreciated to help support our church & parish. Thank you.

The offertory collection after the Liturgy of the Word during Mass on Saturday evening & Sunday morning is for parishioners who wish to donate with their gift aid envelopes or with loose cash. If you choose to donate via the digital plate in church, online or by standing order, please continue to do so—there is no need to change your chosen method of giving. The collection bag will also be circulated for second collections.

Support our parish and make your donations go further by signing a valid Gift Aid Declaration form. Go to www.rcaos.org.uk/media/xfqfyxyj/welling-planned-giving-and-gift-aid-form.pdf Paper copies of the form are available on the table at the back of the church. You can also join the gift aid scheme by completing an online form at https://forms.rcaos.org.uk/giftaid.
Donate online at https://portal.mydona.com/assets/webPay/index.php?cid=236 or https://justgiving.com/campaign/parishsupport—please include parish name and location. To set up a standing order to make regular monthly donations see bank details below.

NatWest Bank
Sort Code: 51-70-14
Account No. 39013332
Account Name: RCAS Welling
Please use your name as a reference Thank you.

Digital Collection Plates are situated at the back of the church. Your donation can be gift aided by completing a digital Gift Aid Declaration on the Digital Collection Plate screen (name, address and email address required) and all future donations you make using this card will automatically be recorded as a gift aid donation. A Gift Aid Declaration is required when using the Digital Collection Plate for the first time even if you are registered for Gift Aid at St Stephen's.

My Dear people,

Having celebrated the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord last Sunday, we now begin what the Church calls the Ordinary Time of the year. The term 'Ordinary Time' of the Year can be rather misleading. Ordinary Time is not just 'ordinary' in the sense that it is rather boring, but rather a period of time where the gospels unfold the public, ministry of Jesus and we read them in a continuous way.

The Liturgical year is based on a three-year cycle (Year A, B and C) when the Sunday readings are from the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke. With few exceptions this year, the Sunday gospel readings for the Ordinary time of the Year are taken from the Gospel of Matthew.

Though there is no year dedicated to the Gospel of John, John's Gospel makes what I call guest appearances in all three years. The reading for the second Sunday of each year which is taken from the Gospel of John, is one of those exceptions. In fact, Ordinary time of each of the Liturgical year begins with a reading from the Gospel of John.

Every liturgical year begins with John the Baptist directing the crowd that gathered around him away from him and towards the person of Jesus. He is the one they should follow.

There are four 'Servant Songs' in Isaiah (chapters 40—55). The term may be collective, but whoever he was, the Servant's faithfulness to God ensures that he becomes a light to the nations and a means of salvation for the blind and those imprisoned. In the New Testament this figure is identified with Christ.

Coming back to the Gospel of today, the first human being mentioned in the Gospel of John is John the Baptist. He has a single mission, to witness to the light, and we hear how he carries out this mission. This is our mission too, to bear witness to the true light Jesus our Lord. And Saviour.

God Bless and love you all.
Canon Edward

Sunday 18th January - Second Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A)

Scripture Insights
God speaks to his prophet Isaiah ("You are my servant"), but then God identifies the servant as Israel, who is to be the light to the nations. Scripture often contains multiple meanings; the servant is both Isaiah and Israel. The prophet represents the nation. Similarly, Christian tradition understands Jesus to be God's servant, "through whom I show my glory," while it also understands Jesus as representative of all Israel (and all humanity). Through Jesus, descendant of the survivors of Israel (see Is 49:6), God brings his salvation to the ends of the earth.

John the Baptist bears witness to these two dimensions of God's salvation. The Baptiser declares that he came to make Jesus known to Israel, but he also recognises that Jesus is the final Passover Lamb who will take away the sin of the world.

In 1 Corinthians, Paul identifies as co-author his "brother" (his fellow Christian) Sosthenes. A man is named Sosthenes only one other time in Scripture, and he is ruler of a synagogue in Corinth. He was seized and beaten by Jews who were angered by Paul's preaching in the synagogue and who tried to convince the Romans to arrest Paul. While most Christians in Corinth were Gentile, revealing the spread of the Gospel to the nations, Paul (a Jew) writes alongside a fellow Jew and synagogue leader, witnessing to God's regathering of his people Israel.

Reflections
• John the Baptist, the great forerunner of Christ, once again highlights his true purpose of revealing the Son of God. John's discipleship was never about himself. Rather, he constantly points to the one who is to come. John understood that his entire purpose or mission was directed toward proclaiming the presence of Christ.

• Like John the Baptist, we too have the opportunity and obligation to remember that our purpose in the kingdom of God is not about us. As Christians, all we do is rooted in and directed to the Son of God. Our words and actions at school, in our workplaces, and every-where in between must point toward Jesus. As with John, this is only possible if we build a deep relationship with the living, loving God. We cannot bring others closer to God if we ourselves do not know God. We cannot share the love of God with others if we ourselves have not first experienced the incredible love of God. We cannot proclaim the Good News of God if we ourselves have not heard it first.

Introduction to Mass
The Lord calls each of us to a life of holiness, conforming our actions and words to God's through the grace of our baptism. That we might be effective or shining witnesses to Christ, carrying his light to all people, let us take account of the times we have not responded to others with holiness, and ask the Lord to restore us our souls.

LTP Sourcebook 2026

Peace Sunday: The work of *Pax Christi* is based on the gospel and inspired by faith. Our vision is of a world where people can live in peace, without fear of violence in all its forms. Rooted in Catholic Christianity, we work with all who share our values to abolish war and create communities of peace and justice. To find out more about the work of *Pax Christi,* the Catholic movement for peace in England & Wales, please go to www.paxchristi.org.uk
There is a second collection this weekend to support the work of *Pax Christi*. Please take an envelope from the table at the back of church for your donation. You can also donate online at
Make a Donation – Pax Christi England and Wales

Many Thanks for your donations to our Christmas Crib which came to £419.35. This will be added to the Christmas Carol service donations (£135.90) and sent to *Friends of the Holy Land,* whose mission is to secure a resilient and enduring community for Christians in the West Bank, Gaza, Israel and Jordan. To find out more go to Friends of the Holy Land

Online Parish Gift Aid Declaration Sign-up: Support our parish and make your donations go further by signing a valid Gift Aid Declaration form. Go to https://forms.rcaos.org.uk/giftaid.

Prayer Intentions Book: Parishioners are invited to write any prayer intentions in our Parish Prayer Intentions book which is placed on the table at the back of the church. Please take time to read the intentions and include them in your prayers.

Archbishop John Wilson will celebrate Mass for *Racial Justice Sunday* at St George's Cathedral on Sunday 1 February 2026, at the 10am Mass. Racial Justice Sunday 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.
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/fdmGwmESSgI**

Bexley Foodbank: Donations can be left in the box in the porch. Your support and generosity is much appreciated. Wanted items can be found at https://bexley.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food/

Confirmation Candidates & First Holy Communion Families are required to sign an attendance register after Mass. Please see the catechists and/or Canon Edward at the back of the church.

Parish Coffee Morning on Sunday in the meeting room attached to the church (while the Confirmation classes are taking place in the main parish hall). Please join us for a cuppa & chat. Donations welcomed

Archdiocesan Pilgrimage for Young Adults (aged 18 to 35) are invited to join Archbishop John on pilgrimage to Lourdes, from 7 to 13 June 2026. The cost is £789, which includes flights and full-board accommodation on a shared basis. To book, please visit: www.tinyurl.com/lourdes26
Young adults (aged 18 to 35) are also invited to register interest for the *World Youth Day* pilgrimage to Korea in August 2027 at www.tinyurl.com/wyd2027
For information about youth activities for all ages across the Archdiocese please visit our website Southwark Catholic Youth Service: Archdiocese of Southwark

A Day With Mary on Saturday 24th January at St Anselm, West Hill, Dartford DA1 2HJ starting at 9.30am, finish at 4.30pm. During the day: Confession & Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. Please bring a packed lunch. See poster for details of the day or go to https://adaywithmary.org/
See poster on the noticeboard in the church porch for a list of *A Day With Mary* venues for 2026.

Mass Intentions: If you would like to offer a Mass for an intention, please use the Mass Intention Envelopes available at the back of the church and post it through the presbytery letterbox. Please ensure you include your contact number. The recommended stipend (donation) advised by the Archdiocese for a Mass Intention is *£10*. Please give plenty of notice to avoid disappointment if you would like specific date for your intention as we may not always be able to accommodate your request at short notice (at least 6 months notice is recommended). If you are a UK tax payer please complete the Gift Aid declaration on the reverse of the envelope. Cheques made payable to '*RCAS Welling'*. Thank you.

Bishop-elect Gerard Bradley's Episcopal Ordination as an Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Southwark will be on *Monday 2 February at 12.30pm* at St George's Cathedral. Archbishop John asks all in our Archdiocese to pray for Bishop-elect Gerard as he prepares to serve as a Bishop.