

**Awakening – Eucharistic Adoration Initiative**  
Our parish will be hosting a time of Eucharistic Adoration next Saturday, 21st March, from 10:30am to 4:30pm as part of *Awakening*, a nationwide initiative led by the Jesus Youth and taking place across many parishes in the UK during the Lenten–Easter season. All parishioners are warmly invited to join us for a moment or for as long as you wish for prayer, reflection, and quiet time before the Lord.

**Repository: New Items:** Please take the time to visit the Repository after Saturday evening & Sunday morning Masses. A selection of Mother’s Day cards & gifts as well as St Patrick’s Day cards & badges are on sale now. Easter cards and much more available in the Repository. There is a wide range of cards for *all occasions* and religious gifts available. Baptism, First Holy Communion & Confirmation cards and gifts are on sale now! Cash only please.

**Gift Aid Envelope Boxes** are on the table at the back of the church. They are arranged in surname alphabetical order– NOT number order. Envelopes have only been ordered for parishioners who use them weekly. The new financial year begins on 6<sup>th</sup> April. New subscribers to our Gift Aid scheme are welcomed. Please take a *Gift Aid Declaration* form from the back table. Once completed, please post it through the presbytery letterbox. Alternatively, you can sign up online by clicking the link <https://forms.rcaos.org.uk/giftaid>  
If you have questions regarding the Gift Aid scheme please speak to Maureen Harrison who will be available after Masses this weekend or contact the church office via email [wellingsecretary@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:wellingsecretary@rcaos.org.uk)

**Stations of the Cross During Lent:**  
Wednesdays at 10.30am—after 10am Mass (NOT Wednesday 25th March)  
Fridays at 7pm (NOT Good Friday 3rd April)  
Saturdays after 5pm Mass  
Sundays after 11.30am Mass

**Grief in Loss retreat 2026: 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](mailto:reception@thefriars.org.uk) to book and find out more.

**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/>

**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.

**Lent Activities 2026:** A leaflet has been prepared with a variety of interesting activities taking place at different churches in Welling. Please take one from the table in the porch.

**Pray the Romero Rosary at St George’s Cathedral** with Archbishop John Wilson who will personally lead the devotion at the National Shrine of St Oscar Romero at St George’s Cathedral (SE1 6HR) on Friday 27th March at 5pm. Stations of the Cross will follow at 6pm.

**Join our Mailing List:** To receive our weekly newsletter by email please email [wellingsecretary@rcaos.org.uk](mailto: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.

**Aspiring to Governance - Wednesday 25 March,** 5.30pm-6.30pm. Join the Education Service for an informative session designed for individuals interested in becoming a Foundation Governor within the Archdiocese. This session is ideal for prospective Foundation Governors, as well as anyone interested in the governance of Archdiocesan schools. To book and view further details please [follow this link](#).

**Evergreen Care UK: Elderberries Vintage Tea Room** in a new Welling venue – 8<sup>th</sup> Bexleyheath Scout Group, 32 Westbrooke Road, Welling DA16 1PR. Starting on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> April 10.30am – 1pm. For over 50’s – friendship, laughter and connection over a cuppa. See leaflets on the table in the porch for more details and for other venues & days in the local area.

**Fire and Accidents:** In the case of a fire in church or in the parish hall please evacuate the building immediately and report to the assembly point in the car park by the school fence (Assembly Point sign on fence facing the church & hall). There is a First Aid box in church (sacristy) and in the parish hall (kitchen) including an accident report book. Please note that any slips, trips, falls or accidents must be logged in the report book and the parish office must be notified as soon as possible.



# 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](http://www.saintstephens.co.uk) Email: [welling@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:welling@rcaos.org.uk)  
Secretary: Mrs. Lorraine Harris. email: [wellingsecretary@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:wellingsecretary@rcaos.org.uk)  
School: St. Stephen’s Primary School, Ruskin Avenue, Welling, Kent. DA16 3QG  
Telephone: 020 8303 9738

<b>Fourth Sunday in Lent (Year A)</b>	
<b>Saturday 14th March</b>	
<b>5pm</b>	Mr Anthony Bong Vu RIP
<b>Sunday 15th March</b>	
<b>9.30am</b>	Patrick Hartley RIP
<b>11.30am</b>	People of the Parish
<b>Mon 16th Feria</b>	
<b>10am</b>	Maggie & Tony Gaywood—wellbeing (P Norville)
<b>Tues 17th St Patrick, Patron of Ireland</b>	
<b>10am</b>	Chloe Coutinho—birthday thanksgiving
<b>7pm Novena Mass</b>	
<b>Weds 18th Feria</b>	
<b>10am</b>	Family Klizowy, Marynia, Bronia
<b>Thurs 19th St Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary</b>	
<b>10am</b>	Peter Ward RIP (M&P Aherne)
<b>Fri 20th Feria</b>	
<b>10am</b>	Maria & Santana Rodrigues—thanksgiving
<b>Sat 21st Feria</b>	
<b>10am</b>	Priest Ints
<b>Awakening—Eucharistic Adoration</b>	
<b>10.30am—4.30pm</b>	
<b>Sacrament of Reconciliation</b>	
<b>4pm—4.30pm</b>	
<b>Fifth Sunday in Lent (Year A)</b>	
<b>Saturday 21st March</b>	
<b>5pm</b>	Patricia Zimmerman RIP (M Rush)
<b>Sunday 22nd March</b>	
<b>9.30am</b>	Peter Ward RIP (A O’Hare)
<b>11.30am</b>	People of the Parish
<b>Please remember in your prayers the sick and housebound; at home, in hospital or in residential care.</b>	

**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](http://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.

<p>My Dear people</p> <p>Last Sunday at the 11.30am Mass we had the first of the three scrutinies. Scrutinies are highpoints in the journey of faith of those who are to be baptised at Easter.</p> <p>The gospel today, the cure of the man born blind is one of the great baptismal stories, and we read it on this Fourth Sunday of Lent, the Sunday of the second scrutiny.</p> <p>His healing is introduced by a short question and answer session with the disciples. The disciples seem to think that if bad things happen to someone it is because of a punishment for their sin or one member of the family. However, Jesus takes a very radical and a different view. The cure of the man born blind is told very briefly in just seven verses. The rest of the story is all about argument and doubt involving the blind man, the pharisees, the parents of the blind man and Jesus.</p> <p>Healed from his physical blindness, the man moves from different stages to full spiritual vision. Like the story of the Samaritan woman, his understanding of Jesus deepens. At first, he describes Jesus as, ‘the man called Jesus’, then he recognises him as a prophet, and finally told that Jesus is</p>	<p>the Son of Man, he worships Jesus as Lord.</p> <p>While the blind man, now cured sees Jesus and worships him as the Lord, the ‘Jews’, the enemies of Jesus fail to realise how they are slipping from physical sight to spiritual blindness. The gospel ends with a warning from the Lord himself that their spiritual blindness is a far worse condition than physical blindness of the healed man.</p> <p>It is good to notice that Jesus is not on centre stage for a good part of the story. The one who takes the centre stage is the man born blind. The interrogation of the blind man resembles the trial of Jesus before Pilate.</p> <p>On this Sunday of the second scrutiny, those who are to be baptised are given the example of the blind man. Baptism gives us a new kind of light. It helps us to see many things in life differently. Preparing for baptism—and for those of us who are baptised—the gospel today challenges us to be aware of our blind spots in our journey of faith as disciples of Jesus.</p> <p>God Bless and love you all. Canon Edward</p>
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**Fourth Sunday in Lent (Year A)**

<p><b>Scripture Insights</b></p> <p>The text this Sunday are about seeing and not seeing, about the light and the darkness, about blindness and eyes being opened. In the first reading, Samuel sees the sons of Jesse but can't see them rightly, because he looks only at their outward appearance. The Lord looks instead “into the heart” (I Sm 16:7). God's chosen one is not even there at the selection; as the youngest son, nobody looked at him and saw a king. When the young David arrives, the narrator observes that he is, in fact handsome. But that's not the point.</p> <p>Perhaps God sees something of his own character in this young shepherd. After all, David himself describes God as his shepherd in Psalm 23. God is a good shepherd who gives rest and refreshes and guides, who guards and protects and gives courage. Even though David walks through the darkest valley (unable to see what is in front of him), he does not fear with God at his side.</p> <p>In John's account of the Gospel, Jesus opens the eyes of a man blind from birth. The Pharisees assume that his blindness results from his sin, or from the sin of his parents, a notion that Jesus sternly rejects. When Jesus tells the blind man that he has seen the Son of Man, this is a literal claim and a spiritual one: In that sense, it is the Pharisees who are blind, unable to see.</p>	<p><b>Reflections</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We can scoff at the disciples for assuming blindness was a punishment for sin, but are we all that different? Victim blaming is rampant in our culture: suffering comes from doing something wrong. We want to believe we can avoid suffering by making the right choices.</li> <li>• The contrast between the blind man and the Pharisees reminds us that there are worse evils than pain and worse deprivations than loneliness. After his sight is restored, the once-blind man finds himself socially out-cast for his faith in Christ. His testimony doesn't fit into the narrative the Pharisees have constructed to protect their own comfortable lives and beliefs. Even then, the newly sighted man remains grateful and worships Jesus. His physical blindness prepared the blind man to recognise the healing Christ came to offer; the Pharisee's selfishness and spiritual blindness prevent them from seeing what was happening right in front of them. Which is the greater deprivation?</li> </ul> <p><b>Introduction to Mass</b></p> <p>Jesus, the light of the world, has come that the works of the Lord might be made visible through him. He heals our blindness to the gifts of others, and he grants us eyes to see as God sees, judging not from the outward appearance but from the inner character. Conscious of the ways we have been blind to God's presence, let us seek his forgiveness and healing, asking him to restore our sight.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>LTP Sourcebook 2026</i></p>
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**Welcomers for Holy Week:** We would like to encourage a number of new Welcomers to help with distribution of Mass books, palms, and candles during Holy Week. Please sign the list at the back of the church if you can help during Holy Week.

**Readers for the Passion and Holy Week:** Two readers are required at each Mass on Palm Sunday to read the Passion. These are in addition to the readers on the rota; the readers on the rota should do the normal readings & bidding prayers as usual. Readers are also needed for the Holy Week services on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and the Easter Saturday Vigil Mass. Please sign the lists on the table at the back of the church if you would like to read. New readers not on the regular rota would be most welcome.

**The Washing of Feet at The Mass of the Lord's Supper** (8pm, Thurs. 2<sup>nd</sup> April) re-enacts Jesus gesture of service at the Last Supper. 12 volunteers needed please to have their feet washed at that Mass. Please sign up on the list at the back of church.

**Eucharistic Ministers** are required for Good Friday and the Easter Saturday Vigil. Please sign the list at the back of the church. Thank you.

**Good Friday Walk of Witness:** Gather outside St Mary's Church, Wickham Street on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April at 11.15am for a 11.30am departure. Join Christians from other churches in Welling as we walk, sing and pray along Bellegrove Road and Welling High Street, followed by a simple lunch at St John's Church, Danson Lane. Donations to Christian Aid.

**Refreshments** will be available in the small hall after the Good Friday Reflection, and after the Easter Vigil in the main parish hall. *No Coffee Morning on Easter Sunday morning.*

**Collection for the Holy Places of Palestine** on Good Friday (3rd April)  
**Easter Collection:** Your Easter offering is for our parish priest. Please use your gift aid envelope, card reader in church or online. Cheques /cash also accepted. Many thanks for your generosity.

**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>.

**This Weekend** (14th / 15th March) we welcome The Knights of St. Columba , giving out their **Holy Week** posters and taking donations for the Seminary Fund.

**Poor Parishes Collection Next Weekend** (21<sup>st</sup> / 22<sup>nd</sup> March). This collection enables the Archbishop to make grants to some of the poorer parishes in the diocese.

**Easter Egg Hamper Raffle:** Tickets (£1 each) on sale this weekend! A chance to win a fantastic hamper full of delicious Easter treats! Tickets are available from the Repository and during Coffee Morning. Proceeds towards our Easter church flower displays.

**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

**Eucharistic Adoration** in church will be on Mondays to Fridays 9am to 9.30am.

**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.

**Southwark Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes:** Bishop Paul Hendricks warmly invites everyone to join the pilgrimage on 21<sup>st</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> August. A pilgrimage is a great opportunity to refresh and renew our relationship with the Lord Jesus, with the help of Our Lady's prayers. I have also found it a blessing to be able to accompany and to be inspired by other pilgrims some of whom are sick, elderly or disabled. Details for booking travel and accommodation can be found at <https://www.tangney-tours.com/diocese-pilgrimages/diocese-ca/> We also ask pilgrims to complete a form with details, including medical requirements (if any) at <https://www.catholicassociation.co.uk/join2026> For more information, please contact Canon Edward Perera ([edwardperera@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:edwardperera@rcaos.org.uk)) or Deacon John Fogarty ([johnfogarty@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:johnfogarty@rcaos.org.uk)) or Bishop Paul Hendricks ([paulhendricks@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:paulhendricks@rcaos.org.uk))