

St Mark's Catholic Church, West Wickham

<https://saintmarkswv.net/>



St Marks Church West Wickham

Parochial Administrator

Father Ashley Beck

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14 December 2025



Third Sunday of Advent (A) - *Gaudete* Sunday

Rejoice!

One of the mainstays in most parishes is people's real and tangible generosity in terms of giving to the Church. So in recent weeks we have had a donation towards the costs of our new heating system, a donation to cover the cost of a new organ (which will be installed next week) and, this weekend, brand new rose pink vestments made in Sri Lanka. We are very grateful to these donors for their generosity. We only wear pink twice a year: on this third Sunday of Advent, known as *Gaudete* ('Rejoice!') Sunday and the Fourth Sunday of Lent (*Laetare* Sunday), a day to lift slightly Advent austerity and restraint. Joyfulness in hope for the coming of God's kingdom is a theme of Advent; this isn't a superficial jollity (we see enough of that), but grounded in teachings about our faith which we encounter so strongly in the beautiful Scripture readings we hear at Mass. This gives us strength and confidence to resist phoney expressions of religious faith (such as the Carol Concert in London being organised by *Unite the Kingdom*) and so many other false messages in the world. The seasons of Advent and Christmas should not lead us to be naïve or blind to the existence of evil and sin in the world. People who hate do not experience real joy.

Christmas at St Mark's

Christmas Eve

6:30pm

Vigil Mass

Christmas Day

Midnight

Mass During the Night preceded by Carols from 11:30

8:00 am

Mass at Dawn

10:00 am

Mass During the Day

11:30am

Mass During the Day

First Holy Communion

If you would like your child to make their first Holy Communion on 17.5.26@11.30 Mass - Please could you either fill out a form in the sacristy or <https://tinyurl.com/mrb3fvbe>

Classes will start in January - Day and time of the week to be arranged. There will be a parents' meeting after the 10am Mass on Sunday 14 December.

St Mark's Parish Golf Society

The parish Golf Society Day and its 33rd AGM took place on Friday 28 November at Croham Hurst Golf Club, with 10 Members playing. with 16 present for our AGM & Dinner. The winners of the day were 1st Richard Hick (39pts) 2nd Matt Carson (39) on the countback, 3rd Greg Gill (35 pts) Our Player of the Year was John Helen. Our incoming Captain is Nigel Walker. We would welcome new members. If you are a golfer, with a handicap, and would like to join us, please contact David Brant on Mob 07890 801 472 or by email on davidbrant1@gmail.com.

Psalm response

Come, Lord, and save us.

Gospel acclamation

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;

he has sent me to proclaim good news to the poor.

This newsletter - an appeal

In any parish a weekly newsletter is an important way for people to learn about Christian teaching and keep in touch with what is going on in the church and also an advertisement to others about our life. Since I came here I have been indebted to Joe Haig who has laid out impressively the material I have gathered, in addition to his other commitments (not least conducting the choir at the 10am Mass); but we need now to find new people to take on Joe's role and most of what I have had to do as well. For this reason we want a **Newsletter** team to be *responsible* for producing it this week. We need a team to do these things:

- To type out the basic text – this requires an ability to use desktop publishing software, such as Scribus or Microsoft Publisher
- To edit the contents – that is collect and put together the contributions, such as the list of intentions, anniversaries and events notified. This will include a contribution from me as parish priest but I shouldn't be the editor
- To photocopy 180 copies each week. We are about to acquire a new copier (which will be able to print in colour) which will be in the developing parish office/outer sacristy. The one we have been using for some years has made this one of the most demanding aspects of all this, particularly for me as I only have to look at a copier for paper to jam.

Joe and I can give guidance about how all this is done – as you can see, it needs more than two people! Since we're engaged in trying to widen participation in parish life, we really need people to do this *who don't have other responsibilities in the parish*. Advent is a time for new beginnings – please think about the gifts you might have to offer to the parish. Many hands make light work. I am very grateful to Joe for all he has done.

Fr Ashley

Monthly Children's Mass

We try to encourage *active participation* in the Mass for as many people as possible: this is a key way in which Catholic worship has been enriched here, and all over the world, since the reforms to liturgy brought about by the Second Vatican Council. In line with this we intend from the first Sunday of June that the readings and bidding prayers at the 10am Mass will normally be led by children on the first Sunday of the month. Coaching will be provided. Please let me know if you are interested.

St Mark's 200 Club

The **ST MARK'S 200 CLUB**, originally started in 1996 to provide funds for Church, Hall and Presbytery maintenance and repair, needs new members. Membership is £5 per month for a personal number entered into a draw at the end of each calendar month, for one of three prizes of either £100, £50 or £30. Please contact: davidj.smith855@gmail.com or 07784-225932 for details.

Missionary Sisters of St Peter Claver

The sisters write:

Thank you very much for the opportunity to visit your parish with our Mission Calendar 2026 last weekend and for encouraging your parishioners to support our missionary endeavours. God bless you for your hospitality and all your support.

With gratitude, we let you know that the proceeds came to £1,010.50 (Cash - £562.50; Card Reader - £448.00). We are very grateful to your Parishioners for their generous response towards this year's Calendar Appeal Project.

Please be assured of our heartfelt prayers, especially through the monthly offering of the Holy Mass for all our Friends and Benefactors - living and deceased - throughout our communities around the world. We remain deeply grateful for your generous support and kindness.

May the Good Lord continue to bless you and grant you all the graces that you need to serve your parish community'.

Charity No: 1048906 For Online donation: <https://square.link/u/5nCu8otr> Cheques Payable to:
SODALITY OF ST. PETER CLAVER

Contact Details: Sodality of St. Peter Claver 89 Shortlands Road, Bromley BR2 0JL (0208 313 3915)

Called to Bear Fruit

Earlier in the year some of you took part in a Called to Bear Fruit group, as encouraged by the archbishop in a pastoral letter sent about a year ago. Booklets giving details of what was raised and discussed in groups all over the diocese are in the porch.

Messenger of the Sacred Heart

Some of you are familiar with this journal produced regularly by the Irish Jesuits. We intend to buy regular copies and there are some of the latest issue in the porch. More details at <https://www.messenger.ie/product/sacred-heart-messenger-subscription/>

St Mary's Primary School

St Mary's School in Westgate Road, Beckenham, is our parish school which we share with Beckenham and Hayes parishes. For details of the school's life and how to apply for a place go to their website; www.stmaryscatholic.bromley.sch.uk

St Mark's Choir

St Mark's Choir sing at the 10am Sunday Mass and on other special occasions, and we rehearse before Mass from 9am to learn new music. We are looking for new members so if you like singing please join us. Children can come along too but need to be with an accompanying adult.

Renew your Gift Aid declaration for St Mark's West Wickham

We are asking all parishioners who Gift Aid their offertory contributions to renew their Gift Aid declaration to the parish so we can ensure our records are up to date.

You can also use the following link to sign-up to Gift Aid and Planned Giving for the first time. Thank you for your support of our parish mission and ministry.

Renew your Gift Aid declaration via: <https://forms.rcaos.org.uk/giftaid/>

Alternatively, you can email the parish on: westwickham@rcaos.org.uk

Shrublands Trust food bank

Thanks for those who contributed gifts last weekend. Our next collection, pre-Christmas, is on the weekend of 14/15 December – please continue to be generous. Details of what is needed at <https://www.shrublandstrust.org/>

Repository

Christmas cards, Advent cards, Thinking of you at Christmas cards, as well as Calendars, Candles and a few Christmas gifts, are available to purchase from the repository. You will be supporting either the church or one of several charities (see the back of the packs) by buying from the repository. You can either put money in the collection box in the wall of the repository or by selecting 'repository' on the card payment machine, in the foyer of the church.

Message from CAFOD

'Wishing you peace and joy in this season of Advent! On behalf of CAFOD and the global Caritas family I am writing to express our sincere thanks to you and your parish for the generous donations, prayers and actions in support of CAFOD's work this Jubilee year. Your support has enabled us to fund projects in more than 40 countries and stand alongside communities who live with the horror of conflict (<https://cafod.org.uk/fundraise/parishes/parishes-emergency-response>). Thank you so much for making this work possible! In this holy season of Advent, may you and your parish be richly blessed with Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. With all good wishes and every blessing to you and your parish community as you prepare to celebrate the joy of Christ's coming this Christmas'.

Many thanks to Maya Bowlett for organising our fundraising for CAFOD.

Future events

Monday 22 December

12 noon

Requiem Mass, Anne Martin

Saturday 4 April

Easter Vigil

Adult Baptism and Reception into the Church

Please let me know if you are interested

Sunday 17 May

11:30 am

First Holy Communion (children in year 3 or above)

Saturday 13 June

Confirmation (young people in year 8 or above)

Parish Mass times		Adoration
Sunday	8:00 am 10:00 am 11:30 am	Mon and Fri after Mass until 11:30 am Normally a priest is available for confession
Monday	10:00 am	Rosary
Tuesday	6:00 pm	Mon and Wed to Fri at 9:20 am
Wednesday	10:00 am	Mass at St Edmund's, Beckenham
Thursday	10:00 am	Sun: 8:00 am, 9:30 am, 11:00 am, 5:30 pm
Friday	10:00 am	Mon to Sat: 10:00 am
Saturday	6:30 pm (vigil)	Sat: 6:00 pm (vigil)

Please pray for

Anniversaries

Keith Breathwick, Maurice Wheeler, Charles Wilkes, John Savage-Roberts, Elizabeth Myatt, Canon Jack Madden, Jimmy Lonergan, Winifred Farrier, Dorio Melfi, James Givvons, Eamon McGowan, Eileen Dunphy, Helen Rogers, Serafina Losinska and Nahla Audish.

Those who are sick

Robert Haines, Mary Bloom, Lucy, Patterson, Michael Grant, Shauna Phibbs, Patrick Ross, Rose Scott, Maura Crawshaw, Anne Argenio, Laura Burley, Patrick Barrett, Maureen Crowhurst, Sophie Campbell, Kathy Springhall, Fr Ray Brennan and Peggy Bohan.

Recently dead

Anne Martin, Eilish Brophy, Bishop Gregor Duncan and Margaret Ziolek.

Sat 13th	St Lucy		
	6:00 pm		Confessions
	6:30 pm	Parishioners	Vigil Mass
Sun 14th	Third Sunday of Advent, Year A Gaudete Sunday		
	8:00 am	Kathleen Fox	
	10:00 am	Fr Bill Bergin	
	11:30 am	Neal Sheppard	
Mon 15th	10:00 am	Keith Breathwick	Followed by Adoration
Tue 16th	6:00 pm	Sadie Moore	
Wed 17th	10:00 am	Cataleya Tiana Perkins Charlie	Followed by refreshments
	3:00 pm	Christmas Carol Service	At Bethlem Hospital Chapel
Thurs 18th	10:00 am	Derek Attwell and Jimmy Lonergan	
	7:00 pm	St Mary's School Carol Service	At St Edmund's Beckenham
Fri 19th	9:00 am	End of Term Mass	At St Mary's School
	10:00 am	Ramilla Alphonse	Followed by Adoration
Sat 20th	6:00 pm		Confessions
	6:30 pm		Vigil Mass
Sun 21st	Fourth Sunday of Advent, Year A		
	8:00 am	Eilish Brophy	
	10:00 am	Eileen Diggins	
	11:30 am	Nahla Audish	

Parish Safeguarding Representatives

Thomas Smialowski	westwickhamsg1@safeguardrcaos.org.uk
Marie Potter	westwickhamsg2@safeguardrcaos.org.uk