

PARISH PRIEST: Fr Michael Jones
Email: michaeljones@rcaos.org.uk
ASSISTANT PRIEST: Fr Luke Malunze
Email: lukemalunze@rcaos.org.uk
PARISH SECRETARY: CATH BIRD
Parish Office Email bexlevheath@rcaos.org.uk
Parish Website: www.StJohnVianney-Bexlevheath.org
Tel: 020 8303 1957

SAFEGUARDING REPRESENTATIVES:
CATH BIRD
Email: bexlevheathsg1@safeguardrcaos.org.uk
Tel: 07444 060578
LENA PETT
Email: bexlevheathsg3@safeguardrcaos.org.uk
Tel: 07444 060577

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT (YEAR C) (PAGE 82)

LITURGICAL YEAR 2024-2025 – THE SEASON OF ADVENT

Sunday 1st December

First Sunday of Advent (Year C)

- 08.30 Mass for Elvin Antao RIP (Fr L)
- 10.30 Mass for Judith Opok RIP and Deceased Family Members (Fr M)
Children’s Liturgy
Refreshments in hall
- 17.30 Mass for Lillian Viegas (Fr L)

Monday 2nd December Feria of Advent

- No** Mass
 10.00 STM Year 4 practice

Tuesday 3rd December

**Saint Francis Xavier, Priest/
Day of Prayer for Migrants**

No Mass
Happy Feast Day to our Goan community

- 09.30 Open Morning at St Thomas More Primary, Sheldon Road
- 10.00 STM Year 3 practice

Wednesday 4th December Feria of Advent

- 09.00 Mass for Adina’s Birthday (Antao) (Fr L)
- 17.00 Year 3 St Thomas More Carol Service in the church (all parishioners welcome)
- 18.15 Year 4 St Thomas More Carol Service in the church (all parishioners welcome)

Thursday 5th December Feria of Advent

- 09.00 Liturgy of the Word/Eucharistic Service

Friday 6th December

Saint Nicholas, Bishop

- 09.00 Mass for the Welfare of Henrietta De Souza (Fr M)
Adoration until 10.00am
Confessions straight after the Blessed Sacrament is exposed

Saturday 7th December

Saint Ambrose, Bishop and Doctor of the Church

- Day with Mary at St Mary’s, Croydon
- 10.00 Mass for all the Holy Souls in purgatory (Antao) (Fr L)
Confessions until 11.00am
 - 12.30 Baptism of Henry William Page (Fr M)
 - 12.30 Ecumenical Carols by the Clock Tower at Bexleyheath Shopping Centre.

Sunday 8th December

Second Sunday of Advent (Year C)

- 08.30 Mass In Thanksgiving (De Souza) (Fr M)
- 10.30 Mass for Camilo De Souza RIP (D’Costa) (Fr L)
Children’s Liturgy
Refreshments in hall
- 17.30 Mass for Fr James Malone RIP

(FOUNDATION) (Fr L)

Today we will celebrate the Asperges (Sprinkling with Holy Water) at all Masses.

Happy New Year: Today marks the start of the Season of Advent and the beginning of a New Church Year. Sunday readings come from Year C and we will listen to St Luke’s Gospel in the new translation. There will be a new volume of the Parish Mass book.

The first part of Advent looks forward to the Second Coming of Christ while the second part prepares us for the coming of Christ at Christmas and the celebration of the Incarnation. It is a penitential season and so the colour is purple. But it is not as solemn as Lent. Purple is the colour of hope and during this time we listen to the prophets as they hope for the coming of the Messiah. The readings and the plainchant for this season are simple and beautiful. We do not use the Gloria but at 10.30 Mass will sing the Kyrie and Lamb of God.

Advent Wreath: On the First Sunday of Advent we will bless the Advent Wreath with its five candles: three purple, one pink and one white. The pink is for Gaudete Sunday [3rd Sunday] and the white candle is lit at Christmas for Christ. Each week we will ask a child to light the candle of that Sunday and then we will sing our Candle Song. The Advent Wreath with its greenery is a symbol of our Advent hope and our countdown to Christmas.

The Jesse Tree is a bare branch in a pot which we decorate with symbols each week. Symbols are people and events from our Salvation History. Children colour in these symbols during their own Liturgy in the hall and bring them up at the Preparation of the Gifts (as in previous years). The Jesse Tree is depicted in medieval art as the ancestry tree of Jesus. It is named after Jesse, (not the cowboy) the father of King David. Jesse is usually shown asleep on the ground and tree growing from his loins. On this tree in stained glass windows you can see the prophets as well as Mary and then Jesus. Some trees, like ours, go back to Adam and Eve. It is a good way of learning Bible stories and connecting them together in the history of our Salvation. This week’s symbols are: Adam & Eve, Noah and Abraham & Sarah.

Advent “Walk with Me” booklets are available in the porch to buy at £1.00 each, together with the Children’s Advent Calendar at 30p each. Please put money in the wall box labelled “cards etc.” Thank you.

Donations of Holly: Now is the time to bring in your donations of holly to enable us to decorate the church. Please put in a black bag and leave in the room where the servers get ready. Thank you.

Decorating for Christmas: We will be decorating the church and tree on Wednesday 18th December after 10.00am Mass. If you can spare some time, please do come along and join the festivities as we prepare the Way for Our Lord.

Volunteering at Christmas: Our lists are on the noticeboard in the porch for you to sign up as a Welcomer, Reader, EM, Altar Server for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. We encourage you to put your name down. Thank you in advance.

MASSES AT CHRISTMAS

Christmas Eve: 6.00pm First Mass of Christmas (especially for children) (Fr M)

9.30pm Carol Service & 10.00pm Christmas Night Mass (Fr L)

Christmas Day: 9.30am The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ (Fr M/Fr L)

Please note there is **no Midnight Mass** on Christmas Eve and **no evening Mass** on Christmas Day. Please ensure you take a copy of the Christmas Programme.

Extra Masses: As we are fortunate to have Fr Luke currently with us, we have decided to resume Masses on Tuesdays and Thursdays and any special days, in addition to our current Masses. This means that we will now have Mass on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. This will start in the New Year.

The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary: Fr Luke will say Mass at 9.00am on Monday 9th December at St John Vianney.

Bereavement Group: Our next meeting will be on Tuesday 3rd December, 7.00-8.00pm. Mary and Maura

Today is the last day to register your child for First Holy Communion classes next year.

Please pray for the sick and those in special need of your prayers: Alan and Rene Fisher, Baby Jemima Rita James, Fr Jeff, Shirley Angerer, Josephine Treloar, Jacqueline Downey, Noreen Lambe, Steve Smith, Annie and Gerry McDonagh Snr, Gerry McDonagh Jnr and Martin McDonagh, Keith Smith, Samantha Butler, Carole, Dean McClumpha, Mrs Chris Lynch, Ashleigh, Fr Michael, Kathy Blakemore, Kirsty, Robin Robinson, Alice, John Moore, Pauline Viegas, Deirdre Collins, Susan Dassanyake, Nuala Pawley, Helena Riley, Richard Whiteside, Sally Pain, Florrie Pereira, Fr John Ryan (former Parish Priest of Crayford), Jo O'Donnell, Matthew Butler, Nadia Sheehy, Steve Pitt, Goretti Stone, Little Buster Sprules, David Collison, Christine Edwards, Santana Fernandes, Maria Pereira, Leonie Viegas, Paul Robson, Jack Goodrich, Gloria Slaney, Andy Wansbury and Roy Miller

Hiring of Hall: Please contact Sarah Tremain: 020 8301 2103.

Receiving electronic newsletter: Please email bexleyheath@rcaos.org.uk

HOW TO MAKE YOUR OFFERTORY DONATION:

Offertory Basket / Card Machine in the porch.

Payment online: Account No: 21089620 **Sort Code:** 51-70-14 **Account Name:** RCAS Bexleyheath

Please do consider Gift Aiding your donation if you are a taxpayer. Forms are available in the porch beside the booklet rack.

Basket Collection, Card Machine Collection and Standing Orders received.

Polite Reminder: Please remember to switch your phone off or put it on silent when you're at Mass. Thank you.

St Catherine's Catholic School invites you to the Grandparents' Advent Tea Party on Friday December 6th 1.30pm -3.00pm RSVP: 01322 556333 / dcunningham@stccg.co.uk (see poster)

Repository: We have Christmas Cards, Advent Calendars, Cribs, Decorations and many more items on sale in our Repository. We take cash or payment can be made via the card machine under "Repository". It is usually open at 8.30am and 10.30am Mass.

We welcome children, parents and teachers from St Thomas More Primary school for their Year 3 and 4 Carol Services on Wednesday at 5pm & 6.15pm.

Ecumenical Carols: We invite you to join our Christian Brothers and Sisters in giving witness to our faith and singing carols by the Clock Tower at Bexleyheath Shopping Centre, at 12.30pm.

Food Bank Items: It would greatly be appreciated if you could donate any food items to support our local food banks at Trinity Place and Devonshire Road. Usual items are needed, tinned meat and fish, pasta and pasta sauces, long life milk, rice, etc... With Christmas looming, if you can spare some nice treats too, that would be amazing. Maybe a selection box, tub of sweets or fancy biscuits. These items are a luxury to those who use the banks.

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School's last Open Morning is on 14th January 2025 at 9.30am.

Men's Spiritual Exercises, 31 March – 5 April 2025: A 5-day version of the Ignatian Exercises offered specifically for men (whether lay or ordained), this retreat will be preached by the Benedictine Monks of St Joseph's Abbey, France. Founded in 1988, this community has retained its charism of a specific apostolate to men and of engaging them through a shortened version of the Ignatian Exercises. One-to-one direction will be offered alongside the talks. Priests are welcome to attend and concelebrate or celebrate their own Mass. For more information and to book: <https://christianheritagecentre.com/events/mens-spiritual-exercises/>

Days with Mary: St George's Cathedral, Lambeth Road on Saturday 14th December (See posters for more information)

CAFOD Christmas Gifts: If you're struggling to buy someone a Christmas gift, how about donating something to CAFOD? Their Christmas Catalogue is available in the porch. Please take a copy.

If you or someone you know is pregnant and looking for an empowering antenatal class, parishioner Stephanie Braganza holds local hypnobirthing classes. Hypnobirthing focuses on relaxation during pregnancy, labour and birth but classes focus on all aspects of labour and birth with the aim of making mum and her birth partner feel empowered and excited. All classes have pay-what-you-can slots available, no questions asked. The next classes are on the 16th, 17th, 23rd and 24th of November, 10.30-12.30pm at the Danson Children's Centre, Bexleyheath. Find out more at littlegreenleaf.co.uk or by emailing info@littlegreenleaf.co.uk.

Beware of Scammers – Message from Diocese ICT Department: We'd like to bring to your attention a concerning rise in scam emails targeting our parishioners. These emails impersonate the parish priest, often using a similar email name and masking the real email address. They typically request the recipient to purchase Amazon or other gift cards as gifts for the priest. Unfortunately, we have received reports of parishioners falling victim to these scams, with some individuals losing up to £600 to the fraudsters.

- Never to purchase gift cards as gifts for the parish priest, based on an email request, unless they have verified the request directly in person or through a trusted means.
- To double-check any suspicious email by directly contacting the parish office.
- To avoid sharing personal or financial information in response to unsolicited emails.

If you or your parishioners encounter these emails, please encourage them to report them as spam and inform the parish office immediately.

***** **CHRISTMAS RAFFLE** *****

Today, you will find an envelope containing five strips of raffle tickets attached to the newsletter for you to complete and return. The cost will be £1 per strip, (a strip is five tickets), for your chance to win one of the fabulous prizes. We ask that you please write your name and contact number on **EACH** ticket.

Place all completed tickets and money in the envelope provided and drop it in the bucket which is in the church porch. The raffle prizes are as follows: **First prize** – Your choice of 4 tickets for **ONE** of the following events a) An England cricket International; b) Royal Ascot; c) Cheltenham National Hunt Festival.

Second prize – A food hamper; **Third prize** – Three bottles of spirits; **Fourth prize** – A Freixenet ice bucket with Prosecco and glasses; **Fifth prize** – Crystal cut decanter; **Sixth prize** – Bottle of Baileys; **Seventh prize** – Box of M & S Belgian Chocolate luxury biscuits.

The draw for the raffle will take place in the church hall after 10:30 Mass on Sunday 15th December. Once again, many thanks for all your help and support and good luck in the raffle!