CHRISTCHURCH NEWSLETTER

CANONS REGULAR OF ELTHAM

Christchurch Priory, 229 Eltham High Street, London, SE9 1TX

Parish Priest: Fr John Fricker CRE **Parish Secretary:** Rebecca Thomas

Telephone: 020 8850 1666 **Email:** eltham@rcaos.org.uk

Parish Office Opening Times: Monday-Friday (9am-3pm) & Saturday (9am-1pm)

Website: www.christchurcheltham.org.uk **Live Stream:** www.churchservices.tv/eltham

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Sunday 18 October 2026

Today's Readings **1st Reading: Isaiah 45:1, 4-6; 2nd Reading: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-5; Gospel: Matthew 22:15-21**

Online Missal **https://universalis.com/Europe.England.Southwark/20261810/mass.htm**

Psalm Response **Ascribe to the Lord glory and power.**

Gospel Acclamation **Alleluia, Alleluia! Shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life. Alleluia!**

FUNERALS

Please remember to pray for repose of the souls of the faithful departed. We especially remember Wendy Angela Burt. A funeral Mass will be held here at Christchurch on Thursday 22 October at 11.30am.

We also especially remember Santiago Harrison, please pray for repose of Santiago's soul. A funeral Mass was held here at Christchurch last Thursday.

BAPTISMS

This week we welcome Lucas Sannino-Borland, Charlotte Pierson and Ark Chukwudozie into the Church. Please pray for the children and their families at this important time.

CONFIRMATION COURSE 2027

If your child is currently in year 8 or above and you would like them Confirmed into the Church, applications for this year's Confirmation Course are now open on the parish website. Please ensure that you apply for the correct course.

SCHOOL FORM SIGNING

Father John will be signing primary and secondary school supplementary forms on **Friday 23 October at 3pm** in the Priory.

SUNDAY TEAS AND COFFEES GROUP 2 VOLUNTEER NEEDED

Our Tea and Coffee shop volunteers do a wonderful job of offering post-Mass refreshments to our parishioners, however, one of our Teas and Coffees groups after the 9.30am Sunday Mass is short one member and would be grateful if a parishioner would come forward to join them. Usually, this involves helping out about one morning per month. Please contact the Parish Office if you can assist. Thank you.

MISSION CALENDARS

The Missionary Sisters of St Peter Claver will be selling 2027 Mission Calendars after the Sunday Masses next weekend. The funds raised will help provide food for girls from poor families at a boarding school established in the Diocese of Tunduru-Masasi in Tanzania. Please support this worthy cause generously.

SECOND COLLECTION

Today is World Mission Sunday and there will be a Second Collection for Missio, the Church's official organ for the support of foreign missions.

All Masses are streamed live.

Sunday Masses:
6pm Sat - Vigil Mass
(No Vigil Mass between third weekend in July and first weekend in September)
9.30am - Children's Mass
11.30am - Mass
6.30pm - Mass

Weekday Masses:
Mon-Fri 9am
Sat 12 noon

Bank Holidays:
12 noon

Holy Days of Obligation:
9am, 12 noon and 8pm

Confession:
Sat 11am-12 noon

Exposition:
Wed after 9am Mass

Divine Mercy Chaplet:
Sat 11.15am-11.25am

Rosary:
Sat 11.30am-11.50am

Missed a special celebration?
You can watch a recording on our website

https://www.christchurcheltham.org.uk/Live-Streaming/

LITURGY AND FAITH: SACRIFICIAL LOVE

Love becomes most radiant when it costs us something. In the quiet moments of ordinary life, a mother rises through the night to tend a feverish child, a husband lays down his own plans to care for a failing spouse, a friend stays at a bedside long after the visitors have gone. These are small crucifixions, hidden from the world, and yet in them we glimpse the very heart of God. For Christ did not merely speak of love; he poured himself out upon the Cross, spending every last drop so that we might know we are never abandoned. Sacrificial love is not loss but a strange and holy exchange, for in giving ourselves away we discover who we truly are.

This is the mystery we celebrate at every Mass, where bread is broken and the Body given for us once more. We are invited not only to receive such love but to become it: to forgive when we have been wounded, to serve when no one is watching, to give of our time, our treasure, and our tenderness without counting the cost. "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends." May our parish family be a place where this love is lived daily, in kitchens and classrooms, in hospital rooms and pews, until our small offerings, joined to Christ's own, become a gift that blesses the whole world.

REFLECTIONS ON THE READINGS FOR THE TWENTY-NINTH SUNDAY (A)

Readings: Isaiah 45:1, 4-6; Psalm 96 (95):1, 3-5, 7-10; 1 Thessalonians 1:1-5; Matthew 22:15-21

"For the sake of my servant Jacob,/and Israel my chosen,/I call you by your name,/I name you, though you do not know me" - God's words to Cyrus, a non-Jew, calling him to work on behalf of Israel. With his rise to power, this gentile King of Persia will be the one to rescue God's people from exile – or rather, says **Isaiah,** it is God who chooses to work through him, showing that even gentile rulers operate at the behest of Israel's God. It is a "royal decree" and the words addressed to him are astounding, for Cyrus is called God's *"anointed",* meaning "messiah", which translated into Greek is "Christ". So, this gentile is called by God "the Christ". But beyond the person of Cyrus, God's purpose is *"that people may know"* – that is, that all the world, beyond Persia and beyond Israel, may acknowledge God as the creator and the only ruler of the world: *"that people may know, from the rising of the sun/ and from the west, that there is none besides me;/I am the LORD, and there is no other."*

The perspective of **Psalm 96** is also global rather than national, with all the inhabitants of earth called to celebrate the Eternal One's sovereignty over them: *"Tell among the nations God's glory/and God's wonders among all the peoples."* To the Eternal One alone *"glory and power"* should be given, for all other gods have no real existence – they are *"naught/ungods"* – *"elilim"* in Hebrew, a clever pun on the words *"al"* ("no/not") and *"el"* ("god"). The psalm concludes by urging sky, sea and the fields of earth to rejoice in God's kingship.

The balance of power between heavenly and earthly authorities is reflected in the reading from **Matthew**, which begins a series of discussions that runs through the rest of chapter 22. Taken together, they add to the negative characterization of the Jerusalem leaders. The issue in today's passage is "paying taxes", which was an incendiary issue during Jesus' lifetime. The Roman Empire imposed a head tax on the population of Judea and Samaria, and conducted a census to enforce it. In Jesus' youth, Judas the Galilean had led a revolt against the census, but the uprising was ruthlessly repressed by the Romans (Acts 5:37-38). By his reply, *"... render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's"*, Jesus addresses only the census tax and expresses his rejection of violence as a way of dealing with oppressive situations. The second half of the saying, *"and to God the things that are God's"* is comprehensive and includes all areas of life. The disputes of Jesus in Matthew 22 culminate in determining the greatest of the commandments: loving God with one's whole heart, mind and soul, and loving one's neighbour as one's self (next Sunday's gospel). Human beings, not coins, bear God's true image, and no edict of Caesar can absolve Jesus' followers from this mandate to love God and to see God in one's neighbour.

Today and on the coming Sundays, as we approach the end of the liturgical year, we read from Paul's **First Letter to the Thessalonians**, as it is very much concerned with the end times, the second coming of Christ. Today, Paul summons his community at the important port city of Thessalonika to preserve and grow in what matters – the "*work of faith and labour of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ."* What better way is there to give back to God what is truly God's?

Sr Margaret Shepherd nds

EVENTS THIS WEEK

Sunday:
9.30am Celebration Mass
9.30am Children's Liturgy in the Halls
10.30am Christchurch Community Choir in the Priory
11.30am Mass
After 9.30am and 11.30am Mass Sunday Teas & Coffees in the Main Hall
6.30pm Mass

Monday:
9.00am Mass
9.30am Toddler Group in the Halls

Tuesday:
9.00am Mass
7.00pm RCIA group 1 in the Priory

Wednesday:
9.00am Mass
After 9.00am Mass Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in the Church

Thursday:
9.00am Mass
11.30am Funeral of Wendy Burt

Friday :
9.00am Mass
After 9.00am Mass Friday Coffee Shop in the Main Hall
10.00am RCIA group 2 in the Priory
3.00pm School form signing in the Priory
6.00pm Christchurch Community Choir in the Priory
8.00pm Baptism Preparation Course in the Priory

Saturday:
11.00am Confession in the Church
11.15am Divine Mercy chaplet in the Church
11.30am Rosary in the Church
12 noon Mass
3.00pm Baptism of Lucas Sannino-Borland
6.00pm Vigil Mass

Sunday:
9.30am Children's Mass
11.30am Mass
After 9.30am and 11.30am Mass Sunday Teas & Coffees in the Main Hall
3.00pm Baptism of Charlotte Pierson and Ark Chukwudozie
6.30pm Mass

ONLINE DONATIONS

Dona

Did you know that you can donate online, with the option to Gift Aid your donations? Please scan the QR Code below or use the following link to access the DONA portal:

https://donate.mydona.com/christchurch-parish-eltham

PARISH REGISTRATION

Please register your details with the parish using the QR code below.

For queries, please email Maria-Christina Eskioglou (one of our parish volunteers) who can help you at elthamjoin@rcaos.org.uk

ChurchSuite

MASS INTENTIONS

17 October to 25 October 2026

SAT 17	The Blessed Virgin Mary
12 noon	David Lincoln – RIP anniversary
6.00pm	Tony Crowe – RIP
SUN 18	TWENTY-NINTH SUNDAY (A)
9.30am	Santiago Harris – RIP
11.30am	Parishioners
6.30pm	Clive Caton – RIP
MON 19	Feria
9.00am	Monica Mead – RIP anniversary (Anna Sullivan)
TUE 20	Feria
9.00am	Mary Corrigan – gravely unwell (Sarah and Martina Walsh)
WED 21	Feria
9.00am	Mark Blackwell – RIP
THU 22	Feria
9.00am	Pauline O'Neill – birthday
FRI 23	Feria
9.00am	Ann Morrison and family – wellbeing
SAT 24	The Blessed Virgin Mary
12 noon	Kathleen and Patrick McAuley – wellbeing
6.00pm	Dacy DeSouza – RIP Months' Mind (D'Sa family)
SUN 25	THIRTIETH SUNDAY (A)
9.30am	Serena – private intention (her friends at the Repository)
11.30am	Anne-Marie Boyle – wellbeing
6.30pm	Parishioners

LOURDES-GREENWICH FELLOWSHIP DANCE

Friday 6 November 7.30pm-10.30pm

Live Irish, Folk and Pop Music to entertain everyone here at Christchurch.

Entrance fee £4 payable on the door.

Bring your own drinks and nibbles

All welcome!

BEREAVEMENT MASS AND PARISH LIGHT LUNCH

Saturday 14 November

Bereavement Mass at 12 noon

followed by hot soup, bread roll, cake, tea or coffee.

Suggested £5 donation per head

CHRISTCHURCH WREATH-MAKING WORKSHOPS

Learn to make a personal wreath from scratch.

Friday 27 November
6pm-9pm

Saturday 28 November
10am-1pm
2pm-5pm

£45 includes all you need to make a 16" wreath.

Mulled wine, tea, coffee and mince pies served.

Contact the Parish Office to book your place.

£5 deposit payable.

Early booking recommended.

If you want help, support or just a chat...

...we're here for you

The St Vincent de Paul Society (or 'SVP' for short) is here to help you. If you need friendship, advice, support or anything else, simply contact us and we'll do our best to assist.

Contact us, too, if you'd like to join us. We're looking for more people willing to give up a little of their time to help others.

Phone or email us

Telephone: 02088501666 Email: through the office

Turning concern into action

The St Vincent de Paul Society (England & Wales) is a registered charity number 1053992

SAFEGUARDING CONTACTS

IN AN EMERGENCY TELEPHONE POLICE ON 999

Mary-Jane Crowley – Head of Safeguarding	**maryjanecrowley@rcaos.org.uk**
Safeguarding Office	**safeguardingoffice@rcaos.org.uk**
Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency	**admin@catholicsafeguarding.org.uk**