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

Sunday 25 October 2026

Today's Readings **1st Reading: Exodus 22:20-26; 2nd Reading: 1 Thessalonians 1:5-10; Gospel: Matthew 22:34-40**

Online Missal **https://universalis.com/Europe.England.Southwark/20262510/mass.htm**

Psalm Response **I love you, Lord, my strength.**

Gospel Acclamation **Alleluia, Alleluia! If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, says the Lord, and my father will love him, and we will come to him. Alleluia!**

NOVEMBER BEREAVEMENT MASS WITH PARISH LIGHT LUNCH

November is the month in the Catholic Church dedicated to the Holy Souls in Purgatory. **There will be a bereavement Mass on Saturday 14 November at 12 noon followed by a parish light lunch of hot soup, bread roll, cake and teas and coffees. There is a suggested donation of £5 per person. No need to book, everyone welcome.**

PARISH CHRISTMAS EVENTS

There are spaces still available at this year's wreath-making workshops here at Christchurch on Friday 27 November and Saturday 28 November. Please contact the Parish Office to register your interest.

There will be a Santa's Grotto here at Christchurch on Sunday 6 December 10.30am-1pm. Please bring your children along to this lively event to meet Santa in person which will include a present for every child. Tea, coffee and biscuits provided. **Tickets are available from the Parish Office, £5 per child.**

This year's Christmas Fayre is also scheduled for Sunday 6 December. More details to follow.

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.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION INDUCTION COURSE

Applications are still open on our website for the First Holy Communion Induction Course for children in year 2 or above **attending a non-Catholic school.** Please visit

https://www.christchurcheltham.org.uk/First-Holy-Communion-Courses/

TODDLER GROUP

The Toddler Group is now closed for the half-term holiday and will reopen on Monday 2 November.

MISSION CALENDARS

The Missionary Sisters of St Peter Claver will be selling 2027 Mission Calendars after the Sunday Masses this 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.

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/

double click on 'recordings'

LITURGY AND FAITH

Every year on October 28, the Church celebrates the feast of Saints Simon and Jude, two of the Twelve whom Jesus himself called by name and sent out to proclaim the Kingdom. Though they appear only briefly in the Gospels, their place in the apostolic circle reminds us that the Church was built not only by the well-known voices of Peter, James and John, but by quiet, faithful witnesses who answered the Lord's call and gave their lives to it. Simon, known as "the Zealot", is thought to have burned with passion for the cause of Israel before Christ redirected that fire toward the love of God and neighbour. Jude, also called Thaddeus, is the author of the short New Testament letter that closes with one of Scripture's most beautiful blessings, praising the One who is able to keep us from stumbling.

Tradition tells us that the two apostles carried the Gospel far from home, preaching in Persia and the lands beyond, and that both ultimately sealed their witness with martyrdom. Their feast is kept together, a lovely sign that mission is never a solitary work. The apostles were sent out in community, and the faith has always been handed on through friendship, shared labour, and mutual support. In an age that often prizes individual achievement, Simon and Jude invite us to remember that we are saved and sent together, and that the Church flourishes when each of us does our part without needing the spotlight.

For generations, the faithful have turned to Saint Jude as the patron of hopeless causes and desperate situations. Perhaps because his name was so close to that of Judas, devotion to him was long overlooked, yet those who finally dared to ask his help found in him a compassionate and powerful friend. Many families in our own parish know the quiet comfort of whispering his name in times of illness, worry, or heartache. As we honour these two apostles, let us ask for their prayers: that we may hold fast to the faith they handed down, that we may carry our own zeal to the service of Christ, and that when every other door seems closed, we may never cease to hope in the God for whom nothing is impossible.

REFLECTIONS ON THE READINGS FOR THE THIRTIETH SUNDAY (A)

Readings: Exodus 22:20-26; Psalm 18 (17):2-4, 47, 51a; 1 Thessalonians 1:5-10; Matthew 22:34-40

Today our readings focus on the most important aspect of what it is to be fully human: love of God and love of neighbour, making a fitting prelude to the coming celebrations of All Saints and All Souls, which remember and honour those who truly loved God and neighbour. In **Matthew's Gospel**, Jesus answers the scribe's question by saying that *"the whole law and the prophets"* depend on the commands to love God *"with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind"* and *"your neighbour as yourself"*. Jesus, Jewish teacher that he is, is quoting here from Deuteronomy 6:4 and Leviticus 19:18. He's not unique in summarizing God's law by these two central commands: his contemporary, the great rabbi Hillel, when challenged by a prospective convert to recite the whole Torah standing on one foot, replied, "What you hate for yourself, do not do to your neighbour. This is the whole law. The rest is commentary."
Our reading from **Exodus** speaks of how placing themselves in the situation of others should determine the Israelites' actions: *"You shall not wrong a sojourner or oppress him/her, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt."* Significantly, the Hebrew word for *"sojourner"* here is *"ger"* , which is the term applied to the resident non-Israelite who could no longer count on the protection of his/her former tribe or community. The *"ger"*/the "stranger", mentioned 33 times in the Torah, was to be given every consideration. Again and again, the Israelites were reminded that they themselves had been strangers in Egypt.
Those whom Paul is addressing in his **Letter to the Thessalonians**, written less than twenty years after the death of Jesus, were probably all gentiles, coming from the poor, non-elite of their society. Their new faith in Christ meant that they had to abandon their traditional gods in favour of the one God, but that would have set them at odds against the rest of the society in which they lived where kinship, politics, economics and religion were inextricably interrelated. This meant that they would have been ostracized, even stoned in the streets: *"...in much affliction....you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God."* Paul encourages them to persevere and discover mutual strength in their new identity, at the same time calling them to treat outsiders well: *"... may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all ...* (1 Thess 3:12).
In the Bible, love of God is often expressed as gratitude and remembrance for what God has done rather than what we do for God. That is clearly the essence of **Psalm 18**, which begins, almost impetuously, with the words, *"I love you, Lord, my strength"*. The form of the Hebrew verb used for *"love"* - *"raham"*, is an Aramaic usage that appears only here in the Hebrew Bible. It is, strikingly, better translated as *"I am **impassioned** of you, Lord, my strength!"* The passionate love of God – and neighbour - is key to our readings today and is our privileged calling.

Sr Margaret Shepherd nds

EVENTS THIS WEEK

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

Monday:
9.00am Mass

Tuesday:
9.00am Mass

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

Thursday:
9.00am Mass

Friday :
9.00am Mass
After 9.00am Mass Friday Coffee Shop in the Main Hall
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
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
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

CAFOD thanks our parishioners for raising £570.32 to support its projects helping communities around the world build a better future.

MASS INTENTIONS

24 October to 1 November 2026

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
MON 26	St Fulk, Bishop, Memorial
9.00am	Cathy Lynam – get well wishes (Sarah and Martina Walsh)
TUE 27	Feria
9.00am	Priests and peoples of Christchurch Parish
WED 28	Sts Simon and Jude, Apostles, Feast
9.00am	Holy Souls
THU 29	Feria
9.00am	Holy Souls
FRI 30	Feria
9.00am	Sean Keaveney – RIP
SAT 31	The Blessed Virgin Mary
12 noon	Cathy Lynam – wellbeing (Pat Tims)
6.00pm	Monica Lynch – RIP
SUN 1	ALL SAINTS, SOLEMNITY, HOLYDAY OF OBLIGATION
9.30am	Lucy Abram – RIP
11.30am	Owen Birmingham – RIP
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!

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**