



**THE CATHOLIC PARISH OF
ST. WILLIAM OF YORK**

4 Brockley Park, Forest Hill, SE23 1PS

Clergy:- Fr Habte Ukbay, Deacon Amgad Gerges

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Mass Times

Saturdays 10.30am, 6.00pm Vigil Mass

Sundays 9.30am, 11.30am Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday - 9.30am

(Please note on Thursdays the church will be open for private prayer from 9.30am-10.00am except on Holydays of Obligations & special occasions)

Reconciliations - Saturdays 11-12 noon

Benediction & Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

1st & last Friday of the month after Mass & 3rd Sunday of the month at 5pm

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B)

24 December 2023

CHRISTMAS DAY (B)

25 December 2023

THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH (B)

31 December 2023

Dear Parishioners



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year 2024

Thank you all for your support, good wishes, cards and gifts.

May the New born Jesus bless and protect you today and always.

Fr. Habte

This year the Fourth Sunday of Advent and Christmas come almost together, This Sunday we read the story of the angel Gabriel's announcement to Mary about the birth of Jesus. The liturgy shifts our focus from John the Baptist to Mary, the mother of Jesus. Both John and Mary serve as important figures for our reflection during the season of Advent; they both generously fulfilled their roles in preparing the way for Jesus. They achieved their mission and responded to their call with a total and generous spirit of self-giving.

This year as a parish community we have prayerfully reflected and emphasised on the importance of stewardship of our gifts of time, talent and treasure. Our Christmas decoration also highlights this same theme as it is right to celebrate the coming of Jesus with the giving of our gifts. Our concrete actions of love and charity bring Jesus into the world. I think of your commitment to the many charitable initiatives throughout the year, especially to the homeless and the support you give to families in need through the parish crisis fund.

Last but not least thank you for your commitment to support the many ministries and groups within our parish throughout the year and in this special season of Christmas, Altar Servers, Sacristans and Catechists, parents and children who came to lead, and read at our Christmas Family and all our Christmas Masses; to our Music Group; Musicians, greeters, Stewards, Readers and Extraordinary Ministers of the Holy Eucharist; the art group and all who worked hard in collaboration with the art group, those who help decorate the Church for Christmas, those who organised the Carol Service; (both the school and the parish) those who came to clean the church, arrange flowers and the Crib.

All who support the parish through their good will and prayer. Your support and commitment to our parish keeps it to be lively and enables us to fulfil its mission.

May Christ the prince of peace, light for the world, bring true peace into your homes, may it reach in abundance to those who most need consolation and hope.

I wish you a happy and holy Christmas and a happy new year 2024.

God Bless
Fr Habte

TODAY'S READINGS - 2 Samuel 7:1-5,8-12,14,16, Romans 16:25-27, Luke 1:26-38

SCRIPTURE REFLECTION - At the start of today's Gospel reading we see a young Mary deeply disturbed by the Angel Gabriel's greeting and foretelling what she would expect in the future, including the birth of a baby boy even though she was still a virgin and unmarried.

What seemed to settle her fears was the news that her elderly kinswoman, Elizabeth, previously barren, was in the sixth month of a pregnancy. This was strengthened by the Angel making it clear that "nothing is impossible to God." Finally, Mary declares herself to be "The handmaid of the Lord" and is ready to accept whatever was to happen in her life.

The incident offers us the chance to renew our faith in God and be confident no matter what may befall us during our lives here on Earth. Our faith should help us to strengthen our ability to live our lives according to the Gospel and remember that Mary is always there to help us to make the right choices. We only have to ask.

PMcD

CHRISTMAS MASSES - Please take a Christmas card so that you and your family have the Mass times at hand over the Christmas season or download a copy here

CHRISTMAS CARD

Please note there will not be a vigil Mass on Christmas eve

- There will be three masses over Christmas: (Sunday) 11.30pm Carols leading into Christmas Midnight Mass and Christmas Day 9.30am & 11.30am
- The Christmas Day 9.30am Mass will be specifically dedicated for families. Children will be involved in leading and animating the liturgy.
- Midnight Mass and 11.30am Mass on Christmas day will be live streamed on our parish Facebook page www.facebook.com/swoyse23/live/

If there is any parishioner in need of transportation to Church for Midnight or Christmas Day Masses. please let Mary in the office or Fr Habte know.

HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO THOSE ABLE TO TRAVEL AWAY FOR CHRISTMAS

We send our best Christmas wishes to those parishioners who are travelling away to be with family and friends, and those who will not be able to be with us on Christmas Day. May you have a great time.



CHRISTMAS OFFERING TO FR HABTE - The offering at all Christmas Masses is your personal offering to Fr Habte. Fr Habte thanks you in anticipation for your generosity. Please use the red envelopes provided and Gift Aid where possible as the parish will benefit. Offerings may also be given via the Contactless device in the Narthex or via the secure link on our webpage <https://donate.myдона.com/st-william-of-york-rc-church> or directly to our parish bank account details below:-

NatWest Bank, Sort Code 60-50-01, Account number 79124437

Account name RCAS Forest Hill, Ref - Your surname/Gift Aid no/Christmas Offering

If you will be away at Christmas, please use the red envelope and put it through the letter box of the presbytery whenever you can. Many thanks

SECOND COLLECTIONS DURING ADVENT WILL BE FOR THE HOMELESS

Please give generously! THANK YOU.

CRIB OFFERINGS 2023: This Christmas our crib offerings will be donated to the Catholic Children's Society. This fund provides emergency grants for children and families in our Archdiocese who are facing a crisis in their lives. Every penny donated to the crib will be given out via these grants. Please be as generous as you can be.

ARCHBISHOP JOHN WILSON'S 2023 CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Archbishop John Wilson has recorded his annual Christmas message for the Archdiocese, calling for us all to embrace prayer and welcome Christ into our hearts. He reminds us that: "if we ask, we will be heard. If we seek, we will be found. If we knock, the Lord Jesus will open the door". So let 2024 be the year we all give prayer a go and welcome Christ into our hearts. To read or watch the message, head to www.rcsouthwark.co.uk or use the QR code or collect a hard copy of the message from the Narthex.



POPE FRANCIS PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR DECEMBER - We pray that people living with disabilities may be at the centre of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusive programs which value their active participation.

NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS - Genesis 15:1-6,21:1-3, Hebrews 11:8-11-12,17-19, Luke 2:22-40

NEXT SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE REFLECTION - Joseph and Mary take the infant Jesus to the temple in Jerusalem, in accordance with the law of Moses that first born males should be consecrated to the Lord. There they encounter Simeon, who is full of the Holy Spirit and has been told by God that he would live to see the Christ (the anointed one) of the Lord. Simeon blesses God and declares that Jesus is the salvation of all nations and a light to enlighten the pagans; he prophesies that Jesus will be a rejected sign and that Mary will suffer because of that rejection. They are joined by the prophetess, Anna, who praises God for the presence of the child Jesus. Joseph and Mary are amazed by these declarations, but then return to mundane family life in Nazareth, where it must have been hard to imagine how such prophesies could be fulfilled. Jesus grows up as the carpenter's son, filled with the wisdom of God.

When parents see their infant children baptised, they can only guess what sort of people they might become; but through that baptism, and through the example of their own lives, they pass on the light of Christ, so vividly described by Simeon. Whatever lies ahead, the baptised walk with a loving saviour, who was once a helpless baby. He truly shares their joys and trials and, ultimately, offers salvation through his own life, death, and resurrection. PB

POPE FRANCIS PRAYER INTENTION FOR JANUARY 2024

For The Gift Of Diversity In The Church - Let us pray that the Holy Spirit helps us recognise the gift of different charisms within the Christian community, and to discover the richness of different ritual traditions in the heart of the Catholic Church.

PARISH OFFICE

The Parish Office will close from Wednesday 27th December and re-open on Tuesday 2nd January 2024. The answer machine will be switched on and messages will be responded to in an emergency, please come to the presbytery and if no answer at the door, please leave a written message. Thank you

**This newsletter is for two weekends. Please do not destroy it too soon!
Our next newsletter will be issued for the Epiphany of the Lord on Sunday 7th
January 2024.**

Please pray for the Peaceful Repose of the Soul of

Veronica Lambert RIP

Please remember the friends and family of Veronica in your prayers

Funeral at St Edmund of Canterbury, Beckenham on Wednesday 10 January 2024
at 11.45am followed by burial at Grove Park Cemetery

The family welcome any parish friends who may wish to attend the
celebration of Veronica's life.

Eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon her,
May her soul and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God,
Rest in Peace. Amen

Veronica, pictured below, was a parishioner of St William of York during the late 1980's and 1990's who may have been known to many of you. Veronica lived on Ravensbourne Crescent for about 7 years and then moved to Rushey Green. She walked to church virtually every day. Her daughter Sue had her wedding service at the church celebrated by the priests at the time Father Patrick Aikens and Father Alan McLean.

Friendly to everyone, she loved to have a chat and a laugh with so many of us. She was active in the Irish community in Lewisham and Greenwich, was a devoted supporter of the Columban Fathers and Sisters, like her mother before her, and was a volunteer at St Saviours helping out with the soup runs for the homeless down at the Embankment.

She moved to Burrell Mead Residential Home a few months ago, and benefited from the love and care of her family and the staff as well as continued contact from Fr Steve and Fr Ashley the priests at St Edmunds.

Veronica died on 6th December, her family by her side, three weeks after her last, cherished visit to St Edmund's.

Her requiem will be at St Edmunds on Weds 10th January at 11.45 am, and all who wish to attend are warmly invited to join in her farewell.



MASS ATTENDEES

2/3 December -375 9/10 December - 277 16/17 December - 228

PARISH DIARY

TBC	Instrumentalists	Church
Thurs 11 Jan 8pm	Singing Practice	Church
Sun 14 Jan 2.50pm for 3pm	Reconciliation 4	Church
Sat 20 Jan 10.00am	Celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation	Church
Sun 21 Jan 9.30am	Thanksgiving Mass for Reconciliation	Church
Sun 21 Jan 6pm	Confirmation 1st Session	Church

New Years Day, our Mass honouring the Mother of God, will be On Monday, Mass at 10.30 am on New Year's Day.

No Benediction in January:- We will have no exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Benediction and Rosary on the First Friday of January. We will resume at the last Friday of the month.

The Feast of the Epiphany is celebrated on the weekend of January 6-7 and the **Feast of the Baptism of our Lord** falls on Monday 8th January.

2024 SOUTHWARK DIRECTORY

Please use link below to access the 2024 Southwark directory which includes the Diocesan Calendar, Parishes, Mass times, Priests, Schools, Societies, Holy Days of Obligation and other useful information:-

[2024 Southwark Directory](#)





FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B)

Day of prayer for Expectant Mothers

Saturday 23 December 2023

18:00 Peter Hann RIP

Sunday 24 December 2023

09:30 Adrian & Matthew McGurran RIP

11:30 For the Parishioners

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD (B)

CHRISTMAS DAY

Monday 25 December 2023

Midnight - For the Parishioners (**live-streamed**)

09:30 John Warner RIP

11:30 Deceased Priests of the Parish (FM) (**live-streamed**)

Tuesday 26 December 2023 - St. Stephen

10:30 Thanksgiving

Wednesday 27 December 2023 - St. John, Apostle & Evangelist

10:30 John Thompson (FM)

Thursday 28 December 2023 - The Holy Innocents, Martyrs

10:30 Private Prayer

Friday 29 December 2023 - St. Thomas of Canterbury, Bishop & Martyr

10:30 Deceased members of the Barber, O'Reilly & Cassidy Families

Saturday 30 December 2023 - Sixth day within the Octave of the Nativity of the Lord

10:30 Mary Anne Thompson (FM)

THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY and JOSEPH (B)

Saturday 30 December 2023

18:00 Peter Coffey RIP

Sunday 31 December 2023

09:30 For the Parishioners

11:30 Yvonne Owokade Birthday Thanksgiving

(FM) Foundation Mass

Please access the live streaming by visiting our parish Facebook page

www.facebook.com/swoyse23/live/



THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY and JOSEPH (B)

Saturday 30 December 2023

18:00 Peter Coffey RIP

Sunday 31 December 2023

09:30 For the Parishioners

11:30 Yvonne Owokade Birthday Thanksgiving

Monday 1 January 2024 - MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD

10:30 Bridie Costello RIP

Tuesday 2 January 2024 - Sts. Basil the Great & Gregory Nazianzen

10:30 Cassie McGlynn RIP

Wednesday 3 January 2024 - Feria of Christmas Time

10:30 John McGlynn RIP Senior ([live-streamed](#))

Thursday 4 January 2024 - The Beatified Martyrs of the Diocese

10:30 Private Prayer

Friday 5 January 2024 - Feria of Christmas Time

10:30 Anne Orieso Thanksgiving to God

Saturday 6 January 2024 - Feria of Christmas Time

10:30 Josie Parker

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD (B)

Saturday 6 January 2024

18:00 For the Parishioners

Sunday 7 January 2024

09:30 Nancy & Michael O'Connor RIP

11:30 John O'Sullivan RIP ([live-streamed](#))

(FM) Foundation Mass

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