

ST. ANDREW'S CATHOLIC CHURCH – THORNTON HEATH

St. Andrew's Presbytery
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RC Archdiocese of Southwark - A Registered Charity No. 1173050

PASTORAL TEAM

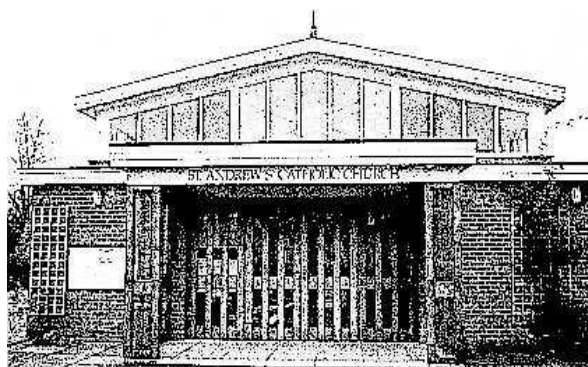
Priests: Fr Anthony Saffa C.S.Sp.
Fr Brendan Ona C.S.Sp.

Deacons: Rev. Errol Quagraine

Parish Sister: Sr. Jennie Eldridge DMJ

Croydon University Hospital Chaplaincy: Sr. Sheila DMJ

Welcome to St Andrew's RC Church. Worship has been offered here since 1905. You are all very welcome to join in the hymns and other parts of the service as much as possible. Please switch mobile phones off and refrain from taking photographs, filming or recording.



10th December 2023 2nd Sunday of Advent (B)

Message from Deacon Errol

Advent: A Time of Salvation, Reconciliation and Peace

Each Year the Church dedicates the Second Sunday of Advent to the vocation of John the Baptist. In an age where others were seeking power and fame, he preached repentance and the coming of the Kingdom of God. His lifestyle challenged the status quo and changed lives.

Today, we are reminded of the coming of Christ and the need to repent. St John the Baptist's voice echoes in the wilderness of our hearts the Prophet Isaiah's words, '*Prepare a way for the Lord, make His paths straight.*' Isaiah 40:3.

St John the Baptist is a waiting figure, but his waiting is anything but passive. He does not go into the wilderness to sit in solitude and wait for the one who is to come; rather, the word of God invades his whole being, calling the people of Israel to a radical change of heart in readiness for the coming of the Lord. From the wilderness, his voice has a powerful reach: it attracts a people who have grown accustomed to the silence of God, a people who are hungry to be nourished again by the word, which they recognise to be God's own word.

Advent is a sacred season: the time of realisation of the Lord's favour, a time of salvation, peace and reconciliation. It is a time to remove all obstacles that prevents our Lord Jesus Christ from coming to us. Advent gives us the opportunity each year to open our hearts to God, so that through prayer and meditating on God's word we might grow in faith, understand the sanctity of life, and be transformed. We do not know when the Lord will come again, so we must sacrifice our treasures in this secular world of ours for treasures in the kingdom of heaven, where we will enjoy eternal life.

May the Lord grant us the grace to stay awake and be alert in prayerful anticipation of His coming. Amen. Come Lord Jesus!

This Sunday's Readings

Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11	Prepare a way for the Lord
Psalm 84	Let us see, O Lord, your mercy and give us your saving help
2 Peter 3:8-14	We are waiting for the new heavens and new earth
Mark 1:1-8	Make his paths straight

Diary for the Week

<p>Sunday 10th December <i>2nd Sunday of Advent</i> <i>Human Rights Day</i></p>	<p>6.00pm (Saturday) First Mass of Sunday 9.30am Mass 11.30am Mass 5.00pm Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament 6.00pm Mass 7.00 - 9.00pm Charismatic Prayer Group</p>	<p>Ann Persaud RIP 1st Anniv Tony Green RIP Repose of the Soul Edward Kofi Nsiah RIP Anniv For the people of the parish</p>
<p>Monday 11th December</p>	<p>7.30am Mass 10.00am Funeral Mass 7.00 – 9.00pm Parish Surgery</p>	<p>Peter Nicholas–Thanksgiving Birthday Fabio Merola RIP</p>
<p>Tuesday 12th December</p>	<p>7.30am Mass 10.00am Mass</p>	<p>All Souls in Purgatory RIP Chuks Etuka – Journey Mercies</p>
<p>Wednesday 13th December</p>	<p>7.30am Mass 10.00am Mass 6.00pm Christmas Carol service: St James the Great school Junior Praesidium (hall) Legion of Mary (hall)</p>	<p>Paul Etuka RIP For Our Suffering Souls Anniv</p>
<p>Thursday 14th December</p>	<p>7.30am Mass 10.00am Mass</p>	<p>Marie Edgely RIP Debra Diplock -60th Birthday, Wellbeing</p>
<p>Friday 15th December</p>	<p>7.30am Mass 10.00am Mass 10.30 – 12noon Adoration 6.30pm Brownies/Guides (hall)</p>	<p>Adrienne McMeeking – Illness For Our Suffering Souls Anniv</p>
<p>Saturday 16th December</p>	<p>9.00 - 9.20am Divine Mercy Prayers 9.30am Mass 10.00 – 10.30am Confessions 5.00 – 5.30pm Confessions 6.00pm First Mass of Sunday</p>	<p>Jude-Martin Etuka – Special intentions For the people of the parish</p>
<p>Sunday 17th December <i>3rd Sunday of Advent</i></p>	<p>9.30am Mass 11.30am Mass 5.00pm Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament 6.00pm Mass 7.00 - 9.00pm Charismatic Prayer Group</p>	<p>Pasquale Migliore – Anniversary Imelda Navarrete Lovo RIP Esther Oyeyinka & Family – Wellbeing and protection</p>

Church cleaners: this week: Fifi's Group, next week: St Jude's Group

St. Andrew's Parish Notices

FR EMMANUEL AHUA

Fr Emmanuel would like to thank all the parishioners who joined him for his special 25th Ordination Anniversary Mass and for all the good wishes. He will return to Nigeria on Monday 11th December and hopes to visit us again in the future.

SECOND COLLECTION THIS WEEKEND

This weekend we will have a collection for Christmas flowers for our church.

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS NATIVITY PLAY

The rehearsals for the Nativity play will start today, Sunday 10th December after the 9.30am Mass - please come into the hall to collect your costumes and lines.

On Sunday 17th December please join us in the church for rehearsal from 2 to 4pm. Please can all children bring a snack and a drink for a break and also bring your costumes and lines too.

On Saturday 23rd December rehearsal again in the church 2 to 4pm and bring a snack also.

On Sunday 24th December please come along to the final run through at 4pm in the hall for the Nativity which will start at 5pm followed by the Vigil Mass for Christmas for children at 6pm.

CHILDREN'S LITURGY

The Children's Liturgy is on Sundays during 9.30am Mass, term-time only. Please can parents note that the class is only for children who have not had their First Holy Communion.

ST ANDREW'S 9.30AM CHOIR

The Choir at St. Andrews warmly invite parishioners who would like to join us. If you can play an instrument, or have a love for singing and would like to be part of a supportive and vibrant group, we would be delighted to meet you. All ages and abilities are most welcome. For more details or to sign up please speak to one of the choir leaders after Mass or turn up to our next practice sessions for Christmas on Sunday 10th and 17th December at 7pm in the church.

ADVENT

Advent marks the start of the Church's liturgical year. Advent comes from the Latin *adventus*, meaning 'arrival' or 'coming'. It is a key time in which we prepare ourselves to celebrate the Lord coming into the world as the incarnate God of love.

The Jesse Tree

The Jesse Tree tradition is rooted in Isaiah 11:1: "A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots." Jesse was the father of David, Israel's greatest king. And Jesus is descended from the line of David. He is the branch God promised would grow from Jesse's family tree. Each symbol represents a story from within this family tree and a step toward the birth of Jesus. The symbols on the tree start at the beginning of the old Testament with *Adam and Eve, Noah Abraham and Jacob*.

As the season of Advent begins this weekend the Jesse tree is also our "giving tree". You are invited to put dried food, tins and all non-perishable food in the box (on the Altar) so that our SVP group can distribute Christmas parcels for local families who need them. Thank you all for your continued support.

Advent Penitential Service

In preparation for Christmas we will have extra confessions. We will be holding our Parish Penitential Service on Monday 18th December at 7.00pm.

Please take our Christmas card home with all the details of the services and Mass times over the Christmas period and also a copy of our Christmas poster.

Also available are envelopes for the Christmas offering which is personal to the Priests of the parish.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION

For the First Holy Communion programme 2024, we are asking parents of children who are in year 3 or 4 from September 2023 to register their children for the programme commencing in February 2024 using the link <https://forms.gle/qbaMyTVVhTnEMaeFA> (please note this is not for children in school year 5 and above)

In order for the Sacraments to go ahead, we will need help from you. If you have a child joining the programme, please consider becoming a Catechist, thank you. Please send all enquiries to fhc.saintandrewschurch@gmail.com or see the poster in the porch and scan the QR code.

CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY

There will be a meeting for the Caribbean Community on Monday 11th December in the hall at the earlier start time of 6.00pm.

JUNIOR PRAESIDIUM

Our Lady Mother of Christ Junior Praesidium was set-up on Wednesday 15th November. We meet every Wednesday in St Andrew's Church Hall from 6.00pm to 7.10pm. You are more than welcome to join us if you are aged between 7 and 17 years old.

WARM HUB

Our Warm Hub has started again from 11am - 4pm every Tuesday, in the parish hall in Quadrant Road. Come along and receive a warm welcome, perhaps meet old friends and/or make some new ones. Hot drinks will be served, and there will be a simple soup lunch available. All good reasons to just pop in and see – any donations welcome.

MASS FOR THE SICK

We will be having Mass for the Sick in St Andrew's every 2nd and last Fridays of every month. Please let all your family and friends know - come and receive God's healing and anointing.

PARISH SURGERY

Please come along if you need to see a member of the Clergy to discuss baptisms, marriage etc to our parish surgery on Monday evenings from 7.00 – 9.00pm, term-time only.

EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Please join us every Sunday evening before the 6pm Mass starting at 5.00pm and finishing at 5.45pm.

ADORATION

Please come in and spend some time in the presence of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament for Adoration every Friday from 10.30am – 12noon.

DIVINE MERCY PRAYERS

Please join us in the Church every Saturday morning, 9.00–9.20am for devotions including the Divine Mercy Chaplet. All are very welcome to attend.

REPOSITORY

The Repository will be open after the 9.30am and 11.30am Masses on Sunday.

CHARISMATIC PRAYER GROUP

Please join our group for prayer meetings every Sunday evening in the Church from 7.00 – 9.00pm. All are very welcome to come along and join us in praises, prayers, Bible studies and youth group ministry. For info please call Stella on 07983 775879.

THE CATHOLIC CHILDREN'S SOCIETY CHRISTMAS GIFT/TOY APPEAL

A big thank you again for your generous donations and support. The gifts have already been collected and the Society have asked us to pass on their enormous thanks. These presents are more than just material goods they bring so much happiness and hope to the families the Catholic Children's Society work with. If you would like to know more about the charity, please visit www.cathchild.org.uk.

MARY'S MEALS: FOREIGN CURRENCY COLLECTION

A very big thank you for all your contributions to Mary's Meals foreign currency collection. Mary's Meals have asked us to pass on their grateful thanks on behalf of all the children that they help and support. They will collect the money from us shortly and they will let us know how much it was all worth – but this can take a number of weeks.

GHANANIAN COMMITTEE MEETING

The group will be meeting on Sunday 17th December in the hall after the 11.30am mass.

GROUPS

- Brownies & Guides finish for Christmas break on Friday 15th December. Return date to be confirmed.
- Mother and toddler finish on Monday 18th December. Return date to be confirmed.

CHAPLAINCY & SPIRITUAL CARE AT CROYDON UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

Please join the Carol Singing on the wards with the Chaplains and the Mayor of Croydon on Wednesday 20th December from 18:15 for a 19:00 start at St Barnabas Worship Centre located at Croydon University Hospital outside the Woodcroft entrance. More details available from Revd Andy Dovey ext 3105 or 07557 140 739, email andrew.dovey@nhs.net

Come along and sing your favourite Carols and bring good tidings and cheer to staff and patients. Afterwards you are welcome to the Worship Centre for refreshments. All are very welcome.

HOUSING JUSTICE/CARITAS SOUTHWARK

In partnership with Housing Justice, Caritas Southwark is hosting an online information session on 13th December, 7.30 – 8.30pm for people interested in becoming a host for a refugee. Please register for the event by emailing Caritas directly and they will forward the link to you, caritassouthwark@rcaos.org.uk

Please also see the poster for Caritas Southwark Advent Giving Calendar to see if you can help in any way. You can also contact Caritas too at caritassouthwark.rcaos.org.uk or tel 0333 188 1385.