

ST. ANDREW'S CATHOLIC CHURCH – THORNTON HEATH

St. Andrew's Presbytery

45 Brook Road

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Live Mass streaming <https://www.churchservices.tv/thorntonheath>

RC Archdiocese of Southwark - A Registered Charity No. 1173050

PASTORAL TEAM

Priests: Fr Anthony Saffa C.S.Sp.

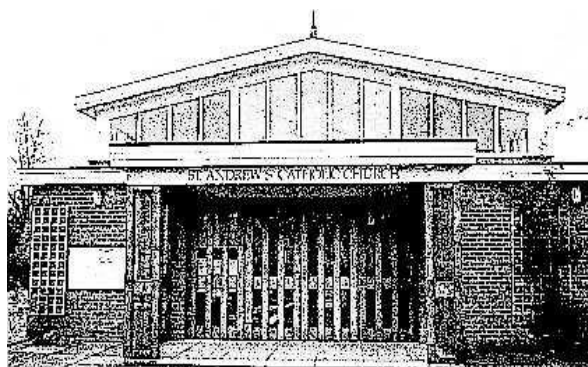
Fr Brendan Ona C.S.Sp.

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.



17th December 2023 3rd Sunday of Advent (B)

Message from Fr Brendan C.S.Sp.

We are reminded to be Witnesses for the light

John the Baptist had a central role to play in the coming of our Saviour. His role as can be seen in today's gospel was to be "a witness, to speak for the light. This light was Jesus.

John proved to be a courageous and effective witness. He was a strong personality and a man of principle. He didn't go into the life of comfort. He lived not in a palace but in the desert. His lifestyle as well as his personal integrity, lent credence to his words. He never claimed to be what he is not. He was a living example of what he preached. And when his task was done, he moved aside to make way for Jesus. Are there still witnesses like John the Baptist today? Jesus still needs witnesses. I guess there are still people who witness faithfully and at great personal cost.

John the Baptist bore witness to the light. Now it is our turn. For many people in the world today Christ has become a very dim figure. The words of the gospel could be literally true: *'there stands one among you whom you know not.'* Christ still needs witnesses, people who can effectively make him present to other people. One thing is clear; we cannot be a witness for the light if we are living in darkness.

We have to be living in the light. A good life is a strong and effective witness, and in itself is a proclamation of the gospel. When religious practice leads to deeds, a very effective witness is given. No witness reaches our contemporaries as persuasively as the witness of those who do what Jesus commanded. ***Remember that faith apart from good works is useless cf James 2:20^b***

Without the witness of Christians the face of Christ, already blurred, will continue to fade from our world. If we do not witness, he will continue to stand among us, unknown and unrecognised. And hearts will remain broken, and people will remain imprisoned in darkness, and the good news will not be preached to the poor.

The task is not one for the individual Christian only but for all of us, the Christian community as a whole. It is easy to witness to Christ as a member of a supportive Christian group. Brethren there are many ministries where you can witness. May you avail yourself the opportunity to be a witness. Shalom.

This Sunday's Readings

Isaiah 61:1-2, 10-11

Psalm Luke 1:46-50, 53-54

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

John 1:6-8, 19-28

I exult for joy in the Lord

My soul rejoices in my God

May you all be kept safe, spirit, soul and body, for the coming of the Lord

There stands among you – unknown to you – the one who is coming after me

Diary for the Week

Sunday 17th <i>December</i> <i>3rd Sunday of</i> <i>Advent</i>	6.00pm (Saturday) First Mass of Sunday 9.30am Mass 11.30am Mass 5.00pm Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament 6.00pm Mass 7.00pm Choir practice	For the people of the parish Pasquale Migliore – Anniversary Imelda Navarrete Lovo RIP Esther Oyeyinka & Family – Wellbeing & Protecion
Monday 18th December	7.30am Mass 10.00am Mass 7.00pm Parish Penitential Service	Chuks Etuka – Journey Mercies Letitsia Hadjizorzi RIP
Tuesday 19th <i>December</i>	7.30am Mass 10.00am Mass	Jude-Martin Etuka – Special Intentions Roisin Power – Wellbeing
Wednesday 20th December	7.30am Mass 10.00am Mass 6.00pm Junior Praesidium (hall) 7.30pm Legion of Mary (hall)	Paul Etuka RIP Brian Sheehan – Wellbeing
Thursday 21st <i>December</i>	7.30am Mass 10.00am Mass	Marie Edgely RIP Patrick Power – Special Intentions
Friday 22nd <i>December</i>	7.30am Mass 10.00am Mass 10.30 – 12noon Adoration	Apolonia & Carol Okoroafor RIP Roque & Ana Rita Fernandes RIP
Saturday 23rd <i>December</i>	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	Patrick & Margaret McGovern (F) For the people of the parish
Sunday 24th <i>December</i> <i>4th Sunday of Advent</i>	9.30am Mass 11.30am Mass 5.00pm Children's Nativity Play 6.00pm Vigil Mass for Christmas 10pm Christmas Carols 11.00pm Midnight Mass	Henry Victoire RIP Anniv Paul Etuka RIP Antonio & His Sister Edwiges Gonsalves RIP

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

St. Andrew's Parish Notices

MESSAGE FROM DEACON TONY

Dear Parishioners

On Friday evening I received a most generous gift from you all. I am deeply touched. But really, this was not necessary. Over the past 20 years, you have afforded me the most precious gifts.

You have allowed me to prepare you to have your children baptised, and to baptise them. You have afforded me the privilege of standing next to the Bishop as your children were confirmed. You have trusted me to prepare you for marriage, and to officiate on the big day. I have received many generous gifts at various times, again, thank you so much.

You have given me the privilege of sitting with you as you receive the worst possible news, and to be with you as you say goodbye to those you have loved most in the entire world.

The money you have given me will be put to a good and appropriate use. When I was ordained twenty years ago I said then I would work hard to be the sort of deacon a parish such as St Andrew's deserves. I hope I didn't let you down.

But I am only at the other end of the deanery, and if I can help at all my diocesan email address is anthonyflavin@rcaos.org.uk. But for now, for the last twenty years, and your generous gift, I thank you from the bottom of my heart. Keep in touch and God bless.

400 CLUB WINNERS FOR NOVEMBER DRAW

No. 122 Miss Jill Barry - 1st prize £20
No. 57 Mrs Lucy McAlpin - 2nd prize £10
No. 40 Miss Beverley Lindsay - 3rd prize £10

GHANANIAN COMMITTEE MEETING

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

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS NATIVITY PLAY

Today, 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.

THANK YOU

A big thank you to all our parishioners who attended and supported all our celebrations and special masses for St Andrew's on the 30th November and 1st December. Also a big thank you to our parish council members and all the volunteers who worked so hard to ensure these events were a big success.

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.

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*.

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. Also confessions are available upon request after the 10am Mass from 18-22 December.

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

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

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 session for Christmas on Sunday 17th December at 7pm in the church.

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.

ALL NATIONS CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC GROUP UK FOODBANK

The next one will be held in St Andrew's Church hall on Saturday 23rd December approximately from 12.00 – 1.00pm. We would welcome any food donations, tinned, dry packets, etc. Please see the poster in the porch for more info and contact details.

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. We have finished for this year and we will resume again in the new year.

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. We have finished surgery for this year, the next one will be on Monday 8th January.

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.

GROUPS

- Brownies & Guides have finished for Christmas break - 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.

2024 ARCHDIOCESE OF SOUTHWARK: AGENCY FOR EVANGELISATION AND CATECHESIS LEAFLET

Please take home a copy of the leaflet which gives information about some important events taking place during 2024.