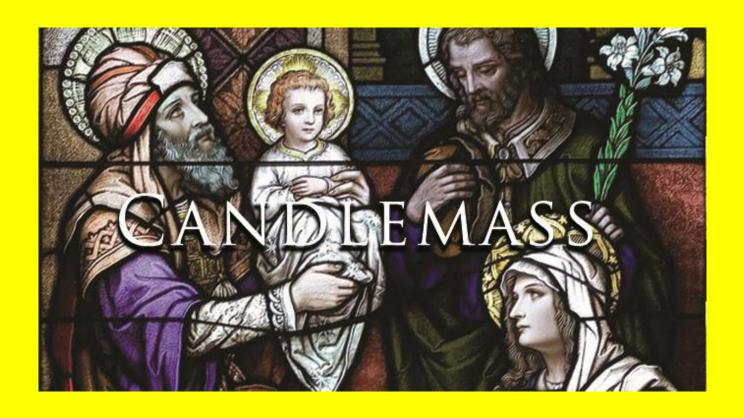


The Parish Magazine of St Mary the Virgin Stanwell and St Matthew's, Ashford

ISSUE 120 • FEBRUARY 2025





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Parish Magazine

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Copy deadline is 20th of the month and articles should be no longer than 750 words. News items or reports should be factual and no longer than 250 words. Articles are copyright to the author and may not be reproduced in any form without the written permission of the author or Editor. The Editor's decision is final regarding content.

Disclaimers: The Editor does not necessarily agree with all of the views expressed in this magazine.

Advertisers: We are grateful to all who advertise in our Parish Magazine, thereby allowing us to produce a higher quality publication.

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Whilst reasonable care is taken when accepting advertisements, the Editorial Committee of the Parish Magazine cannot accept any responsibility for any resulting unsatisfactory transactions.

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SERVICE TIMES

Time	Service		Place				
Weekdays:							
08:30	Lauds - Morning Prayer	Online					
18:00	Evening Prayer & Holy Hou	ır - Tuesday	St Matthew's				
19:00	Low Mass - Tue		St Matthew's				
12:30	Low Mass - Wed		St Mary's				
09:15	Low Mass - Thurs		St Matthew's				
18:00	Evening Prayer & Holy Hou	ır - Fri	St Mary's				
19:00	Low Mass - Fri		St Mary's				
Saturdays	<i>:</i>						
09:00	The Holy Rosary		Online				
Sunday							
09:30	Parish Mass		St Matthew's				
11:00	Parish Mass		St Mary's				
18:30	Evensong & Benediction		St Matthew's				
REGULAI	R EVENTS –						
Wednesda	y: Morning Café	10:00-12:00 before Mass					
Thursday:	Coffee Morning	After 09:15 Mass					
	Bell Ringing *	19:00					
Friday:	Choir Practice	20:00					
	between St Mary's and St Ma	tthew's please contact the	Tower Captain for				
more detai	ls.)						
	PASTORAL CARE						
Feasts, Saint's days, Holy days and							
	al occasions occur through	Please advise Fr Stuart or one of the					
•	e notices in Church, in the	Pastoral Team of those who are sick at					
weekly new details.	rs sheet and the website for	home or in hospital, so prayed for and visited as					

PASTORAL OFFICES

Preliminary information and relevant forms for Baptism and Marriage can be collected from the parish office at the advertised times. Baptisms usually take place on the first Saturday or third Sunday at St Mary's and St Matthew's. If you would like to have your child baptised, then come along any Sunday for the main Mass and meet us there!

For information about preparing your own or a loved one's funeral, please contact the parish office.

LET US PONDER TOGETHER...

FR STUART PONDERS ST. VALENTINE AND LOVE AS SERVICE TO OTHERS

As we approach the Feast of St. Valentine, I find myself reflecting on the deeper meaning of love, especially within the context of our Christian faith. In our modern world, Valentine's Day is often associated with romantic gestures, flowers, and chocolates, but the roots of this feast day go much deeper. The life and legacy of St. Valentine can teach us much about what it means to love in a truly Christian sense — love as a service to others. St. Valentine, as the legend goes, was a priest in Rome during the reign of Emperor Claudius II. He is said to have defied the emperor's decree, which prohibited marriages for young soldiers, believing that such a law was unjust. Valentine married couples secretly, demonstrating his unwavering commitment to love, even in the face of danger. His courage, selflessness, and sacrifice led to his eventual martyrdom, and we celebrate this example of love on February 14th.

From a Catholic perspective, St. Valentine's story serves as a powerful reminder that love is not just an emotion or a feeling but an act of service to others. Christian love — the love Christ calls us to embody — is a love that places the good of others above our own. In a world that often focuses on personal gain or pleasure, St. Valentine's willingness to act selflessly for the good of others — to help them fulfil their vocations and live in unity — shows us the true essence of love.

At its heart, Christian love is rooted in the concept of agape, a Greek word for love that transcends mere affection or romantic desire. It is the love of charity, of service, and self-sacrifice. Christ's command to "love your neighbour as yourself" (Mark 12:31) calls us to actively seek the good of others, often at a cost to ourselves. St. Valentine exemplified this by risking his life to marry couples and defending and nurturing the sacrament of marriage, which is a profound symbol of Christ's love for the Church.

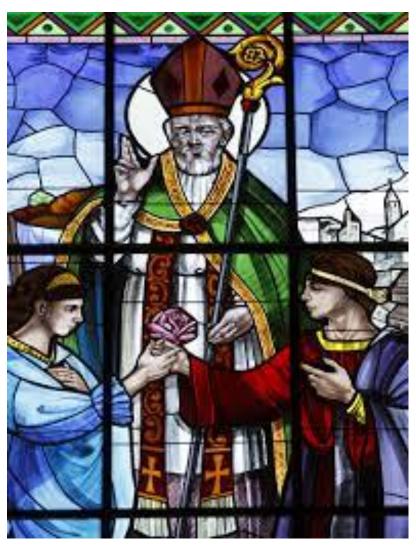
On this feast day, we are reminded that love is not merely about the person who receives affection or admiration. True love is found in giving—pouring out one's life in service, much like Christ did for us on the Cross. St. Valentine's actions mirror this great act of love, reminding us that love, when authentic, requires sacrifice and service to others.

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Perhaps the modern celebration of Valentine's Day can be a tool for us to rediscover this deeper meaning. As we exchange cards or spend time with loved ones, we should also take a moment to reflect on how we are serving those around us. Are we acting in love that mirrors the love of Christ? Do we love as St. Valentine did, not for our own benefit, but for the well-being of others?

St. Valentine's feast encourages us to live out love as a continual choice to serve and sacrifice in a world that can often reduce love to fleeting emotions. As we celebrate this day, let us remember that Christian love is a commitment — a commitment to be there for one another, to serve each other, and to put the needs of others before our own. In doing so, we follow the path of Christ and the example of St. Valentine, whose love continues to inspire us to love as He loves.

Yours in Christ Fr Stuart



NOTE FROM THE TREASURER

If you attend St Matthew's and St Mary's you will notice that we are trialling a brand new Card donations system. This scheme has also given us the option of signing people up for monthly giving, or a one-off donation, via our website and the QR code below. If you are not presently someone who has signed up to gift aid and regular giving, please consider doing so. If you already give regularly, we are grateful for your continued support.

Please support the work of this Parish with a donation via:





For bank details for online payments, please email treasurer@smam.org.uk
Julie Bell PCC Treasurer

NOTE FROM THE PARISH OFFICE

Please note that our office is extremely busy, and we may not always be able to answer telephone calls immediately. This could be due to our team being in church, attending to someone in person, or managing deliveries. To ensure your inquiry is addressed as efficiently as possible, we kindly ask you to consider the following:

- Email: The best way to reach us is via email at office@smam.org.uk.
- Voicemail: If you prefer to call, please leave a message, and we will get back to you as soon as we can. Please be aware that messages left during the weekend may not be answered immediately.

We appreciate your understanding and patience during this busy time and look forward to assisting you.

PRAYING TOGETHER: FEBRUARY				
Sat	1st	Our church buildings		
Sun	2nd	The presentation of the Lord - Candlemass		
Mon	3rd	Furniture makers		
Tues	4th	Hospital staff		
Wed	5th	Nursery schools		
Thurs	6th	Our safeguarding officers		
Fri	7th	The air ambulance service		
Sat	8th	All suffering with dementia		
Sun	9th	5 th Sunday in Ordinary Time – the gospel of peace		
Mon	10th	Actors		
Tues	11th	Professional musicians		
Wed	12th	Staff in the retail industry		
Thurs	13th	Our churchwardens		
Fri	14th	Good health		
Sat	15th	Our local GP surgeries		
Sun	16th	6 th Sunday in Ordinary Time – deanery synod		
Mon	17th	Broken families		
Tues	18th	Spelthorne borough council		
Wed	19th	The parishes of Stanwell and Ashford		
Thurs	20th	All training for Ministry		
Fri	21st	The disabled and any we know personally		
Sat	22nd	The See of S. Peter the Apostle		
Sun	23rd	7 th Sunday in Ordinary Time - those churches in interregnum		
Mon	24th	University staff and students		
Tues	25th	Our church choir		
Wed	26th	Newspaper editors		
Thurs	27th	Refuse collectors and street cleaners		
Fri	28th	Our local communities		

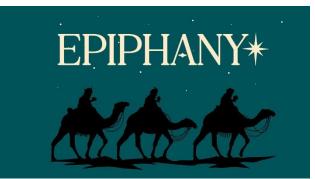
God writes the Gospel not in the Bible alone, but on trees, and flowers, and clouds, and stars.

Martin Luther

LECTIONARY PAGE

Date	Sunday	Readings
2 nd Feb. 2025	The Presentation	• Hebrews 2:14-18
	of the Lord	• Psalm 23(24) 7-10
	(Candlemass)	• Luke 2:22-32
9 th Feb. 2025	5 th Sunday in	• Isaiah 6:1-2a, 3-8
	Ordinary Time	• 138(137):1-2A. 2BC, 3. 4-5. 7C- 8. R 1C
		• 1 Corinthians 15:3-8, 11
		• Luke 5:1-11
16 th Feb. 2025	6th Sunday in	• Jeremiah 17:5-8
	Ordinary Time	• Psalm 1:1-2. 3. 4, 6. R Psalm
		40(39):5a
		• 1 Corinthians 15:12, 16-20
		• Luke 6:17, 20-26
23 rd Feb. 2025	7 th Sunday in	• 1 Samuel 26:2, 7-9, 12-13, 22-23
	Ordinary Time	• Psalm 103(102):1-2. 3-4. 8, 10.
		12-13. R 8a
		• 1 Corinthians 15:45-49
		• Luke 6:27-38
2 nd Mar. 2025	8 th Sunday in	• Sirach 27:4-7
	Ordinary Time	• Psalm 92(91):2-3. 13-14. 15-16. R cf. 2a
		• 1 Corinthians 15:54-58
		• Luke 6:39-45
9 th Mar. 2025	1st Sunday of Lent	Deuteronomy 26:4-10
		• Psalm 91(90):1-2. 10-11. 12-13.
		14-15. R cf 15b
		• Romans 10:8-13
		• Luke 4:1-13
16 th Mar. 2025	2 nd Sunday of	• Genesis 15:5-12, 17-18
	Lent	• 91(90):1-2. 10-11. 12-13. 14-15.
		R CF 15B
		• Philippians 3:17-4:1
		• Luke 9:28b-36





MESSY CHURCH SATURDAY 18TH JANUARY 2025

Our January Messy church's theme was the Epiphany of the Lord.

As usual the range of activities to reflect this. There were activities to make star mobile and decorate Star biscuit. There were lanterns to make and camel masks, the young people were able to decorate Magi figures and complete a Magi maze. There were seven children and six adults that attended.

After the activities we has the Epiphany story read to the young people by Antonia and we sang the hymn We Three Kings.

The meal was once more a favourite, pizza, fruit, crisps, and biscuits. This was wolfed down and all had a happy time with lots of smiles.

All are welcome to join us for Our February Messy Church on Saturday 15th February 2025 at 15:00hrs at St Mary the Virgin, Stanwell, where we will be exploring love through the prodigal son.



Fr John Hillman Curate





DATES FOR THE NEXT TERM

Saturday 21st December 2024



Saturday 18th January 2025 Saturday 15th February 2025 Saturday 15th March 2025

between 1500 - 1700 hrs

St Mary the Virgin, Church Approach, Stanwell, TW19 7JS



There is no cost for attending these sessions For all the family! Children must bring a grown up office@smam.org.uk 01784-259093

SAINTS FOR FEBRUARY

4TH FEBRUARY: ST GILBERT OF SEMPRINGHAM (1083 - 1190)



He was born at Sempringham, near Bourne in Lincolnshire, the son of Jocelin, an Anglo-Norman lord of the manor, who sent him to the University of Paris to study theology; it may be that he had some deformity which barred him from the military career which would normally have been expected.

When he returned home in 1120, he became a clerk in the household of Robert Bloet, Bishop of Lincoln, started a school for boys and girls, and was finally ordained by Robert's successor, Alexander.

When his father died in 1130 and he became lord of the manor of Sempringham, he used his inherited wealth to found an order of monks and nuns, known as the Gilbertines. It was the only completely English religious order and came to an end in the 16th century at the time of the Dissolution of the Monasteries. Modest Gilbertine revivals have taken place in the late 20th and early 21st centuries on three continents.

When he was 90, some of his lay brothers revolted and spread serious calumnies against him, but he received the support of King Henry II, and Pope Alexander III freed him from suspicion and confirmed the privileges granted to the order. Gilbert resigned his office late in life because of blindness and ill health, and died at Sempringham in about 1190, at the age of 106.

REFLECTION: Grant us, O Lord, that amid the uncertainties of this world we may cling with all our heart to the things of heaven, for through the Abbot blessed Gilbert you have given us a model of evangelical perfection.

28TH FEBRUARY: SAINT OSWALD (-992)

Oswald received his formation as a Benedictine monk in the Abbey of Fleury-sur-Loire in France and became Bishop of Worcester in 961. With St Dunstan and St Ethelwold, he worked hard at reviving monastic life in Anglo-Saxon England after the disruption of the Danish invasions. He was noted for his attractive and accessible character and for the exemplary way in which he celebrated the liturgy.

He had a special love of the poor; in Lent he would wash the feet of twelve poor men every day. In 972 he became Archbishop of York and administered the two dioceses. He died at Worcester on 28 February 992.

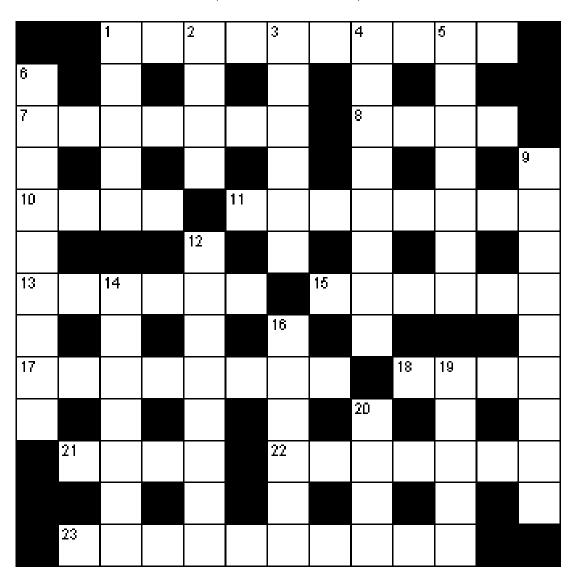


REFLECTION: Lord God, who made blessed St Oswald a bishop in your Church, eminent for his ardent love and that faith which overcomes the world, at his intercession grant that we ourselves, persevering in faith and love, may join him in your glory.



CROSSWORD

(solution on P20)



Across

- 1 The capital of Uruguay (10)
- 7 Little pasta cases with savoury filling (7)
- 8 Profound (4)
- 10 Walk through shallow water (4)
- 11 Leave the country (8)
- 13 Sea between Greece and Turkey (6)
- 15 Owing money (2,4)
- 17 Australian marsupial (8)
- 18 Unpleasant child (4)
- 21 The two of them (4)
- 22 Examined and corrected (7)
- 23 Early bird song (4,6)1

Down

- 1 Shifted (5)
- 2 Midday (4)
- 3 Puzzle (6)
- 4 Needy (8)
- 5 Raise (7)
- 6 Disadvantages (9)
- 9 Lack of doubt (9)
- 12 Long-distance foot-race (8)
- 14 Venetian canal boat (7)
- **16** Quarter (6)
- 19 Takes a break (5)
- 20 Above (4)

SUDOKU

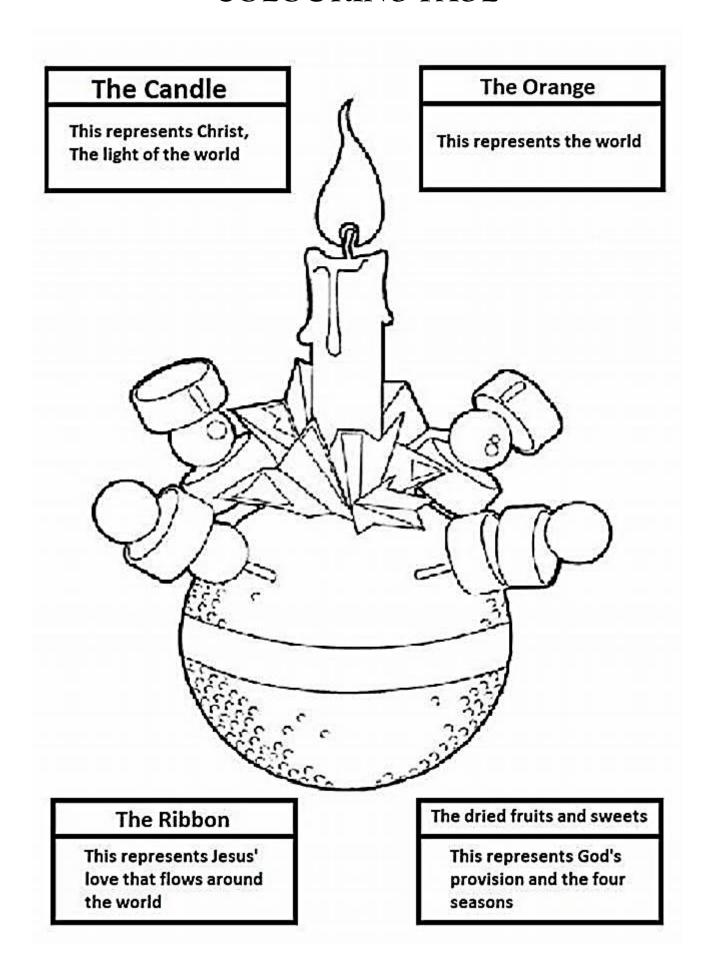
(solution on P20)

		1	4		5			
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					6	5		
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7								1
4			8	6	2			3
		3	5					
	2				1	8		
			2		4	┺		

MARCH MAGAZINE

Items for the next issue should be received by SUNDAY 23rd FEBRUARY. These may be sent via emailed to - magazine@smam.org.uk

COLOURING PAGE



RECIPE PAGE

RECIPE: EASY BANANA BREAD

INGREDIENTS (serves 10)

- 285g/10oz plain flour
- 1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
- ½ tsp salt
- 110g/4oz butter, plus extra for greasing
- 225g/8oz caster sugar
- 2 free-range eggs
- 4 ripe bananas, mashed
- 85ml/3fl oz buttermilk
 (or normal milk mixed with 1½ tsp lemon juice or vinegar)
- 1 tsp vanilla extract



- 1. Preheat the oven to 180C/160C Fan/Gas 4. Grease a 20x12.5cm/8x5in loaf tin (also known as 900g/2lb).
- 2. Sift the flour, bicarbonate of soda and salt into a large mixing bowl.
- 3. In a separate bowl, cream the butter and sugar together until light and fluffy.
- 4. Add the eggs, mashed bananas, buttermilk and vanilla extract to the butter and sugar mixture and mix well. Fold in the flour mixture.
- 5. Pour the banana bread mixture into the prepared tin.
- 6. Bake for about an hour (check after 45 minutes), or until well-risen and golden-brown.
- 7. Remove from the oven and cool in the tin for a few minutes, then turn out onto a wire rack to cool completely before serving.



TOUR OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

THE FIRST LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS

Paul's first letter to the church of Corinth provides us with a fuller insight into the life of an early Christian community of the first generation than any other book of the New Testament. Through it we can glimpse both the strengths and the weaknesses of this small group in a great city of the ancient world, men and women who had accepted the good news of Christ and were now trying to realize in their lives the implications of their baptism. Paul, who had founded the community and continued to look after it as a father, responds both to questions addressed to him and to situations of which he had been informed. In doing so, he reveals much about himself, his teaching, and the way in which he conducted his work of apostleship. Some things are puzzling because we have the correspondence only in one direction. For the person studying this letter, it seems to raise as many questions as it answers, but without it our knowledge of church life in the middle of the first century would be much poorer.

Paul established a Christian community in Corinth about the year 51, on his second missionary journey. The city, a commercial crossroads, was a melting pot full of devotees of various pagan cults and marked by a measure of moral depravity not unusual in a great seaport. The Acts of the Apostles suggests that moderate success attended Paul's efforts among the Jews in Corinth at first, but that they soon turned against him (Acts 18:1–8). More fruitful was his year and a half spent among the Gentiles (Acts 18:11), which won to the faith many of the city's poor and underprivileged (1 Cor 1:26). After his departure the eloquent Apollos, an Alexandrian Jewish Christian, rendered great service to the community, expounding "from the scriptures that the Messiah is Jesus" (Acts 18:24–28).

While Paul was in Ephesus on his third journey (1 Cor 16:8; Acts 19:1–20), he received disquieting news about Corinth. The community there was displaying open factionalism, as certain members were identifying themselves exclusively with individual Christian leaders and interpreting Christian teaching as a superior wisdom for the initiated few (1 Cor 1:10–4:21). The community lacked the decisiveness to take appropriate action against one of its members who was living publicly in an incestuous union (1 Cor 5:1–13). Other members engaged in legal conflicts in pagan courts of law (1 Cor 6:1–11); still others may have participated in religious prostitution (1 Cor 6:12–20) or temple sacrifices (1 Cor 10:14–22).

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The community's ills were reflected in its liturgy. In the celebration of the Eucharist certain members discriminated against others, drank too freely at the agape, or fellowship meal, and denied Christian social courtesies to the poor among the membership (1 Cor 11:17–22). Charisms such as ecstatic prayer, attributed freely to the impulse of the holy Spirit, were more highly prized than works of charity (1 Cor 13:1–2, 8), and were used at times in a disorderly way (1 Cor 14:1–40). Women appeared at the assembly without the customary head-covering (1 Cor 11:3–16), and perhaps were quarreling over their right to address the assembly (1 Cor 14:34–35).

Still other problems with which Paul had to deal concerned matters of conscience discussed among the faithful members of the community: the eating of meat that had been sacrificed to idols (1 Cor 8:1–13), the use of sex in marriage (1 Cor 7:1–7), and the attitude to be taken by the unmarried toward marriage in view of the possible proximity of Christ's second coming (1 Cor 7:25–40). There was also a doctrinal matter that called for Paul's attention, for some members of the community, despite their belief in the resurrection of Christ, were denying the possibility of general bodily resurrection.

To treat this wide spectrum of questions, Paul wrote this letter from Ephesus about the year 56. The majority of the Corinthian Christians may well have been quite faithful. Paul writes on their behalf to guard against the threats posed to the community by the views and conduct of various minorities. He writes with confidence in the authority of his apostolic mission, and he presumes that the Corinthians, despite their deficiencies, will recognize and accept it. On the other hand, he does not hesitate to exercise his authority as his judgment dictates in each situation, even going so far as to promise a direct confrontation with recalcitrants, should the abuses he scores remain uncorrected (1 Cor 4:18–21).

The letter illustrates well the mind and character of Paul. Although he is impelled to insist on his office as founder of the community, he recognizes that he is only one servant of God among many and generously acknowledges the labors of Apollos (1 Cor 3:5–8). He provides us in this letter with many valuable examples of his method of theological reflection and exposition. He always treats the questions at issue on the level of the purity of Christian teaching and conduct. Certain passages of the letter are of the greatest importance for the understanding of early Christian teaching on the Eucharist (1 Cor 10:14–22; 11:17–34) and on the resurrection of the body (1 Cor 15:1–58).

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Paul's authorship of 1 Corinthians, apart from a few verses that some regard as later interpolations, has never been seriously questioned. Some scholars have proposed, however, that the letter as we have it contains portions of more than one original Pauline letter. We know that Paul wrote at least two other letters to Corinth (see 1 Cor 5:9; 2 Cor 2:3–4) in addition to the two that we now have; this theory holds that the additional letters are actually contained within the two canonical ones. Most commentators, however, find 1 Corinthians quite understandable as a single coherent work.

The principal divisions of the First Letter to the Corinthians are the following:

- i. Address (1:1-9)
- ii. Disorders in the Corinthian Community (1:10-6:20)
 - A. Divisions in the Church (1:10-4:21)
 - B. Moral Disorders (5:1-6:20)
- iii. Answers to the Corinthians' Questions (7:1-11:1)
 - A. Marriage and Virginity (7:1-40)
 - B. Offerings to Idols (8:1–11:1)
- iv. Problems in Liturgical Assemblies (11:2–14:40)
 - A. Women's Headdresses (11:3-16)
 - B. The Lord's Supper (11:17-34)
 - C. Spiritual Gifts (12:1-14:40)
- v. The Resurrection (15:1–58)
 - A. The Resurrection of Christ (15:1–11)
 - B. The Resurrection of the Dead (15:12–34)
 - C. The Manner of the Resurrection (15:35–58)
- vi. Conclusion (16:1-24)

FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS

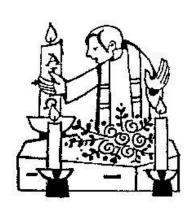
HOLY BAPTISM



No baptisms in January

We have been called by the Lord to be a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people he acquired for himself. Let us ask him to show his mercy on those who have received the graces of baptism, for their parents and godparents, and to all the baptized everywhere. Amen

FUNERALS



 06/01/2025
 Doreen Crane

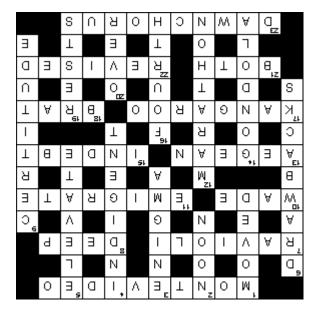
 10/01/2025
 Agnes Templeton

 10/01/2025
 Patricia Martin

 30/01/2025
 Monica Marden

Our thoughts and prayers are with all those who mourn their passing May the souls of the departed rest in peace and rise in Glory. Amen

CROSSWORD SOLUTION SUDOKU SOLUTION



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LENT COURSE THE CREED

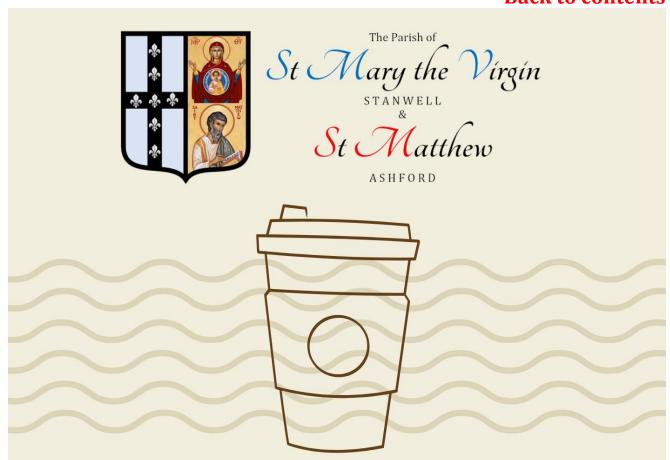


at St Mary's Stanwell Mondays throughout lent Starts at 19:00 with Mass

www.smam.org.uk







COFFEE MORNINGS

Wednesdays - St Mary's Thursdays - St Matthew's 10:00-12:00

www.smam.org.uk



Volunteer Coffee Morning

Tuesday 11th February 9:30 - 11:30am

Being a parent can be lonely, frustrating and overwhelming. Home-Start volunteers work alongside families to give compassionate and confidential support. Volunteers are central to what we do, they provide invaluable friendship, emotional and practical support to parents in need.

We are urgently in need of new volunteers. If you have parenting experience and can spare a couple of hours each week we would like to invite you to our coffee morning. Learn more about Home-Start, what volunteering involves and meet some of our existing volunteers.

Home-Start Spelthorne
The Resource Centre
Staines Park
Commercial Road
TW18 20J

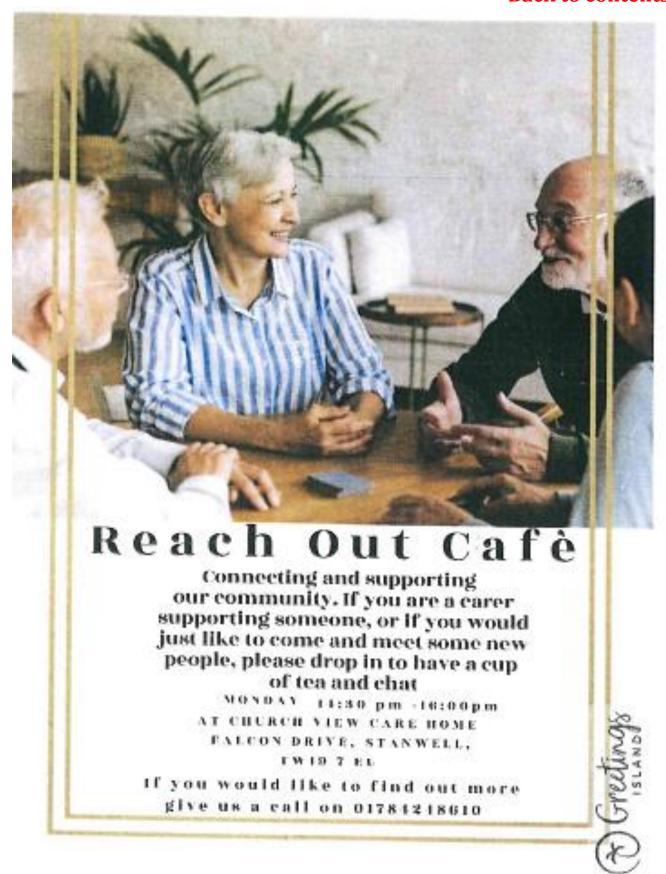
info@home-startspelthorne.org 01784 463200





A natural place to play and learn





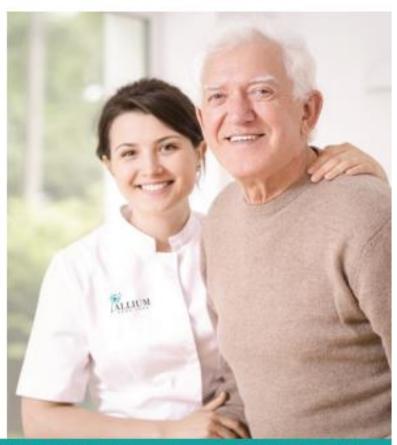


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Parish Information

PARISH DIRECTORY

The Parish Office

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Parish Priest:

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