

ST MATTHEW CATHOLIC CHURCH, WEST NORWOOD

02086701765

37 Norwood High Street

norwoodwest@rcaos.org.uk

West Norwood

www.stmatthews-westnorwood.org.uk

London SE27 9JU

14 September 2025

Parish Newsletter

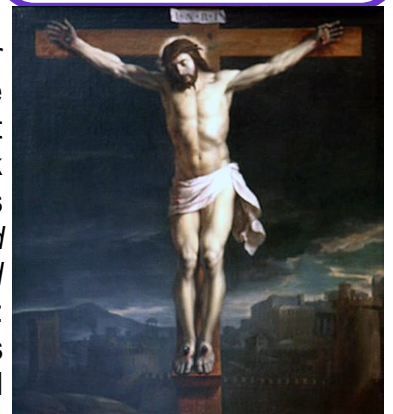
FEAST OF THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS (C)

TODAY'S MASS READING: Parish Mass Book, from page 192.

1st Reading (Num.21:4b-9). **2nd Reading** (Phil.2:6-11). **Gospel** (Jn.3:13-17)

Readings Next Sunday: 1st Reading (Amos 8:4-7). 2nd Reading (1 Tim.2:1-8). Gospel (Lk.16:1-13)

Today, we celebrate the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, a feast that may sound strange at first. After all, why exalt an instrument of torture and death? But that's exactly what we do today: we lift high the Cross because for us, it is no longer a symbol of defeat, but of victory; no longer a sign of shame, but of glory. In the time of Jesus, the cross was a tool of humiliation and execution. Crucifixion was the most painful and degrading death reserved for criminals and slaves. And yet, Jesus took that very symbol of horror and transformed it into the greatest sign of God's love. As St. Paul writes in the letter to the Philippians (today's second reading), *"He humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross. Because of this, God greatly exalted him."* So, the Cross becomes the paradox at the heart of our faith: Through death comes life. Through humiliation comes exaltation. Through weakness comes power. It's easy to admire the Cross in a beautiful church or wear it around our necks. But Christ calls us to something deeper: *"If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me."* This means the Cross is not just something Jesus carried, it's something we carry too. The crosses in our lives, our sufferings, burdens, sacrifices aren't meaningless. When united to Christ, they become redemptive. They can even become the path through which God saves us and others. Do you have a cross today? A physical illness, a wounded relationship, a silent suffering? Don't run from it. Don't waste it. Unite it to Jesus. Let it be transformed. We live in a world that fears suffering and runs from sacrifice. But as Christians, we know that love always involves the cross. Every act of real love, whether it's parenting, forgiving, caring for the sick, standing up for truth comes with a cost. But the Cross teaches us that that cost is worth it. Because Good Friday was not the end. Easter Sunday came. In the same way, our own crosses will not be the end. If we carry them with Christ, we too will rise with Him. So today, we don't glorify suffering we glorify love that suffers willingly for the sake of others. We don't exalt pain, we exalt the One who bore our pain to give us eternal life. Let us look to the Cross not as a defeat, but as a daily invitation to love more deeply, to suffer more generously, and to trust more fully in the God who can bring resurrection out of anything. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You, because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world. Amen.



Parish Priest: Fr Celestine Ekwueme

Email: celestineekwueme@rcaos.org.uk

PARISH INFORMATION AND FAITH NEWS

Pope's September prayer intention: For our relationship with all of creation

Let us pray that, inspired by Saint Francis, we might experience our interdependence with all creatures who are loved by God and worthy of love and respect

Prayer for September: Heavenly Father, I trust in Your enduring faithfulness. Your mercies are new every morning, and Your grace is sufficient for each day of September and beyond. May this month be one of spiritual growth, fruitful service, and deepening relationships for me, my family and friends. I commit this month to You, for You are the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End. As You have been with me in past seasons, I know You will be with me in the days to come. In the name of Jesus Christ, I pray. Amen.

PARISH NOTICES

Mass for those Harmed by Abuse: Archbishop John Wilson and the Safeguarding team, invite all our parishioners to join us on the 24th September 2025 6.30pm, for the Service for Hope and Healing, for all those that have been harmed by abuse. The service is to express the archdiocese's commitment to all those that have been harmed, their family and friends and to come together as a community and demonstrate our solidarity for those harmed.

Building a Better Marriage (BABM) – Jubilee 2025

Pilgrims of Hope: To celebrate Jubilee 2025 one=day Building a Better Marriage events are being held during 2025. The opportunity for married couples starts at 9.30am and finishes at 4.30pm and is free to attend. Contact Carole on 07983 524 727 or email: mflkent@rcaos.org.uk; 13 September – Southwark Cathedral, London, 4 October – Holy Cross, Catford, 1 November – St James the Great, Petts Wood

Free Sycamore course on the **9th, 16th, 23rd and 30th September** (4 X 1 hour sessions over 4 weeks) at 8pm: The Growing in Faith Together for married and engaged couples is an ONLINE course about the Catholic faith by Fr Stephen Wang, developed in collaboration with the Marriage and Family Life team and the Agency for Evangelisation. It is a wonderful opportunity for married couples to enrich their friendship and love and for engaged couples who want to start or continue exploring their faith together. For further information and to book a place, please contact Carole on mflkent@rcaos.org.uk FAQ: The course is for couples - Can I attend on my own or do both of us have to attend? ANS: If you're attending as part of your marriage preparation, then both of you should attend. If you're already married, you can attend alone or as a couple – your choice!

Free walking tour of the City of London, on **Sunday 21st September** starting at 10.30am.

This is not suitable for children. Please contact Carole on mflkent@rcaos.org.uk

This Sunday is Education Sunday which offers an opportunity for us to pray to Almighty God for all people involved in Catholic education, to celebrate the achievements of the past and to ask Our Lord to bless the work of the year ahead. This year's theme is "The Son of Man must be lifted up" taken from St John's Gospel (John 3:13-17). The second collection this weekend is for The Catholic Education Service (CES) which acts on behalf of the Catholic Bishops' Conference to support Catholic education. The CES is the chief negotiating and advisory body on matters affecting all aspects of Catholic education. **Next Sundays 2nd collection** is for the Catholic Agency for the Support of Evangelization (Home Mission) which provides the bishops of England and Wales with resources to support Home Mission, the spread of the gospel in our own Country

Lourdes Pilgrimage 2025, 21st – 25th October Cost £399: A pilgrimage trip with a number of places left. Costs include return flights from Stansted half board accommodation, transfer from/to Lourdes. £70 single supplement. Children under 16 go for £199. Contact: dartford@rcaos.org.uk, Tel: 01322220075.

Annual Diocesan Day for Catechists, Saturday 20th September. Registration now open! You are invited to join us for a day filled with teachings, prayer and a chance to meet fellow Catechists. This day is for all catechists including those involved in Liturgy of the Word for Children and the RCIA process. For the last few years, the day has reached capacity; registration is therefore necessary as soon as possible to guarantee a place. Join us at St George's Cathedral, SE1 6HU from 10am. Registration and choice of workshops can be found at aec.rcaos.org.uk/day-for-catechists-2025

The First National Mass Count takes place at all Masses next weekend.

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK**PARISH MINISTRY**

| | |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| Saturday 13 | Vigil, Exaltation of the Cross |
| 6:30pm | Corporal B.Daly RIP |
| Sunday 14 | FO Exaltation of the Holy Cross |
| 9am | Peter Isamah, wellbeing |
| 11am | Nathan Dakouri, wellbeing. |
| Monday 15 | Our Lady of Sorrow |
| 9:30am | No Mass |
| Tuesday 16 | St Cornelius |
| 6:00pm | Adoration |
| 7:00pm | Anne Lagerwell |
| Wednesday 17 | Feria. |
| 9:30am | Holy Souls |
| Thursday 18 | Feria |
| 11am @ BH | Holy Souls |
| Friday 19 | Feria |
| 12 noon | Peter Selestine RIP |
| Saturday 20 | Vigil, 24th Sunday |
| 6:30pm | K C Abraham, RIP |
| Sunday 21 | 24th Sunday Ord. Time |
| 9am | Pro Populo |
| 11am | Derek D'Souza RIP |

READERS:

| | 13th/14th | 20th/21st |
|---------------|------------------|------------------|
| 6:30pm | Preetha | Ethelbert |
| 9am | Savio | Dorothy |
| 11am | Melba/Michelle | Nana/Jeniffer |

Eucharistic Ministers

| | | |
|---------------|-----------|----------|
| 6:30pm | Jenny | Russell |
| 9am | Albertina | Lawrence |
| 11am | Yvonne | Kereine |

Church Cleaning

Catherine/Noelie/Hugo Justin/Justina

We remain grateful to all our volunteers who help in different parish ministries.

Your services to the parish is immensely appreciated. May God whom you serve bless you and provide for you exceedingly, more than you can ever imagine. Amen.

CYCLE OF PRAYER - Intentions for Ordinary Time – Autumn

For Students and Teachers, especially on Education Day

For the Spread of the Gospel, especially on Home Mission Sunday & World Mission Day

For the Harvest, the Fruits of Human Work and for the Reverent Use of creation, especially on World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation

For Justice & Peace in the World, especially on Harvest Fast Day

For All Victims of War, especially on Remembrance Sunday

For Young People, Especially on Youth Day (Christ the King)

For Prisoners & their Families, especially on Day of Prayer for Prisoners & Prison Week

WE REMEMBER IN OUR PRAYERS THOSE WHO HAVE RECENTLY DIED IN OUR PARISH COMMUNITY , AND THOSE WHOSE ANNIVERSARY OF DEATH OCCUR AROUND THIS TIME, MAY THEY REST IN PEACE. AMEN.

Gerry Grehan, RIP.

HOSPITAL CONTACTS: If you or a member of your family are admitted to our local hospitals, do please let the hospital's Catholic chaplain know.

St George's Hospital: 02087253069 / 02086721255)

Kings Hospital: If outside hospital—02032993522. inside the hospital call extension 33522

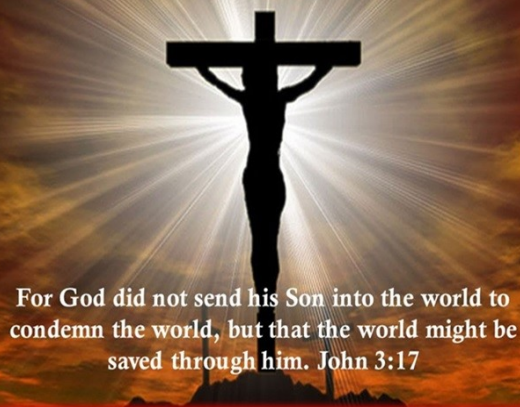
Croydon University Hospital: 02084013105

St Thomas' Hospital: 02071881187/02071881186

Guy's Hospital: 02071881185/02071889576

14 SEPTEMBER - FEAST

The Exaltation of the Holy Cross



PARISH SCHEDULES

Sunday Mass Times :

6:30pm (Sat), 9am and 11am

Week Day Mass Times:

Tuesday ; 7pm

Wednesday & Friday; 9:30am

Thursday; 11am @ British Home

First Fridays; 12noon.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament:

Tuesdays; 6:00pm

Baptisms, Marriage, Funerals: Contact the Parish Office.

Youth Club:

4:30pm Every 3rd Saturday

RCIA: Contact Parish Office

RECONCILIATION/CONFESSIONS

Saturdays: 5:30pm to 6:15pm and on call.

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

Open Office: Fridays 10am to 12:30pm and 2:30pm to 4:30pm.

Other days with appointment, please.

UCM:

12noon Every First Friday

CHOIR REHEARSALS:

Wednesdays; 7:30pm @ the Church.

DIVINE MERCY GROUP

Sundays; after 11am mass @ the Divine Mercy Altar

We are grateful for all you do to support the parish.

Setting up a Standing Order is the most efficient way to make a donation to the parish without incurring fees. You can use the following details for one-off donation or to set up a Standing Order or Direct Debit. NatWest Bank: Account Name: RCAS Norwood West, Sort Code: 60-23-19; Account Number: 44115369. Thank You!