

ST MATTHEW CATHOLIC CHURCH, WEST NORWOOD

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West Norwood

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07 September 2025

Parish Newsletter

TODAY'S MASS READING: Parish Mass Book, from page 133.

1st Reading (Wis. 9:13-18). **2nd Reading** (Philemon 9b-10,12-17). **Gospel** (Lk.14: 25-33)

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

Today's Gospel presents us with one of the most challenging teachings of Jesus. As crowds follow Him, excited by His miracles and teachings, Jesus turns to them not to entertain or impress, but to tell the hard truth: *"Whoever does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters... even his own life, cannot be my disciple."* At first glance, this sounds harsh. How can Jesus, who commands us to love, tell us to "hate" our families? But Jesus is using strong language to make a powerful point: Nothing, not even our closest relationships should come before Him. This is not about being against family or life. It's about putting God first, above all else. It's about being ready to carry our cross to accept sacrifices, to make hard choices, to follow Christ even when it's uncomfortable or unpopular. Jesus compares discipleship to building a tower or going into battle. He says: *Count the cost*. Don't start unless you're willing to finish. He's telling us: Being a Christian is not just about feelings or good intentions it requires commitment and sacrifice. So, what does this mean for us today? We live in a world that promotes comfort, convenience, and compromise. But Jesus calls us to be different. He calls us to: Put faith over fear. Choose truth over popularity. Live with eternity in mind, not just the here and now. For some, carrying the cross might mean standing up for their faith in a secular workplace. For others, it might mean forgiving someone who has deeply hurt them. For many, it simply means remaining faithful in the daily struggles, caring for a sick relative, resisting temptation, or praying when you don't feel like it. All of us are called to follow Jesus with our whole heart not half, not sometimes, but fully. That is the cost of discipleship. But here's the good news: while discipleship costs us something, it gives us so much more, peace, purpose, joy, and eternal life. Jesus never said the road would be easy, but He promised to walk with us every step of the way. So today, let's ask ourselves: What are the "crosses" I'm being asked to carry? What am I holding on to that might be holding me back from following Jesus completely? Let's pray for the grace to put Christ first and follow Him, no matter the cost. 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

Education Sunday, 14th September - 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). **Next Sundays 2nd collection** 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

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.

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales produce many podcasts throughout the year. Our main strand is 'Catholic News' but we also have podcasts covering social justice, Scripture and the Gospels as well as standalone series like 'Journeying with Newman' looking at the life and teachings of St John Henry Newman. Visit [https:// www.cbcew.org.uk/podcast/](https://www.cbcew.org.uk/podcast/)

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

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK**PARISH MINISTRY**

Saturday 06	Vigil, 23rd Sunday
6:30pm	John Abraham, wellbeing
Sunday 07	23rd Sunday in Ord Time
9am	Peter Isamah, wellbeing
11am	Silva Gomeahey, t/giving.
Monday 08	Nativity of BVM
9:30am	No Mass
Tuesday 09	Feria
6:00pm	Adoration
7:00pm	Holy Souls
Wednesday 10	Feria.
9:30am	Holy Souls
Thursday 11	Feria
11am @ BH	Holy Souls
Friday 12	Feria
12 noon	Peter Selestine RIP
Saturday 13	Vigil of Exaltation of the Holy Cross
6:30pm	Corporal B.Daly RIP
Sunday 14	Exaltation of the Holy Cross
9am	Peter Isamah, wellbeing.
11am	Nathan Dakouri, wellbeing.

READERS:

	7th/8th	13th/14th
6:30pm	Ethelbert	Preetha
9am	Eliza	Savio
11am	Nana/Jessica	Melba/Michelle Elemosho

Eucharistic Ministers

6:30pm	Annabel	Jenny
9am	Zena	Albertina
11am	Patience	Yvonne

Church Cleaning

Chika/Patience/Juliana Catherine/Noelie/Hugo

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.

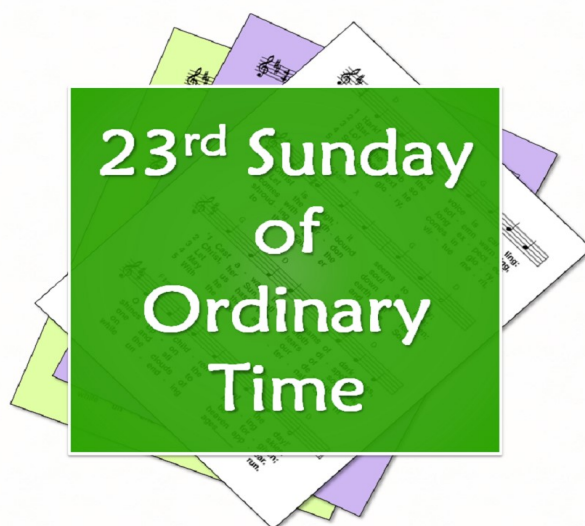
St George's Hospital: 02087253069 / 02086721255)

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



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!