

Welcome to our weekly newsletter. We hope you enjoy your time at St James' and we look forward to seeing you again next week.

Thank you for your offerings last week of £1035.04. Mass attendance 806.

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| 1st December (Saturday Vigil) | 1st Sunday of Advent 6pm Caroline Cleary (LS & F Wynne) |
| Sunday 2nd December | 9.15am Mary McEnergy RIP (G Carter) 11am Mary Monaghan RIP (Monaghan Family) |
| Monday 3rd December | St Francis Xavier, Priest 9.30am Peter Roberts RIP (Evans Family) |
| Tuesday 4th December | Feria 9.30am Rita Cassidy RIP (Mary Kelly) |
| Wednesday 5th December Whole School Mass | Feria 9.30am Marie Reid RIP (E Smith) 10.45 Eucharist Adoration |
| Thursday 6th December | Feria 9.30am Mary Kelly |
| Friday 7th December First Friday of the Month | St Ambrose, Bishop 9.30am Amanda Mulroy RIP (G Mulroy) 7.30pm Eucharist Adoration |
| 8th December (Saturday Vigil) | 2nd Sunday of Advent 6pm Elisabeth Pottiers (Mrs MacArthur) |
| Sunday 9th December | 9.15am Relatives and Friends of the Fyson Family (Foundation) 11am Private Intention |

Confessions are heard on Saturday, 5.00-5.45pm, or by appointment.

Morning Prayer takes place Monday – Friday at 9.10am. All are welcome to attend.

Pondering the Word (*Lectio Divina*) - A quiet reflective look at the following Sunday's Gospel. Mondays 11am-12 noon, except for Bank Holidays, here in the Church. All are welcome.

Rosary – Every day after Mass there is rosary. All are welcome.

Second Collection

Next weekend of 8-9th December, the second collection will be for our Parish Overseas Project supporting the parish of St Catherine's in the Philippines. We support the educational projects in the parish and the work done to assist those in particular need in the area.

Fr David writes...

Advent is a time of waiting. It is so ironic that amidst the most frantic and hectic time of the year, we are invited to be silent and wait. Advent is a totally counter cultural liturgical period for us Christians. Whereas the shops are already celebrating Christmas and luring us to shop and be festive, the beginning of the liturgical year is encouraging us to slow down and wait. Advent is a hard season. It goes completely against the grain. We are quite naturally impatient in everything to reach the end without delay. We tend to want to skip the intermediate steps. We are impatient of being on the way to something unknown, something new. And yet it is the law of all progress that is made by passing through some stages of instability and that it may take a long time before we arrive to embrace something new. I feel we need to learn to honour more the natural process of things.

Grief for example has its own path to take. We cannot rush it. We cannot construct it. It just is. Let us learn by observing nature. Gestation of a baby has its own rhythm and process. The mother and father have to learn to wait for the baby to grow and mature within the womb before it is ready for birth. This time is of paramount importance as it helps them to physically and psychologically prepare themselves for the arrival of another human being. A dependent baby who would change their world completely. The Church might come across as a major spoiler in inviting us to wait and not jump necessarily to the festive season to celebrate immediately. However there is a wisdom in doing so. We appreciate things more in life when we wait. There is a right time for things to happen. We cannot construct things at our own pace always. Although we would rather have things instantly. The art of waiting is definitely becoming a rarity.

In Advent the Church encourages us to stop and reflect on our lives. We begin a new Church year with a gospel that seems intent upon shocking and startling us out of complacency. In the first Sunday of Advent we are invited to ask ourselves "how would I live today if I knew it was my last day on the earth? What priorities would guide my choices and decisions? The Church gives us the Gospel from Luke to start this Advent season in part so that we might call to mind the "end times" and the concurrent coming of the Son of Man. When our minds are drowning in lists, shopping, groceries, and gifts, we might pause, raise our head above these pressing concerns and reflect from another point of view. In the end, what does it all mean? What is driving my actions and behaviours? Am I watchful, vigilant for the Lord's coming? And what would such watchfulness look like? The dying and rising of Christ give meaning to my own personal death and resurrection each season, when I set aside my own desires and aims and focus on something eternal, something lasting. The waiting for Christmas means death to an old way of life and resurrection of hope and life everlasting. I hope that as we start to prepare ourselves for Christmas, we take some moments to reflect upon what is essential in life. Let us take some time to be more mindful and present to the other members of our family especially those who are struggling because of illness or because they are grieving and alone. This time of year can be very hard for some people. God bless you all and hopefully you will also engage with the Advent events which our parish has prepared for us all to help embrace Christmas in the best possible way this year!

"Drop-In" Evening Surgeries – The next drop in surgery with Fr David will be on **Tuesday 4th December between 5pm-7pm**. No appointment needed.

Advent – Prepare ye the way of the Lord

Advent Reflection – Led by Sr Clara, Thursday 6th December 8pm

Advent Reconciliation Service – Thursday 13th December 8pm

Advent Carol Service – Sunday 16th December 4pm

Advent Reflection Service - Led by Fr David Camilleri, Thursday 20th December 8pm

Volunteers Are Needed to Help Prepare Christmas Lunch with Fr David on Tuesday 25th December!

Would you like to help organise, prepare, cook and share, Christmas lunch for Fr David and his parish guests in the Community Centre this year? And maybe plan a Christmas game (charades, bingo?) and a film to watch after lunch too – not forgetting to allow time for the Queen's speech! If you have ideas and would like to help, please email the Parish Office: parish.office@stjamespettswood.org

Christmas

The Christmas cards for Petts Wood Churches Together are here. Please take a bundle and deliver them to the houses in your road, if you safely can. Thank you.

Christmas Crib – Poinsettias Needed

If you would like to donate some poinsettias for the crib this Christmas, they would be gratefully received. Please drop them off at the Church on the weekend of 15th and 16th December.

Religious advent calendars, Christmas cards and the like are now on sale in the repository and from the stall in the church porch after all Sunday Masses.

Decorating the Church for Christmas

We are meeting to decorate the church for Christmas **on Saturday the 15th at 10.00am**. Anyone who has an hour to spare to help us decorate the church is more than welcome.

Gifts on Christmas Day

At all Christmas Masses you are invited to bring a gift of a brand-new toy to put around the Christmas tree. This year we are supporting Great Ormond Street Hospital, who are looking forward to receiving toys/gifts for boys and girls aged 0 - 16. They have asked that we do not donate stuffed animals/teddies but are in special need of sensory toys for children aged 0-1 years old and toys for children ages 14-16 years. We know you will be generous as always.

Evangelisation Pillar

RCIA

Journey in Faith continues on Sunday 2nd December from 2.00 to 5.00pm in the Community Centre.

Confirmation 2019

The first preparation session is on Monday 3rd December from 7.00pm-8.30pm.

SS Joseph & Swithun Parish – Bromley Advent Reflection on Laudato Si': Care for Our Common Home

Come and reflect on how we can find new ways forward together to care for our common home and our finite resources in our homes, our parish, our world, on Wednesday 5th December 7.30pm – 9.30pm Church Hall – Sharing Session and Reflection on Global Healing Film.

Social Pillar

Christmas Fair

The Christmas Fair is rapidly approaching and there are many ways for you to get involved. You can:

- Take home some raffle tickets (these are on sale at the back of the church from this weekend)

onwards)

- Look at the sign-up list (also at the back of the church) and see where you can help.
- Bring some cakes to sell on the day.
- Bring some food to sell. The more varied the dishes the more exciting the culinary experience!
- Help on a stall.
- Create (with friends) a stall to show off your country's crafts, decorations, biscuits!!
- Donate a bottle for the bottle tombola.
- Donate a brand new, possibly an unwanted gift, for the children's raffle.
- Children and the young at heart wear a Christmas jumper.
- If you have a particular connection with a business in Petts Wood: your barber, pedicurist, favourite coffee shop, could you take a poster advertising the Christmas Fair and ask them to display it in their business.
- Don't forget to return raffle tickets.
- Finally, come along and enjoy the fair on Sunday 9th December after both masses.

Donations of bottles and new toys gratefully received! The collection box is at the back of the church. Have you signed up yet? Please contact me if you need any further advice/ help.

Mary O'Mahony:

mary.omahony@stjamespettswood.org

New Year's Eve Party, 31st December

Save the date - and welcome the new year as a parish community. We would appreciate expressions of interest, so please sign the sheet at the back of the church.

New Year's Eve Party' Meeting!

There will be a meeting **on Wednesday 12th December at 8.00pm** in the Community Centre to finalise arrangements for the New Year's Eve Party. All who came to the first meeting are most welcome plus anyone else that is interested in helping in any way.

Many thanks.

Parent and Toddler Group

The St James' parent and toddler group has reopened on Friday afternoons between 1.30pm-3.30pm. £2.50 per family.

Liturgy Pillar

Children's Mass

We are looking for someone to co-ordinate the children's readers' rota for the children's mass once a month. Please contact the parish office for more information.

Music Workshop

We invite all music lovers to our next workshop which is being held in the Community Centre on 26th January, led by Meg Shepherd. Please put this date in your diaries.

Children's Liturgy

Please note Children's Liturgy will NOT be on when there is a Church Parade Mass. There will be no Liturgy on 9th December as we do not have enough leaders. If you would like to lead or help please contact Hannah via email: childrens.liturgy@stjamespettswood.org

Children's Choir, Christmas Day 9:15 Mass.

Calling all kids year 2 and up to help sing for the Christmas 9:15 Mass. We need your voices to get into the Christmas Spirit!

There will be several practice sessions where we will sing through the songs. We are singing songs which will be familiar to the children. To make this as convenient as possible, sessions are 10:20am - 10:50am (between the two Masses) in the side room of the Parish Hall. Parents could have a coffee/tea while we sing through the hymns.

Sessions:

10:20am - 10:50am December 2nd, 9th and 16th

Please come to as many of the sessions as you can. Ideally at least 2.

If you are interested, please give your names to youthchoir.stjames@gmail.com so we have an idea of numbers.

Christmas Choir

Our Advent service will be held on Sunday 16th December at 4pm, and on Christmas Eve, we will start with carols at 11.30pm followed by Midnight Mass.

We are inviting singers to join our Christmas choir which sings in four-part harmony. **Rehearsals** will be held on Thursdays from 7.30 - 9pm, on December 6th, and 13th, (with possibly another rehearsal just before Christmas if needed). This is a lovely way to participate in our parish' festivities so if you enjoy singing, please come along.

Eucharist Adoration – Be Still in the Presence of the Lord. Your time set aside in your hectic life – wasting time in silence with God. Takes place for an hour **each Wednesday** shortly after the Morning Mass and the Wednesday Café starting at 10.45am and finishing with Benediction at 11.45am.

First Friday of the Month. A time of silent meditation in an evocative atmosphere created by soft background music and candles. From 7.30pm till 9.00pm. The **next will be on Friday 7th December. All are welcome for all or part of this time of Adoration ending with Benediction.**

Justice & Peace

Next meeting

There was no meeting at St James' on Wednesday 28th November because members were participating in the Global Healing event at St Joseph's. The Group will meet in the Community Hall at 7.45pm on Wednesday 5th December instead. All parishioners are warmly invited to attend.

Greeting cards to Victims of Injustice

The response to our appeal for Mass goers to send messages of solidarity to Victims of Injustice was tremendous. More than 80 cards were written, and generous donations enabled us to cover postage, stationery and printing costs. The envelopes have been addressed and sent off. Thank you for your support. It was great to have such enthusiasm from young parishioners who understand what injustice means.

Foodbank Christmas hampers

The organisers are now preparing for Christmas and have sent a list of items they try to provide for those in need at this time. Ideally, they would like to receive these items by the first week in December, but earlier is fine. So, if you can help by donating any of the following items, we should be very grateful: mince pies, various sized Christmas puddings, tinned salmon, pickles/chutneys, Christmas biscuits, Christmas cake/fruit cake, Christmas sweets/chocolates, biscuits for cheese, Christmas savoury assortments (crisps, pretzels, nuts, etc.), large tinned hams, any other Christmas items. £5 supermarket vouchers are also very useful additions to a hamper.

Manna Centre

The parish has once again shown great generosity in collecting a mountain of items including men's clothing and shoes, blankets, and toilet rolls and kitchen rolls, last month in support for the tireless work of the Manna Centre. On behalf of Paddy Boyle from the Manna Society, the Justice and Peace Group would like to thank all parishioners who donated items.

Our next collection will be in March 2019 – so why not start putting aside items that can be donated and look out for a list of items in particular need a bit nearer to the time! Take a look at the Parish website for more information or send an email to nick.babb@stjamespettswood.org

Pastoral Pillar

St James The Great 'Memory Café'

Here at St James' we run a Dementia Café on the first two Tuesdays of each month from 2pm to 3.30pm in the Community Centre. This is a time for guests with dementia and their carers to come for refreshments and a chat in a comfortable and safe environment and if they wish, join in with activities such as quizzes, games and music. If you would like to know more, please contact: pastoral.care@stjamespettswood.org or telephone the Parish Office: 01689 827100. **We look forward to welcoming you.**

Helplines and Counselling Services.

A list of helplines and counselling services is available on our website, and in the church porch, for anyone who might need this.

The Knights of St Columba's Singalong

Council 327 (Orpington) of the Knights of St Columba is organising a Sing-Along for **Saturday, 8th December 2018** at St Theresa's Church Hall, 1 Haig Road, Biggin Hill, Kent, TN16 3LJ, from 7.30pm onwards. Tickets cost £5 per person or £10 per family. Please bring your own nibbles & drink. All are most welcome!

Finance Pillar

Fundraising by shopping online

Several parishioners over the last few years have helped the parish by raising donations through **easyfundraising.org.uk**. Recently we reached the milestone of £3,000, for which we thank everyone who has made purchases that way. Over 3,400 retailers including Amazon, eBay, M&S, John Lewis, Argos, Booking.com, tour operators, now make donations on every purchase (from 0.5% to 5% of cost). The top supporter parishioner has raised £388 (all transactions are completely anonymous), so why not embrace the idea and help St James'? To get started, follow the item on the left menu bar of the parish website. Once you've registered, you have the option to install an automatic donation reminder in your browser to make sure no purchase misses its reward.

Any questions, please contact roger.wright@stjamespettswood.org. Thank you.

Polite Reminders

Parking

- The Parish disabled parking spaces are for Blue Badge holders only.
- Please be aware of our neighbours in the surrounding roads, please do not block driveways or double-park your car.

In church

Please refrain from eating and drinking while you are in church.

Seeing a Chaplain if You Are Admitted to Hospital

- **Protecting personal information** (data protection) is really important when you become an inpatient in hospital.
- **So please specifically ask hospital staff to pass on your details** to the hospital's Roman Catholic chaplain as soon as you are admitted if you would like a Chaplain to visit you.
- **Fr David would always be very happy** to visit you too, so please ask a relative or friend to let him know about your admission. You, or they, can email Fr David on: father.david@stjamespettswood.org, or phone the parish office on 01689 827100.

Rotas for this week: *Thank you for helping*

Weekend 8th/9th December

Cleaning the Church

S. Lams, L. Monsah, D. Generowicz, K. Salter

Wednesday Coffee

S. Barradell, M. Howell, B. D'Arcy

9th December 2018

| Mass | Saturday 6pm (Vigil) | Sunday 9.15am | Sunday 11am |
|------------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Welcomers | I. Garcia Finan | A. Delamain L. Delamain | Uniformed groups |
| Readers | P. Dabrowski J. Wedderspoon | R. Lim S. Cotta | Parade Mass |
| Ministers of Holy Communion | T. Babb B. Babb P. Cantopher J. Gribben J. Bajorek | B. Cotta W. David B. D'Arcy T. Forde M. Howell | V. Terry N. Longhurst T. Williard R. Mwansa K. Chan |
| Bar | P. Troy, M. Wright | | |
| Coffee | | G. Brookes D. Brookes | S Ingle A. Huntingdon |
| Altar Servers | tbc | tbc | tbc |
| Tellers | J. Cosgrave, F. Simon | | |