

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 £1,357. Mass attendance was 739.	
22nd December (Saturday Vigil)	Fourth Sunday of Advent 6pm Seamus & the O'Mahony Family (Confirmation Catechists & Confirmandi)
Sunday 23rd December	9.15am KSC Widows (L Thomas) 11am Terence Quinlan RIP (E Quinlan)
Monday 24th December	Feria 6pm People of the Parish 11.30 People of the Parish
Tuesday 25th December	The Nativity of the Lord 9.15am People of the Parish 11am People of the Parish
Wednesday 26th December	Saint Stephen 9.30am Michael Ingrams RIP (M Haisell) 10.45 Eucharist Adoration
Thursday 27th December	Saint John 9.30am David Forde RIP (H&T Forde)
Friday 28th December	The Holy Innocents 9.30am Thanks to the Holy Spirit
29nd December (Saturday Vigil)	The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph 6pm Jessie DeClozets RIP (Jeanne Craen) David Archer RIP (Dudley Family)
Sunday 30th December	9.15am People of the Parish 11am Carmela & Gerardo Battista RIP (Rosa Del Guercio)
Monday 31st December	Seventh day within the Octave of the Nativity of the Lord 9.30am World Peace (CWL)
Tuesday 1st January	Mary, The Holy Mother Of God 9.30am Maurice G Ingledew RIP (M Ingledew)

Wednesday 2nd January	Saint Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen 9.30am Deceased members of the Butler family (Foundation)
Thursday 3rd January	Feria of Christmas Time 9.30am Lydia Jagger RIP (S Jagger)
Friday 4th January	Feria of Christmas Time 9.30am Thanks to St Jude 7.30pm Eucharist Adoration
5th January (Saturday Vigil)	The Epiphany of the Lord 6pm People of the Parish
Sunday 6th January	9.15am Dr Margaret E Ledger (Foundation) 11am Elizabeth Horner RIP (Horner Family)

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.

Christmas Masses

Christmas Eve 6pm Christmas Eve Mass

Christmas Eve 11.30pm Carols & Midnight Mass

Christmas Day 9.15am Family Mass
11am Mass

Christmas Offerings

The collection at the Masses over the Christmas period are your personal offerings for your Parish Priest.

Fr David writes

This year, I feel that Advent has flown by very quickly. Coming back from a highly charged spiritual experience in the Holy Land, it took me some time to engage with the preparations for Christmas. I needed to take some breath to digest the experience, however the preparations for Christmas and simultaneously the renovation of the Presbytery took centre stage. The mystics, especially St Theresa of Avila, always envisaged the soul as a Mansion. And some psychologists find a direct connection between what is happening in the soul and our physical homes. My home became a metaphor for me

this year of my soul's desire for encountering Christ amidst the turmoil of transformation. Before there is order, there has to be chaos. I feel that we are ill-equipped to live in chaos. We prefer to have everything in order – everything under control. We are not good at the in-between stages. And yet what kept me going through the external turmoil of my home was the promise of a house in transformation. The promise of some normality at the end of the journey. Another aspect of resource in this process was the goodness of so many people wanting to make things nice for me. I will be always ever grateful for your love and concern.

The time just before Christmas is characterized by our desire for connection and relationship with one another. Christmas, I feel, brings the best in humanity. For a while people seem to become friendlier and want to help others especially those who are less fortunate than them. At Christmas, I experience people going out of their way in order to see smiles on other people's faces. Christmas is also a time where people acknowledge their blessings too and so want to make other people happier. Some of you are preparing homes to receive guests, others are preparing meals, and many are doing both. Still others are setting out on their travels to see loved ones during these holy days. We are really busy with so many tasks and charities. Amidst all of these activities are people who this year are dreading Christmas. These are the people who do not have the energy or even the will to celebrate because for the first time in their lives, a loved one is not with them this year. Some of us, in our parish are going through the pain of loss this Christmas. So although it is right to celebrate the gift of life during this time, we need to be sensitive and remember this reality too.

In the beautiful gospel today we might imagine Mary and Elizabeth sharing these feelings in this reading from Luke. Our gospel today begins with a journey. Mary, having heard from the angel Gabriel of Elizabeth's pregnancy, sets out to visit her kinswoman. This was no small expedition. Tradition holds that Zechariah and Elizabeth lived in Ain Karim, a little town in the hill country of Judea about five miles from Jerusalem. The Journey from Nazareth was nearly one hundred miles; travelling on foot or by caravan, it would have taken three to five days. We were blessed to have visited Ain Karim on our pilgrimage some weeks ago. It is not easy to get to however, I consider the place as one of my own personal highlights in the sense of the beauty of the landscape and also the sense of spirituality of the site. Not only did Mary believe the news Gabriel had brought her, but she puts this faith into action immediately travelling in haste to be close to Elizabeth and to share the good news that invites us all to "leap for joy". Mary visits her cousin and Elizabeth has certainly been preparing for her guest. The greeting and the encounter are joyful, and the evangelist Luke tells us that Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. For Luke the evangelist, the Holy Spirit is not only present and active in Jesus' ministry but before Jesus was born, in preparation for it.

This gospel passage calls to mind for us how important human relationships are. Amidst all the travel, preparation, meals and general business, the bonds of human love bind us together. When we consider the Christmas season, with its pressing demands, let us recall the ultimate reason for our cares and concerns. We have in mind those we love and care for. Ultimately that is what we yearn for and what gives us meaning in our lives. The richness of human relationships. Like Mary let us be more sensitive to the needs of those within our families who are feeling lonely, bereft and down. Let us invite, but at the same time be ready for a refusal of our offers. Let us try not to take this rejection personally. Let us give the other the option of acceptance and refusal. We cannot save the other from their pain however we can help them to realise that they can be themselves with us. They don't need to pretend. Encounters during Christmas season are multi-layered. Let us create places within our homes that allow others to be who they are. Let us take this opportunity this year to celebrate life – life as it is with all that gives us joy and all that which burdens us. My desire is that this Christmas would be a time where real love prevails. Merry Christmas to you and your families. Let us pray and care for one another.

"Drop-In" Evening Surgeries – The next drop in surgery with Fr David will be on **Tuesday 22nd January 2019 between 5pm-7pm**. No appointment needed.

Second Collection –The next second collection will be on Sunday 6th January and is for The Society for the Protection of Unborn Children (SPUC).

Christmas Day Lunch

Fr David has asked that all those who have indicated to him that they would like to join him for lunch on Christmas Day confirm their attendance to him personally, by email or voicemail by this Sunday, 23rd December at the latest. At the same time could you please advise if you need a lift to the Community Centre. We would need your address & contact details of anyone needing a lift.

Christmas

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.

Help Sofia (Twinkle Toes) raise money for Great Ormond Street Hospital...

Sofia Cotta, Stuart & his daughter Zoe will be kick starting their new year (13th Jan) with a cool 20km 'winter walk' across the streets & bridges of London, along with 2000 others to raise money for GOSH. Zoe (now 14 years old) has been an in and out patient of GOSH since she was born with a rare condition called Goldenhar, and so very keen now that she's able, to give something back. Please help us support them on this chilly experience! Sponsorship form for their Team: "Twinkle Toes" will be at the back of church.

Evangelisation Pillar

Confirmation 2019

The third preparation session is on Monday 7th January from 7.00pm-8.30pm.

A DATE FOR YOUR 2019 DIARY

From **10th to 16th March** next year we are holding another **Week of Accompanied Prayer**. Previously, such Weeks have been really appreciated.

Details of the Week will be published in the New Year, but in the meantime, you are invited to **note the Week in your 2019 diary**.

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 4th January. All are welcome for all or part of this time of Adoration ending with Benediction.**

Pilgrimage/Cultural tour to Oberammergau & Salzburg – 25th May to 30th May 2020

We are organising a pilgrimage/ culture tour to Oberammergau for May 2020. This is the famous Passion play that is performed every 10 years. We need to establish the level of interest and potential numbers so please contact the parish office if you are interested.

Social Pillar

New Year's Eve Party

Tickets are now available at the back of church for the New Year's Eve Party. Take one to reserve your place and pay on the night. Looking forward to another wonderful parish event.

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.

Monday Craft Club

The next Craft club will be on Monday 14th January 2019.

Film Night

Thank you to all those who challenged the miserable weather to attend our Film Night last Saturday evening. Although we were small in number, donations raised amounted to a very generous £75 for the homeless charity, The Passage. Our next Film Night will be at 7.30 pm on Saturday, 12 January. We will be showing the 2017 Film "Phantom Thread", starring Daniel Day-Lewis. Running time is 2 hours, 10 minutes. The Storyline is as follows: "Set in the glamour of 1950s post-war London, renowned dressmaker Reynolds Woodcock (Daniel Day-Lewis) and his sister Cyril (Lesley Manville) are at the center of British fashion, dressing royalty, movie stars, heiresses, socialites, debutants, and dames with the distinct style of The House of Woodcock. Women come and go through Woodcock's life, providing the confirmed bachelor with inspiration and companionship, until he comes across a young, strong-willed woman, Alma (Vicky Krieps), who soon becomes a fixture in his life as his muse and lover. Once controlled and planned, he finds his carefully tailored life disrupted by love."

Firm Believers - starting again on Tuesday, 8th January.

St James' Inter-Church Fun Fitness class is open to all ages, abilities and fitness levels.

Tuesday nights in our Community Centre led by Jo Gallier, a local fitness instructor.

Term time only, at 7pm for 45 minutes with the option of a cuppa and a chat afterwards!

Classes are a mixture of aerobics, pilates with some core and stretch working, and dance.

Improves all aspects of fitness, flexibility, muscle strength, toning and general well-being.

It's just £5 a time, no need to book, just turn up ! All welcome.

Liturgy Pillar

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

Children's Liturgy will not be on until the New Year. At the 9.15 Christmas Day Mass please feel free to dress your child as a shepherd or an angel. Keep practising Away in a Manger that we have been trying to learn! You will get a chance to sing this during the Mass. We wish all the children a happy, healthy & holy Christmas!

Justice & Peace

Foodbank donations

The response of many generous parishioners, to the appeal for Christmas food and goodies, has been amazing. For the last three weeks our collections have been full of mince pies, puddings, assorted biscuits, cakes, chocolates, crisps and lots more. Special thanks to the person who donated £30 of Tesco vouchers. The Foodbank organisers have packed the hampers and now must revert to ordinary foods and household goods. So please use this list until further notice: cold meat, cooking sauce, tinned potatoes, custard, rice pudding, male and female razors, shaving foam, washing-up liquid, large nappies (size 5 and 6), and shampoo. J&P Group.

Message from CAFOD

Lend Your Voice to help our global family

Do you enjoy inspiring people by giving talks and presentations or would you like to learn? Are you free two weekends a year to inspire others with stories of CAFOD's work with people facing poverty and injustice? How about joining our team of CAFOD volunteer speakers across Southwark Archdiocese? Your passion and skills will bring CAFOD's work to life and get more people involved in making the world a fairer place. For more information and to book on our next training day on Saturday 16 February in Waterloo, please email southwark@cafod.org.uk or call 020 8466 9901.

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.

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 29th/30th December

Cleaning the Church

O Clutton, M Mathews, R Blanco, R Mwansa, D Delf

Wednesday Coffee

30th December 2018

Mass	Saturday 6pm (Vigil)	Sunday 9.15am	Sunday 11am
Welcomers	A Huntington	D Hairs C Hairs	M Cooper K Edwards
Readers	J Bajorek M O'Mahony	R Lim S Cotta	Z Bajorek R Del Guercio
Ministers of Holy Communion	J Bajorek H Rotheron M Cahill C Cahill C Wakefield	D Hairs B Cotta T Forde M Howell S Cotta	R Del Guercio Z Bajorek T Troy A Bunnage P Murray
Bar			A Barradell M Horner
Coffee		L Lynch S Barradell	M Harrington K Walsh
Altar Servers	Roisin Fintan Peter Nathan Jude	Zoe Daniella	Emily Valentino
Tellers	P Cosgrave, P Dabrowski		

Rotas for this week: *Thank you for helping*

Weekend 5th/6th January

Cleaning the Church

Uniformed Groups / CWL

Wednesday Coffee 9th Jan 19

Sheila Barradell & M Howell

6th January 2019

Mass	Saturday 6pm (Vigil)	Sunday 9.15am	Sunday 11am
Welcomers	J Callinan	A & L Delamain	G Whitley M Ingledew
Readers	K Salter K Lams	B Cotta C D'Souza	N D'Silva R Morrison
Ministers of Holy Communion	J Callinan R Wright T Babb	K Chan A Ward T Blythe	V Terry N Longhurst R Mwansa

	B Babb P Driscoll	A Delamain B Cotta	K Evans A Evans
Bar			M Smith N Longhurst
Coffee		D Delf F Curran E Aletta	S Ingle A Huntington
Altar Servers	Roisin Fintan Peter Dom Annie Jude	Zoe Lydia Jamie	Emily Francis
Tellers	C Delf, M Troy		