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PARISH WEBSITE
www.englishmartyrsrccstrood.org

DONATIONS

Nat West Bank
Sort code: 60-21-02
Account number: 55082904
Account Name: RCAS Strood

*This parish is part of the RCAOS registered
Charity Number 1173050*

Thank you for your kindness and generosity.

ENGLISH MARTYRS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Headmistress Ms Catherine Thacker
Frindsbury Road, Strood
ME2 4JA
01634 718964

A member of Kent Catholic Schools Partnership

LAST WEEK 253

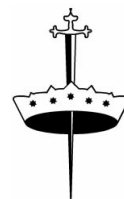
ATTENDANCE WEEKLY COLLECTION

GIFT AID £404.44
NON-GIFT AID £188.01

TOTAL £592.45



ENGLISH MARTYRS' STROOD



DECEMBER
The Immaculate Conception

✠ HOLY MASS FOR THE WEEK 14TH DECEMBER 2025
Missal: Prayers and readings PG. 13

SUNDAY 14TH DECEMBER THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

8.30am Said mass
10.30am Sung mass

*People of the Parish
Rose Barrington RIP*

MONDAY 15TH FERIA

No public mass today
6.00pm Carol Service by English Martyr's pupils

TUESDAY 16TH FERIA

9.30am Holy Mass
10.00am Holy Rosary

Josephine Maher RIP

WEDNESDAY 17TH FERIA

9.30am Holy Mass
10.00am Holy Rosary with St Joseph's Litany

Mrs Moya Collis RIP

THURSDAY 18TH DECEMBER FERIA

9.30am Holy Mass
10.00am-11.00am Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament & Holy Rosary

Graham Godfrey RIP

FRIDAY 19TH DECEMBER FERIA

9.30am Holy Mass
5.30pm Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament & Confessions
6.30pm Holy Mass for Young People

For all the children in the Parish

SATURDAY 20TH DECEMBER FERIA

9.30am Holy Mass
10.00am Exposition
6.00pm Vigil Mass

Wieslaw Lipinski RIP

People of the Parish

SUNDAY 21ST DECEMBER FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

8.30am Said mass
10.30am Sung mass

*Vocations of the Priests
Rev Antonio Cannavina RIP*

Confessions	Fridays: 5.30 pm–6.30 pm, Saturdays: 10.15 am–10.45 am First Friday of the Month: 10.00 am–12.00 noon
Adoration	Thursdays: 10.00 am–11.00 am, Fridays: 5.30 pm–6.30 pm Saturdays: 10.00 am–12.00 noon, First Friday of the Month: 10.00 am–12.00 noon
Parish groups (held in the John Fisher Room unless otherwise stated)	
Monday	Mothers Prayers (monthly) at 7pm
Tuesday	Legion of Mary at 7 pm
Wednesday	Coffee Club after morning mass
Thursday	Padre Pio Prayer Group first Thursday at 7 pm
Friday	Mother and toddler's group at 9am (term time) Parish Hall Youth Club – first Friday of the month at 6.15 pm (term time)
Saturday	Knights of St Columba, first Saturday of the month at 7 pm
Sunday	Tea and Coffee first Sunday at 11.30 am in the Parish Hall

Joy on the Journey: Guadalupe and Gaudete

This weekend, we recall that on Friday we celebrated the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Her message continues to speak to us as we prepare our hearts for Christmas. We now come to the Third Sunday of Advent — Gaudete Sunday — the Sunday of rejoicing, reminding us that the Lord is near.

In 1531, Our Lady appeared to Saint Juan Diego, a poor and humble man, at a time when child sacrifice still existed. Many were hesitant to believe him, including the local bishop. Our Lady came gently and patiently, appearing as a pregnant woman, reminding the world of the dignity of the unborn, even unborn pagan children, and revealing herself as Mother of all humanity.

Her message still echoes today in the pro-life mission of our parish and the wider Church — to protect life, to stand with the vulnerable, and to witness to love rather than fear or violence. She walks patiently with those who struggle to believe, just as she did with the bishop and the people of her time.

As we now look towards Gaudete Sunday, the Gospel presents us with John the Baptist in prison. This may seem surprising on a Sunday of joy. John, who boldly preached the coming of the Messiah, now finds himself unsure. The Jesus he hears about — gentle, merciful, close to sinners — does not fully match the strong message of judgment he had proclaimed. So John asks, *“Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?”*

This question is deeply human. There are moments in our own lives when faith feels uncertain, when things are not as we expected, when life feels messy and out of order — much like the manger where Jesus chose to be born.

Yet John does the right thing: he turns to Jesus. And Jesus responds not with anger, but with reassurance, ending with the words: *“Blessed is the one who is not offended by me.”*

This is the heart of Gaudete Sunday. Our joy does not come from having everything clear or under control. It comes from trusting that the Lord is near, even in uncertainty.

As we continue our Advent journey, guided by Our Lady of Guadalupe, we learn how to wait with hope — protecting life, walking patiently with one another, and opening our hearts to the coming of Christ.

Maranatha — Come, Lord Jesus.

You are the source of our true joy.

Christmas Preparation: Adoration, Confessions & Mass Times

As we prepare our hearts to welcome the Lord at Christmas, parishioners are warmly invited to take time for prayer and reconciliation.

Christmas Preparation: Adoration & Confessions

Monday 22 – Wednesday 24 December

Morning:

- 10.00 am – 12.00 noon

Evening:

- 5.00 pm – 7.00 pm

(Monday & Tuesday only — no evening session on Wednesday 24 December)

Christmas Mass Times

Christmas Eve – Tuesday 24 December

- 6.00 pm
- 9.30 pm

The Nativity of the Lord – Wednesday 25 December

- 8.30 am
- 10.30 am

“Prepare the way of the Lord.”

All are very welcome.

Tea and coffee

Tea and coffee is now held every Sunday after the 10.30am mass in the parish Hall. Please join us to get to know your brother and sister parishioners.

Mothers Prayer group

This Tuesday, 16th Dec., Mothers Prayer group will meet at 7 pm in the church. **Church cleaning at 6pm.** Any help is highly appreciated.

Wintertime 2026: Friday 2nd – Sunday 4th January.

Cost £139: For aged 11 – 15. This initiative is an offshoot of Summertime 2025. **For altars servers and those who attend Sunday mass regularly aged 11 -15.** See poster for details. **Names need to be known by 15th December, and forms received by Fr. Stephen Boyle by the 20th December.** A coach will be put on from St. Anselm's Dartford at a cost of £20 return.

A Defibrillator for our parish

Thanks very much to everyone who baked, helped and contributed to the defibrillator fund after 10.30 Mass last Sunday, cash contributions on the day totalled **£162.50 which is a great result.**

Further donations in cash, cheque or by bank transfer would be very welcome over the coming weeks and months please mark any contribution 'Defibrillator Fund'

Our defibrillator has been ordered and there will be further information on training etc. in future newsletters.

All parishioners are most warmly invited to **our Parish Christmas Party.** We will have Christmas carol

presentation, Quizzes, Christmas games, Food (Buffet) Dance, and a wonderful opportunity to socialise with fellow parishioners.

We will celebrate in the **Parish Hall at 7pm till late on the Friday 19th December 2025.** Let's dress up to make the night even more special.

Grand Christmas Raffle tickets

Our Grand Christmas Raffle tickets – last chance to buy them! You can find them in the envelopes in the porches.

Great prizes for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd prize and many of the other fantastic prizes to win too.

Please return them by this Monday 15th December. Draw on Sunday 21st December at 12noon during special tea and coffee in the Parish Hall.

We are welcome donations of new, unwanted gifts for our lottery. **Thank you for supporting our Church!**

Message from English Martyrs' RC Primary School

I would like to invite you all to our Key Stage Two Carol Service, which will take place in the Church **on Monday, 15th December at 6 pm.** This special event will feature our pupils sharing the joy of the season through song and celebration. I would also like to take this opportunity to extend warm wishes for a happy and blessed Christmas from all of us at school.

C Thacker (Headteacher)

Our sick parishioners and friends: Barbara Borthwick, John Paul Stoke, Betty Jones, Cathrin La Page, Lauren Allan, Tony Carroll, Sylvia Kemp, Billy Thomas, Marie Fassioms, Samantha Candeggi-D'Alonzo, Joe-Joe Dockrell, Carol Masey, Eileen Wells, Jenson Lambeth, Neo Taylor, Kathy Mogg, Anna Gawlik, Joanna Tidmarsh, Shane McNeelan, Helen and Arthur Annal, Claire Baron, Rod Black, Michael New, Michael (Mick) Griffin, Adam Luck. Elliott King.

Of your charity – please pray for those whose anniversaries occur at this time: Catherine Copling, Adam Palfrey, John Craven, Pauline Carter, Ronald Curley, James Allison, Alma Voight, Joseph Richards, Savitin Banerjee, Fredrick Smith, Maurice O'Kane, John Ogilvie, Catherine Larkin, Annie Still, Letizia Boni, Ivy Scharneck, Joan Settle, Mary Pereira, Joseph Monaghan, Mary Ellis, Fr Francis Corley, Daniel Lawlor, Mary Noonan.