

PRESBYTERY
37 Frindsbury Road,
Strood, ME2 4JA
01634717582

PARISH PRIEST
Fr Mebrate Desalegn
mebratedesalegn@rcaos.org.uk
Emergency only: 073 790 51 749

SYRO-MALABAR CHAPLAIN
Fr Shinoj Francis
shinojfrancis@rcaos.org.uk

PARISH DEACON
Rev. John Letley
07958 677299

PARISH SISTER
Sr. Augustine Day
01474 569565

PARISH SECRETARY
Anna West
strood@rcaos.org.uk

SAFEGUARDING
Kate Taylor
Stroodsg4@safeguardrcaos.org.uk
Anthea Kwaw
stroodsg3@safeguardrcaos.org.uk
Barbara Asaam
stroodsg2@safeguardrcaos.org.uk

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

ATTENDANCE
308

WEEKLY COLLECTION
GIFT AID £219.00
NON-GIFT AID £431.49

TOTAL £650.49



ENGLISH MARTYRS' STROOD



JANUARY
The Holy Name and Childhood of Jesus

✠ HOLY MASS FOR THE WEEK 4TH JANUARY 2026
Missal: Prayers and readings PG. 56

SUNDAY 4TH

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY

8.30am Said mass
10.30am Sung mass

*People of the Parish
Estaban Rojas and Rosa Villamizar RIP*

MONDAY 5TH

FERIA OF CHRISTMAS TIME

No public mass today

TUESDAY 6TH

NF. THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

9.30am Holy Mass
7.00pm Holy Mass

*Baby William Manfe
Vacation of the Priests*

WEDNESDAY 7th

SAINT RAYMOND OF PENYAFORT

9.30am Holy Mass

Shane McNeelan RIP

THURSDAY 8TH

FERIA OF CHRISTMAS TIME

9.30am Holy Mass
10.00am–11.00am Adoration

For all the children in our Parish

FRIDAY 9TH

FERIA OF CHRISTMAS TIME

9.30am Holy Mass
5.30pm Adoration
6.30pm Holy Mass

Holy Souls

*For the whole parish community, with a special
invitation to young people and their families*

SATURDAY 10TH

FERIA OF CHRISTMAS TIME

9.30am Holy Mass
10.00am–12noon Adoration
6.00pm Vigil Mass

For our Altar servers

Arthur and Kathleen Pearl RIP

SUNDAY 11^T

THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

8.30am Said mass
10.30am Sung mass

*People of the Parish
Mrs Agnes Seisay 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 every Sunday at 11.30 am in the Parish Hall

First Holy Communion Preparation

This morning I met with our parishioner and volunteer catechist, Clare Di Fede, to begin planning the First Holy Communion programme, which will start on Thursday, 8 January 2026 at 6.00 pm. Before the classes begin, and until the end of Advent, I am very happy to meet with parents and their children who are preparing for First Holy Communion.

When meeting with families, I emphasised the importance of their involvement in this journey of faith. As a parish, we are glad to organise catechetical sessions and times of prayer in church, but preparation for First Holy Communion is a shared responsibility. At Baptism, children are entrusted to their parents and godparents, and this continues as they prepare for the sacraments. Even as children grow in understanding, they still rely greatly on the adults who care for them for guidance, encouragement, and example.

Just as families support their children in school and daily activities, they also play a vital role in nurturing faith at home—especially through prayer and by practising the fundamental prayers together. As children prepare for First Holy Communion, families are gently invited to prepare themselves too, particularly through prayer, so as to better understand and support what their children are learning. This is not always easy, and every family's situation is different, but the Church walks alongside families with patience, understanding, and prayer.

During this Christmas season and throughout January, we are reminded of the Holy Name and the childhood of Jesus. The name of Jesus was given with love and reverence, and Jesus himself grew quietly within his family in Nazareth. As children prepare for First Holy Communion, we pray that they may grow in understanding, learning to call upon the holy names of Jesus and Mary with respect, trust, and devotion, both in church and at home.

We are also reminded that God's work is guided by the Holy Spirit. Mary conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit; Elizabeth recognised God's presence through the Spirit; Simeon and Anna were inspired to welcome Christ in the Temple; and the Magi were led from afar by wisdom from above. These moments remind us that we, too, are guided by the Holy Spirit as a parish community.

Through Baptism, we are temples of the Holy Spirit. May the Lord help us to live with that dignity, bringing our worries, imperfections, and wounds to Jesus, the Divine Physician.

Family life today can be complex and challenging, but when families and the parish work together, children are strengthened in faith. Faith grows patiently, step by step, just as Jesus grew in wisdom and grace.

Let us keep our First Holy Communion children and their families in our prayers.

Fr Mebrate

Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord – Holy Day of Obligation

On Tuesday, 6 January, 2026, we celebrate the Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord.

Masses will be celebrated at 9.30 am (morning) and 7.00 pm (evening).

All are warmly welcome.

Friday Evening Adoration and Mass

Every Friday evening, there will be Eucharistic Adoration at 5.30 pm, followed by Mass at 6.30 pm.

This is a special opportunity for children, students, and families who may find it difficult to attend weekday Masses.

First Holy Communion Classes

Children's First Holy Communion classes will begin on Thursday, 8 January 2026, at 6.00 pm.

Parents are kindly asked to ensure that children arrive at least 10 minutes early.

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.

The Parish New Year's Lunch

The Parish New Year's Lunch for 2026 will be held on **Sunday 18th January starts at 1pm to 4pm at English Martyrs Parish Hall**. There will be a 4-course dinner, music, wine and sherry plus a raffle, what a great way to start the New Year. Just come along and enjoy yourselves. **There will be a list in the church porch shortly to put your names on to give us an idea how many to cater for.**

Volunteers needed

Mary's Meals is looking for volunteers. Could you spare a few hours during the year to help? We are looking for parish reps, volunteer speakers (training and support provided!) and volunteers who can help at events. We are very much a volunteer-led movement, so any little you can offer will make a huge difference to the children we serve in some of the world's poorest communities. Please contact **Roy Peachey** (roy.peachey@marysmeals.org or **07593 447297**) if you can help. To find out more about Mary's Meals, please visit marysmeals.org.uk. Thank you for your support!

Summer Theatre Trip 29 July 2026

We have secured a block booking of 34 tickets to see a stage performance of **Jesus Christ Superstar** showing for a limited period at the **London Palladium (evening performance)**. Travel will be by coach; recommended age is 10 years and over. **Ticket price is £55 payable on reservation (by 31 January)** Seats are in the Dress Circle rows G, H and I.

Return coach fare will be approx. £20 (payable in July)

Please use sign-up sheets in both porches and please commit early to avoid disappointment as seats will be offered to other parishes in the Deanery from February if we do not fill the booking from our own parish.

Christmas Raffle Draw 2025

Thank you for participating in our Christmas raffle! We are grateful for your contribution.

Winners can view the results in the porches or contact the church office for prize collection.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

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, 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: Debra Cordingley, Margaret Wagstaff, Patrick Lennon, Shirley Redmond, Monica Jamieson, James Connor, Angela Keogh, Terence Bonser, Margaret King, Brian Lyons, Cecil Babington, Brian O'Dolan, Stuart Walsh, Cornelius Harrigan, Joseph Beale, William Maxwell, Ellen Herlihy, Alice Thompson, Annie Mateer, Francis Carter, Denis Lenihan, Terence Musgrave, Teresa McDowell, Joseph Giblin, Jane Alcock, Michael Ahern.