

PRESBYTERY
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(Mobile number for urgent pastoral needs,
including Anointing of the Sick and Holy
Communion)

PARISH PRIEST

Fr Mebrate Desalegn
mebratedesalegn@rcaos.org.uk

SYRO-MALABAR CHAPLAIN

Fr Shinoj Francis
shinojfrancis@rcaos.org.uk

PARISH DEACON

Rev. John Letley
07958 677299

PARISH SISTER

Sr. Augustine Day
01474 569565

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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

**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
361**

WEEKLY COLLECTION

GIFT AID £806.01
NON-GIFT AID £550.46

TOTAL £1356.47

DIRECT DEBIT IN JANUARY

GIFT AID £710
NON-GIFT AID £395

TOTAL £1105.00



ENGLISH MARTYRS' STROOD



FEBRUARY
The Holy Family

✠ HOLY MASS FOR THE WEEK 8TH FEBRUARY 2026
Missal: Prayers and readings PG. 92

**SUNDAY 8TH
FIFTH SUNDAY**

8.30am Said mass

People of the Parish

10.30am Sung mass

Bonifacio and Tania Rose da Silva

**MONDAY 9TH
FERIA**

No public mass today

**TUESDAY 10TH
SAINT SCHOLASTICA**

9.30am Holy Mass

Margaret Roseline Boyle RIP

**WEDNESDAY 11TH
OUR LADY OF LOURDES**

9.30am Holy Mass

Bernadette Foster intentions

**THURSDAY 12TH
FERIA**

9.30am Holy Mass
10.00am–11.00am Adoration

Sally Malone RIP

**FRIDAY 13TH
FERIA**

9.30am Holy Mass
Afternoon Syro-Malabar retreat

Raymond Pettitt RIP

**SATURDAY 14TH
SAINTS CYRIL**

9.30am Holy Mass
10.00am–12noon Adoration
6.00pm Vigil Mass (Syro-Malabar community joining us)

Jean Mabel Jarman RIP

*Arthur and Kathleen Pearl
RIP*

**SUNDAY 15TH
SIXTH SUNDAY**

8.30am Said mass

People of the Parish

10.30am Sung mass

Bogdan Mysiak 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 6.30 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

Working on Our Imperfections as Lent Approaches

As the Word of God shapes us daily, the weekday readings of the past week and the saints we have celebrated offer us a timely invitation to pause and reflect, especially as Lent approaches. They remind us of a consoling and challenging truth: God does not call the perfect, but calls imperfect people and patiently leads them through mercy, repentance, and faith.

This is clearly seen in the life of King David. David was a man of deep faith and courage, yet he also sinned grievously. He committed adultery and arranged the killing of Uriah the Hittite. At another moment, he trusted more in himself and in the number of his armies than in God. These choices brought serious consequences. Yet when David recognised his sin, he did not turn away from God. Instead, he repented and placed himself once again in the Lord's hands.

When David was offered three possible punishments, he chose to fall into the hands of God, trusting divine mercy rather than human cruelty. Through this, we learn a vital lesson: God's mercy is greater than our sins, and true strength lies not in power, numbers, or self-reliance, but in humble trust in the Lord.

The Gospel readings echo this same call to faith. When Jesus returns to his hometown, familiarity becomes an obstacle. The people struggle to believe that God is at work among them, and Jesus is amazed at their lack of faith. It is not that Jesus lacks power, but that faith is required of us. Time and again in the Gospels, Jesus says, "*Your faith has saved you.*" When our faith meets God's desire to heal and save, remarkable things happen.

This call to faith is closely linked to courage and truth. During the past week, we also remember John the Baptist, who was beheaded by order of Herod because he spoke the truth and was not afraid of the consequences. Like David, John sought only to give glory to God. His witness reminds us that faithfulness is not always easy, but it always leads us closer to God.

The saints of these days reinforce the same message. Saint Agatha, a young woman of the third century, refused a forced marriage and remained faithful to God, even to martyrdom. Saint Paul Miki and his companions suffered public crucifixion for their faith in Christ. Their courage shows us that holiness is not about comfort or perfection, but about fidelity and trust in God.

As David approached the end of his life, he passed on wisdom shaped by experience to his son Solomon: "*Keep the mandate of the Lord.*" Having learned through failure and repentance, David knew that trusting God mattered more than armies or power. His life teaches us that while sin has consequences, repentance always opens the way to renewal.

David was far from perfect, yet he loved God with his whole heart. He gave thanks to God in victory, worshipped openly, and even danced before the Ark of the Covenant without fear of what others might think. His heart continually returned to the Lord — and that is what mattered most.

As Lent draws near, we are invited to recognise our own limitations and sins — not with fear, but with hope. Every saint has a past, and every sinner has a future. Holiness is not about never falling, but about trusting God's mercy enough to rise again and give him glory.

We are even more blessed than David. We have something greater than the Ark of the Covenant. In our churches, we have Jesus himself, truly present in the Blessed Sacrament. As we continue to be shaped by the Word of God and spend time before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, may the Lord give us the wisdom to recognise where we are in our lives and the grace to turn back to him with trusting hearts.

Masses this week

Friday 13: There will be **no usual Evening Mass or Adoration**, as the **Syro-Malabar community** will be using the church for their retreat.

Saturday 14: At the **Vigil Mass**, the **Syro-Malabar community** will join us as they conclude their retreat.

Mass for Ash **Wednesday 18th February** morning mass at 9.30 and evening mass at 7pm.

Prayers for the Dead:

We remember in our prayers **Rita Mary Gregory** and **Irelyn Jacobs**, who have recently died.

May their souls rest in peace, and may the Lord comfort and strengthen their families.

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: John Foster, William Avis, Bessie Avis, Murial Kinsella, Nuala Robinson, Brigit Collins, Victor Kirby, Margaret Boyle, Roy Glower, John Jo O'Kane, Martha Fitzpatrick, Luis Caruana, Albert Streten, John Warne, Phyllis Dodgston, Daniel Murphy, Mary Calnon, Mary Ford, John Say, Margaret Yeo, Myra Davies, Edward Burke-Masters, Sally Malone, Joseph Holmes, Isabel Thomas, John McGill, Jean Jarman.

Tea and coffee

This Sunday we will have **Tea and Coffee** after the **10:30am Mass in the Parish Hall**, please do join us and get to know your brother and sister parishioners.

40 Days For Life

Come and learn about the 40 Days For Life peaceful prayer vigil happening this year near the abortion centre in Brixton. With the recent release of the shocking statistics of 299,614 abortions in the UK in one year, let this be the year you come and join us. We will hear the Testimony of a **MOTHER WHO CHANGED HER MIND** and kept her baby because she met people praying outside an abortion clinic. She will be accompanied by her daughter.

TUESDAY 10th FEBRUARY at 6:30PM at Our Lady of the Rosary Church Hall, 364 Brixton Road London, SW9 0TH
<https://www.goodcounselnetwork.com> or contact **Jacinta on 07503 151419**

Pray the Romero Rosary at St George's Cathedral

Join Archbishop John Wilson and the Cathedral clergy in praying the rosary **every Friday at 5pm** throughout Lent. This is a beautiful opportunity to draw closer to the Lord Jesus in prayer. Archbishop John will personally lead the devotion at the National Shrine of St Oscar Romero at St George's Cathedral (SE1 6HR) on **Ash Wednesday (18th February) at 5pm**, and again on **Friday 6th and Friday 27th March**. On all other Fridays during Lent, the Cathedral clergy will lead the rosary, followed by the Stations of the Cross at 6pm. Let the rosary connect you to the Lord Jesus this Lenten season. Find out more at: rcaos.org.uk/romerorosary

Building a Better Marriage BABM

A one-day event in different deaneries. 9am - 4.30pm. It's a day where couples can **privately** explore their relationship more deeply and gain valuable insights into the communication and the call of the Church to be married. The one-day course is for married couples (whether married for one year, 60 years or anywhere in between). It seeks to help husbands and wives to make their marriages better and to improve their communication skills. **There is no group sharing and private information remains private to each couple. Booking is essential.**

7 March Tonbridge Parish (Tonbridge Wells Deanery)

23 May Wallington (Sutton Deanery)

Contact Carole on: mflkent@rcaos.org.uk

Clergy Support Fund Second Collection next weekend

The clergy in our Archdiocese have given us so much. They have been there for us in our happiest moments and comforted us when we have lost loved ones. Supporting priests in their retirement is one way to show your appreciation for all they have one for parishes. You make supporting our clergy in retirement possible, find out how to donate to the Clergy Support Fund at www.rcaos.org.uk/donate/CSF or scan QR code. You can also donate via telephone Mon-Fri 020 7960 2504 or by using the Clergy Support Fund envelopes available today at the back of Church. Please continue to keep our Priests in your prayers.

