

PRESBYTERY

37 Frindsbury Road,
Strood, ME2 4JA
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(Mobile number for urgent pastoral
needs, including Anointing of the Sick
and Holy Communion)

PARISH PRIEST

Fr Mebrate Desalegn

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shinojfrancis@rcaos.org.uk**PARISH DEACON**

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*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****316****WEEKLY COLLECTION**

GIFT AID £253.07

NON-GIFT AID £433.34

TOTAL £686.41**DIRECT DEBIT IN JULY**

GIFT AID £580.00

NON-GIFT AID £530.00

TOTAL £1'110.00

ENGLISH MARTYRS' STROOD

August

Immaculate Heart of Mary**✠ HOLY MASS FOR THE WEEK 16TH AUGUST 2026****Missal: Prayers and readings PG. 1054**SUNDAY 16TH**THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

8.30am Said Mass

10.30am Sung Mass

*People of the Parish
Anthony Grierson RIP*

MONDAY 17TH**FERIA**

No public Mass today

TUESDAY 18TH**FERIA**

9.00am-9.30am Adoration & Holy Rosary

9.30am Holy Mass

Bruce Bentley RIP

WEDNESDAY 19TH**FERIA**

9.00am-9.30am Adoration & Holy Rosary

9.30am Holy Mass

Bonny and Joel Da Silva

THURSDAY 20TH**SAINT BERNARD**

9.00am-9.30am Adoration & Holy Rosary

9.30am Holy Mass

Birthday intentions for Menyene and Menim

FRIDAY 21ST**SAINT PIUS X**

9.00am-9.30am Adoration & Holy Rosary

9.30am Holy Mass

(FRIDAY ABSTINENCE)

Mary Marchan RIP

SATURDAY 22ND**THE QUEENSHIP OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

9.30am Holy Mass

10.00am-12noon Adoration

6.00pm Vigil Mass

Holy Souls

Arthur and Kathleen Pearl RIP

SUNDAY 23RD**TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY**

8.30am Said Mass

10.30am Sung Mass

Bernadette Foster intentions

People of the Parish

Confessions

Saturdays: 10.15 am–10.45 am and 5.15pm -5.45pm

First Friday of the Month: 10.00 am–11 am

Adoration and Holy Rosary: From Tuesdays to Fridays 9.00am-9.30am

Saturdays: 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

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

THE ASSUMPTION: THE EXTRAORDINARY GLORY OF MARY

Everything the Church teaches about Mary begins with Jesus. We honour her because she is the Mother of the Lord, from whom Jesus received his human nature. She carried him in her womb, stood beneath his Cross and prayed with the apostles at Pentecost. It is fitting that Mary should share uniquely in his risen life. The Assumption was not a new belief created in 1950. Christians had celebrated Mary's entrance into heavenly glory for centuries. A solemn definition confirms the Church's faith and protects the faithful from confusion.

In 1950, Pope Pius XII solemnly proclaimed the Assumption as a dogma of faith. He declared that Mary, "having completed the course of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory." Europe had suffered two World Wars. The First left millions dead, injured and bereaved. The Second brought greater devastation: cities and towns were destroyed, millions were killed, and countless widows, orphans and grieving families were left without hope. Human dignity had been denied terribly. Amid this devastation and the growing influence of Communism, many were discouraged. The Church directed the world towards Mary, already glorified in heaven. The Assumption proclaimed that the whole person—body and soul—is created by God and destined for resurrection and glory.

Pope Pius XII did not define whether Mary died before her Assumption. Eastern Churches call the feast the *Dormition*, meaning "falling asleep," and commonly believe that Mary died peacefully. Western art often shows her being taken alive into heaven. The essential truth is the same: God took Mary, body and soul, into glory. Jesus ascended by his own divine power; Mary was assumed by God. The Assumption reveals what God's grace can accomplish in a faithful person.

This reminds us of our dependence upon God. We imagine ourselves independent because we can work and plan. Yet everything comes from God: our existence, abilities, strength and every breath. We also receive life, care, faith and love through others. At death, our dependence upon God becomes clear. We cannot save or raise ourselves; we must entrust ourselves to his mercy. This is why we ask in the Hail Mary: "Pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death," when we shall depend completely upon God.

The Assumption also helps us understand what we profess in the Creed: "I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come." Jesus rose from the dead in his glorified body and ascended into heaven. Mary, through God's unique grace, has also been taken into heaven, body and soul. The canonised saints already share in the joy of heaven. Nevertheless, they, like all the faithful departed, await the resurrection of the body. Jesus possesses his glorified body through his Resurrection, and Mary already shares, body and soul, in her Son's glory. The redeemed await this fulfilment at Christ's Second Coming.

Our bodies change with age and illness. After death, the body returns to the earth and may disappear entirely. We do not know how it will be restored, but nothing is impossible for God. Saint Paul teaches that the body "is sown perishable" but "is raised imperishable"; it "is sown in weakness" but "is raised in power" (1 Corinthians 15:42–43). When Christ comes again, the dead will rise, and our bodies will be transformed and reunited with our souls. The God who created us can raise us and give us glorified bodies.

This feast first reveals the unique glory bestowed upon the Blessed Virgin Mary, but it also gives hope to us. As our bodies become weaker through age or illness, as we approach the final stage of our earthly journey, or as we grieve for loved ones—as families in our parish and elsewhere are grieving—we are invited to renew our faith in the resurrection. When Jesus told Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life," and asked whether she believed, Martha answered, "Yes, Lord, I believe" (John 11:25–27). Her words can become our own. The Assumption invites us to consider whether we truly believe what we regularly profess in the Creed: "I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come."

Mary's glory does not separate her from us. She is a sign of comfort and hope for the whole Church. In her, we see our destination already fulfilled. Where Mary now is, God desires us to be. The Assumption assures us that suffering does not have the final word and that the grave is not our final destination. God's love is stronger than suffering and death. Today, let us recognise our dependence upon God and ask Mary to pray for us now and at the hour of our death. May she help us to live with faith, serve with love and walk in hope until, through God's mercy, we reach our true home in heaven.

Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen assumed into heaven, pray for us. Amen.

MASSES AND CLERGY COVER IN AUGUST

Fr Mebrate will be away from Thursday 6 August until Friday 28 August.

Fr Shinoj will celebrate the other weekday Masses, while **Fr Geoffrey Pointer** will assist with the weekend Masses. We thank all the priests for their generous support.

On Sunday 13 September, we will be delighted to welcome Canon Victor Darlington, who will celebrate the 10.30 am Mass as we begin our new pastoral year.

FORTHCOMING FUNERAL MASSES

As members of the Body of Christ, we share one another's joys and sorrows. When possible, attending a fellow parishioner's Funeral Mass is a beautiful sign of prayer and support. If we cannot attend, we can still remember the deceased and their family in our prayers.

- **Mrs. Margaret Jablonska:** Wednesday 2 September at 1.30 pm
- **Mr. Gerard Cosgrove:** Tuesday 8 September at 11.00 am

May their souls, and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

PILGRIM MADONNA

The parish Pilgrim Madonna statue is available to be welcomed to homes, for a period of one week to one month. This is a wonderful way to allow Our Blessed Mother to foster family prayer.

Please contact Chioma McMorro, text 0741112463 or email sylverlyn_chioma@yahoo.com.

MESSAGE FROM PASCHAL: Fr Donald Calloway MIC, of the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception, will visit St Paul's, Dover, on Tuesday 18 August. Anyone interested in travelling should contact Carmen or Paschal. If there is sufficient interest, a minibus may be arranged.

Interested in becoming Catholic? Seeking Baptism for your child? Enquiring about First Holy Communion or Confirmation? Please contact the parish:
strood@rcaos.org.uk

COURSE FOR MARRIED AND ENGAGED COUPLES

Growing in Faith Together is a four-session online course helping married couples enrich their relationship and engaged couples explore their faith together. Sessions take place via Zoom at 8.30 pm on 8, 15, 22 and 29 September. To book, contact Carole: mflkent@rcaos.org.uk.

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, Bonny (Bonifacio) Da Silva.

Of your charity – please pray for those whose anniversaries occur at this time: Pamela Smith, Rose Rose, Patrick Connolly, Anne Barnes, Mary Murphy, Michael Baxter, Michael O'Neil, Margaret O'Sullivan, Victoria Dane, Joyce Mulvaney, Ian Murpht, Patricia Sage, Bruce Bentley, Stella Toner, Patrick McMullan, James Brophy, Harold Collinson, Mary McCullough, Tim Collins, James Johnston, Peggy Mason, Norah Gilligan, Kathleen Moreton, Frederick Goldsack, Margaret Lavelle, George Griffin, Yvonne Olsen, David Farrell.