

PRESBYTERY

37 Frindsbury Road,
Strood, ME2 4JA
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07379051749

(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 SECRETARY

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strood@rcaos.org.uk

SAFEGUARDING

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Anthea Kwaw
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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

**ENGLISH MARTYRS
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

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

A member of Kent Catholic Schools Partnership

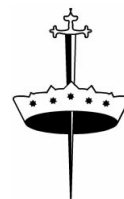
**LAST WEEK
ATTENDANCE
325**

WEEKLY COLLECTION
GIFT AID £256.00
NON-GIFT AID £685.58
TOTAL £941.58



ENGLISH MARTYRS' STROOD

August
Immaculate Heart of Mary



✠ HOLY MASS FOR THE WEEK 30TH AUGUST 2026
Missal: Prayers and readings PG. 392

SUNDAY 30TH

TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY

8.30am Said Mass
10.30am Sung Mass

*People of the Parish
Thomas and Catherine Fogarty RIP*

MONDAY 31ST

FERIA

No public Mass today

TUESDAY 1ST SEPTEMBER

FERIA

9.00am-9.30am Adoration & Holy Rosary
9.30am Holy Mass

Thanksgiving for Sr Augustine

WEDNESDAY 2ND SEPTEMBER

FERIA

1.30pm Funeral Mass *Margaret Jablonska*

THURSDAY 3RD SEPTEMBER

SAINT GREGORY THE GREAT, POPE

9.00am-9.30am Adoration & Holy Rosary
9.30am Holy Mass

Parishioners wellbeing and their intentions

FRIDAY 4TH SEPTEMBER

FERIA

9.00am-9.30am Adoration & Holy Rosary
9.30am Holy Mass
7.00pm Holy Mass

(FRIDAY ABSTINENCE)

*Mrs Salvaco Desa
Agnieszka Gredys Baradziej*

SATURDAY 5TH SEPTEMBER

THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

9.30am Holy Mass

Thanksgiving to God for all that he has done and is doing for me and my family

10.00am-12noon Adoration
6.00pm Vigil Mass

Andrew Johnson RIP

SUNDAY 6TH SEPTEMBER

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY

8.30am Said Mass
10.30am Sung Mass

Holy Souls
Sung Mass Pro Popolo: the opening of our new Parish Pastoral Year

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
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

SACRIFICE: LOSING IN ORDER TO GAIN

Recently, I had a chat with our parishioner Pascal about the defence of human life and developments concerning assisted suicide. He shared his concern about growing support for it and spoke about the work of the pro-life movement. His commitment reminds us that we must continue praying, speaking and witnessing to the sacredness of life, although results are not immediately visible. At times, we may ask: "Are our efforts making a difference? Why does God not intervene and put everything right?"

The prophet Jeremiah understood such discouragement. In today's first reading, he complains about his mission. He feels rejected, mocked and tired, and considers remaining silent. Yet God's Word is like a fire burning within him, and he cannot stop speaking in the Lord's name. Jeremiah does not see victory, but remains faithful to the mission God has given him.

The apostles struggle to understand God's way. Until now in Saint Matthew's Gospel, Jesus has revealed his identity through teaching and miracles. Last Sunday, Peter proclaimed: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Yet when Jesus says that he must go to Jerusalem, suffer, die and rise again, Peter cannot accept it. He wants a powerful and victorious Messiah. In effect, he says: "No, Lord, this suffering must not happen to you." Jesus rebukes him: "Get behind me, Satan!" These words show Peter where a disciple belongs. A disciple follows behind Jesus and learns from him. We cannot walk in front of the Lord and say: "This is my plan and what I want. Now you must follow me." Instead, we ask: "Lord, where are you leading me? What are you teaching me? Which choice will help me to love you and others more?"

Saint Matthew wrote for a Christian community facing opposition and persecution. Some were losing hope when people were losing their lives for their faith. Matthew reminded them of Jesus' words: "Deny yourself, take up your cross and follow me." Those who appeared to lose everything for Christ would gain eternal life. Jesus is not asking us to search for suffering or accept injustice passively. He asks us to remain faithful when doing what is right costs us something. We do not know what will happen tomorrow, but we know that Christ remains with us.

The world tells us to win, succeed and put ourselves first. Jesus teaches another way: sometimes we must lose in order to gain. Parents give up time, sleep and comfort to care for their children. Children may put aside their plans to care for elderly parents. We give our time to serve the parish, support someone struggling with faith, visit the sick or stand beside someone treated unjustly. We continue to pray and work for the sacredness of every human life, even when developments move in the opposite direction. What we give in love is never wasted.

Last Thursday and Friday, we celebrated Saint Monica and her son, Saint Augustine. Monica prayed faithfully for many years for Augustine's conversion. Although her tears and prayers may have seemed fruitless, she never lost hope. Augustine searched for happiness in success, honour and pleasure, but his heart remained restless. Through his mother's prayers and God's mercy, he left his old life and followed Christ. By letting go of worldly things, he gained something greater and became a blessing to the Church through his teaching and writings. His influence continues today, and Pope Leo XIV is an Augustinian.

Saint Monica and Saint Augustine remind us that every saint has a past and every sinner has a future. We must not lose hope in ourselves or another person. God may be working in ways we cannot yet see.

Jesus asks: "What will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his life?" Even death is not the final loss for those who belong to Christ. When we lose our body in death, we are called to eternal happiness with God in heaven.

The Holy Spirit guides us to follow Jesus when the road is difficult. Let us conclude with Saint Augustine's prayer:

***Breathe in me, O Holy Spirit, that my thoughts may all be holy.
Act in me, O Holy Spirit, that my work, too, may be holy. Draw
my heart, O Holy Spirit, that I may love only what is holy.
Strengthen me, O Holy Spirit, to defend all that is holy. Guard
me, then, O Holy Spirit, that I may always be holy. Amen.***

SECOND COLLECTION

Next weekend we will have second collection for the Education Service.

MASSES

HOLY MASSES

Sunday 6 September: The 10.30 am Mass will mark the opening of our new Parish Pastoral Year and conclude with brief Eucharistic Adoration and Benediction.

Sunday 13 September: We will welcome **Canon Victor Darlington**, who will celebrate the 10.30 am Mass.

FORTHCOMING FUNERAL MASSES

Please attend the Funeral Masses of our fellow parishioners whenever possible; otherwise, remember them in prayer on the day. **Margaret Jablonska:** Wednesday 2 September, 1.30 pm; **Gerard Cosgrove:** Tuesday 8 September, 11.00 am. May they rest in peace. Amen.

SYCAMORE – GROWING IN FAITH

For married and engaged couples

An online four-week course exploring faith, marriage and relationships. Sessions are on Zoom from **8.30–9.30pm** on **8, 15, 22 and 29 September 2026**.

To book or find out more, contact **Carole** at mflkent@rcaos.org.uk.

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 07411112463 or email sylverlyn_chioma@yahoo.com

READERS' MEETING

There will be a brief meeting for all current and new Readers on Saturday 5 September at 2.30 pm. Important changes and further training will be discussed. If you cannot attend, please contact Monica O'Brien on 07811

SACRAMENTAL ENQUIRIES

Interested in becoming a Catholic or preparing for Baptism, First Holy Communion or Confirmation? Please contact the parish at strood@rcaos.org.uk. **Application forms for these sacraments will be available from next weekend.**

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: John Griffin, William Thatcher, Maurice Leon, Maureen Drake, Catherine Bradley, Kathleen Kelly, Rosemary Walton, Annie Smith, Ethel Laver, Stanley Marsh, Michael Hunt, Patricia Plowman, Mary Fitzgerald, Ann Moran, Margaret Kavanagh, Oliver McGlynn, Helen Groves, Myra Carpenter, Hugh Talty, Peter Sleprownski, Trevor Swan.