

PRESBYTERY
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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
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

PARISH SECRETARY

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strood@rcaos.org.uk

SAFEGUARDING

Kate Taylor
Stroodsg4@safeguardrcaos.org.uk
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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
351

WEEKLY COLLECTION

GIFT AID £274.10
NON-GIFT AID £542.88
TOTAL £816.98

DIRECT DEBIT IN APRIL

GIFT AID £610.00
NON-GIFT AID £435.00
TOTAL £1045.00



**ENGLISH MARTYRS'
STROOD**

The Month of May is Mary - Dedicated to
the Mother of God



✠ HOLY MASS FOR THE WEEK 17TH MAY 2026
Missal: Prayers and readings PG.302

SUNDAY 17TH MAY

SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

8.30am Said Mass
10.10am Holy Rosary
10.30am Sung Mass

People of the Parish

Mary Kelly RIP

MONDAY 18TH

SAINT JOHN I

No public mass today

TUESDAY 19TH

SAINT DUNSTAN

9.30am Holy Mass
10.00am-10.30am Holy Rosary

Nora Louwers RIP

WEDNESDAY 20TH

SAINT BERNADINE OF SIENA

9.30am Holy Mass
10.00am-10.30am Holy Rosary

Thanksgiving Louise Weller

THURSDAY 21ST

SAINT CHRISTOPHER OF MAGALLANES

9.30am Holy Mass
10.00am-10.30 am Adoration and Holy Rosary

FRIDAY 22ND

SAINT RITA OF CASCIA

9.30am Holy Mass
10.00am-10.30 am Adoration and Holy Rosary
6.00pm Confirmation Mass

(FRIDAY ABSTINENCE)

Rebecca Maufe wellbeing

For all the confirmation candidates

SATURDAY 23RD

FERIA

9.30am Holy Mass
10.00am-12noon Adoration and Holy Rosary
6.00pm Vigil Mass

Padre Ignacio Rosero RIP

People of the Parish

SUNDAY 24TH MAY

PENTECOST SUNDAY

8.30am Said Mass
10.10am Holy Rosary
10.30am Sung Mass

Bernadette Foster intentions

Quintero Rojas O'Brien Family

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 10.00-10.30am

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

Our Lady of Fatima: Simple Hearts Close to Jesus and Mary

What I shared recently with our First Holy Communion children and Confirmation candidates was a reminder of the beautiful place Our Lady has in the life of the Church and in our own journey of faith.

The foundation of our devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary always leads us closer to Christ. The more the saints loved Jesus, the more they loved his Mother, because through Mary they contemplated the mystery of the Incarnation — the young woman chosen by God to become the Mother of the Saviour.

From the Cross, Jesus entrusted Mary to us when he said to Saint John: “Behold your mother.” Saint John welcomed her into his home, and from the very beginning we see Mary among the apostles and the first Christians, praying with them and strengthening them in faith. Even after the Ascension, her presence remained important for the early Church. She could speak of the Annunciation, the hidden life of Nazareth, and the birth of Jesus — memories that encouraged and strengthened the apostles as they preached the Gospel.

Later, after Our Lady was assumed into heaven, she continued throughout history to guide believers towards Christ. Her message is always the same: “Do whatever he tells you.” Like a loving mother, she also warns the world when people move far from God and calls us back to prayer, conversion, and trust in her Son.

This was seen especially at Fatima in 1917. During the First World War, Europe was suffering greatly. Pope Benedict XV had asked the whole Church to pray the Rosary for peace. At the same time, dangerous ideologies, especially atheistic communism beginning in Russia, were spreading and would later weaken and destroy the faith of many people across the world.

At Fatima, the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared not to famous leaders or important people, but to three simple shepherd children: Lúcia, Francisco, and Jacinta. God wanted to show that the prayers of humble people and children are precious before him.

The three children had learned their devotion from their parents. Even after eating their simple lunch in the fields — often only bread and water — they still made time to pray the Rosary together. What a beautiful example for us today.

It is a reminder for families to ask themselves: are we teaching our children how to pray? Are they learning devotion to Our Lady from us? Do they see us praying the Rosary at home?

Our Lady appeared to the children while they were praying the Rosary and asked them to continue praying for peace, for sinners, and for the world. She reminded the Church that even simple prayers offered with faith are powerful before God. The message of Fatima teaches us that our simple prayers have great value before God. Mary listens to the prayers of the Church, and she prays with us. Every Rosary, every Hail Mary, every small prayer said with faith is precious before heaven.

Another pope deeply devoted to Our Lady of Fatima was Pope John Paul II. After he was shot in Saint Peter’s Square in 1981, he believed that Our Lady of Fatima protected and saved his life. Later he travelled to Fatima to thank Mary and to pray there.

As our children prepare to receive Jesus in the Holy Eucharist and the Sacrament of Confirmation, may they learn from the example of the children of Fatima: to pray every day, to stay close to Jesus, to love Our Lady, and to trust that even simple hearts can become holy.

CONCLUSION OF MAY DEVOTION

On Sunday, 31 May at 6.30 pm, we will conclude our May devotion with the Holy Rosary, Adoration, Benediction, and a simple Marian procession inside the church. All parishioners are warmly invited to join us in prayer through the intercession of Our Lady.

GRATITUDE FOR SISTER AUGUSTINE

From Pentecost onwards, Sister Augustine will retire from regular parish service after many years of faithful dedication to our parish community. A **Thanksgiving Mass will take place on Sunday, 12 July at 11.00 am**, celebrated by Bishop Paul Hendricks. Further details and arrangements for the celebration will be shared in the coming weeks. Please keep Sister Augustine in your prayers with gratitude and affection.

PENTECOST SUNDAY – RCIA & PARISH CELEBRATION

Next Sunday, we celebrate Pentecost and warmly welcome our RCIA candidates and new members into the Catholic Church at the 10.30 am Mass. Parishioners are invited to bring some finger food to share after Mass during tea and coffee in the hall. You are also welcome to place a small national flag beside your food if you wish. The hall will be open from 9.30 am for donations. We will also sing some Pentecost hymns and music to the Holy Spirit, including the *Veni Creator Spiritus* (hymn book page 297). Please keep our RCIA candidates and all preparing for the sacraments in your prayers.

Summertime 2026: 11th August – 14th August: Altar Servers Trip to Westminster Pastoral Centre

For aged 11-15, £199. We commend this excellent residential **trip for altar servers and those who regularly attend mass on the weekend.** It is a few days for deepening one’s catholic faith, in a great social atmosphere, including football, sports and visit to Thorpe Park. For more details of how to get to the venue, with a coach laid on at St. Anselm’s Dartford, see your parish priest for a form, or contact **Fr. Stephen Boyle, chaplain to the Guild of St, Stephen, Dartford@rcaos.org.uk, [Tel:01322 220075](tel:01322220075).**

Parish Reminder

Confirmation – Fri 22 May, 6.00 pm (with Bishop Paul Hendricks)

RCIA (Pentecost) – Sun 24 May, 10.30 am

First Holy Communion – Sat 13 June, 10.30 am

Please keep all candidates in your prayers and save these dates. These are joyful celebrations for our whole parish community. You are especially encouraged to come on Friday evening to welcome the Bishop, receive his blessing, and join in the joy of our candidates who will receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Month of May – Devotion to Our Lady

During this month, we honour **Our Blessed Mother** in a special way.

New statue of Our Lady in the sanctuary throughout May, **Lady Chapel** reserved for personal and family prayer, **Communal Rosary** takes place in the **main body of the church, Sunday Rosary: 10:10am**, followed by **10:30am Mass**.

Weekdays: after 9:30am Mass – Rosary & Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament (30 minutes)

As our RCIA and Confirmation candidates prepare to receive the Sacraments of the Church in the coming weeks, I would warmly encourage parents, sponsors, and families to consider giving simple Catholic books as meaningful gifts to help deepen their faith. The *YOUCAT* catechism (£15), the *Jerusalem Bible* (£25), and a simple Catholic prayer book (£4) are all very helpful for growing in prayer and understanding of the Catholic faith. I would especially recommend the *YOUCAT* and the prayer book together as a very good beginning, though the Bible is also very important. These books will be available in our parish shop.

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.

Of your charity – please pray for those whose anniversaries occur at this time: Helena Butler, Ron Rayner, Kathleen Lacey, James Rohan, Mary Grainger, Honor Horsefall, Robert Duhig, Kathleen Keenan, Margaret Baragnanath, Maisie Pearton, Annie Beirne, Victoria Meade, Joseph Yates-Burns, Norah Lamb, Tom Sparkes, Thomas Power, Joseph griffin, Mary Toole, John Chambers.