

CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST EDMUND OF CANTERBURY

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Sunday 12 October 2025 Yr C



No retiring collection this weekend

PEACE IN THE HOLY LAND?

A few weeks ago the Gospel reading at Sunday Mass included the parable of a man who, wanting to accommodate his bumper harvest, tore down his old barns and built bigger ones. He died before he could derive any benefit from them. The reading is from Luke's gospel (12: 13 - 21) and those of you who come to week-day Mass will have the opportunity of hearing it again in just over a week's time.

The story is so arresting that we tend to forget what made Jesus tell it: a man's request for Jesus' help in getting his hands on an inheritance that his brother had refused to pass on to him. For most of us, Jesus' reaction to the man is disconcerting, because he refuses to help. Instead, he warns the man not to be greedy. 'Don't strive to accumulate more than you need for life,' he says, 'what matters is your credit rating with your Father in heaven.' Whether or not we have personal experience of litigation over wills and inheritances, we will all know of such cases, and most of us will have some sympathy with the man that Jesus puts down so uncompromisingly. The thought of anyone being swindled makes us recoil with indignation as something deep within us kicks in; as Machiavelli observed: a man will sooner forget the death of his father than the loss of his inheritance.

As I write this, we are waiting to see if the plan to end the war in Gaza will stick. The root of the conflict is essentially the same as that of the man who sought Jesus' help - though multiplied enormously. Those of us who have happy childhood memories will sigh at the thought of the family home being sold after the death of our parents, but we get over it. However, when what is at stake is not the family home but the land of our birth, or the land of our parents and ancestors, it is a different matter, because that land is where our beliefs, culture and values were nurtured, the source from which we developed our sense of belonging, and of how we fit in on God's earth. Having to let go of it, or being forced out of it, can be an assault on our very identity. For Palestinians, the Holy Land is theirs, as it had been for centuries. Until a hundred years ago it was overwhelmingly a land of Palestinians, and its expropriation in 1948, and their enforced removal from large parts of it, remains, for them, a catastrophe. For Jews, piecing together their sense of self-hood after the horrors their people underwent at the hands of the Nazis and their collaborators, the Holy Land holds a similar place: looking back over two thousand years, they also claim it as theirs. The dispute is not just about real estate and a source of livelihood, but about Palestinian and Jewish people's

sense of themselves, of who they are, of where they belong.

But when both sides claim the same land as being inalienably *theirs*, there can be only one outcome, as, for large numbers in both populations, mounting suspicion gives way to fear and hatred, before escalating, inevitably, into a total demonisation of the other side, until each camp even denies the basic human rights of the other, and seizes land, kidnaps and slaughters hostages, or bombs indiscriminately. And, all the while, nobody has achieved anything worth having.

For decades, masses of Palestinians have lived, been born, died, in poverty, in refugee camps, at first hoping for justice, but descending, as despair kicked in, into a craving for revenge. Zionists, with cruelty, violence, fire and bullets, continue to seize land from Palestinians and to build on it, having then to surround their settlements with razor wire to remain safe against reprisals. Can either side ever have a moment's real peace?

When Jesus advised that man over his inheritance dispute, he said nothing about seeking to be reconciled with his brother, and he refused, point blank, to intervene, not even in the interests of justice. Instead, he homed in on what he saw as the core of the matter, telling the man to guard against believing that possessions can make us happy. It's not an easy lesson for any of us. But suppose the man *did*, somehow, go on to seek justice, in the courts, say. Would peace result? A judge might assign him what was due to him; but the family would probably remain broken, perhaps forever, as both brothers continue to live out their resentment in the years ahead.

Maybe there is a lesson here as we consider the problem of justice in the Holy Land. Peace can only come when both sides back down from a belief that it's about winning and losing. Seventy years of conflict have shown the emptiness of that way of thinking. We must thank God that there have long been many, many people - Jews, Muslims, Christians, Palestinians, Israelis - living together in the Holy Land, who *do* want peace, who have *always* wanted peace. If the proposal for ceasing the war in Gaza can take hold, we can yet hope that the voices of these other people can be heard as the din of gunfire and bombing, and the wailing of the bereaved, and the groaning of the wounded and the destitute, gradually fade away.

Deacon Seán

Being formed in the likeness of Christ, we strive to become a truly Christ centred community, through humble witness, love, compassion and communion.

"If we do not plan, we plan to fail". My words in last's week newsletter caused some comment and feedback so I am writing Part 2 to you sooner than I expected.

The issue of Supply Priests, which I wrote about last time is an immediate issue, but there is a background to this. In 'The Called to Bear Fruit' booklets we looked at a year ago, the Archbishop asked us to prepare for the future so we can ensure provision for the sacraments when we have fewer priests.

This is a practical issue, whatever your opinion on married priests and woman's ordination is. The Anglicans have both, but their clergy numbers are falling too: 47% of their stipendiary clergy will reach retirement age in the next 12 years and the current rate of ordinations will not replace them.

Things are far from hopeless as there is currently a increase in those discerning the priesthood. And we have help from religious orders like the Franciscans, Carmelites and Spiritans in many parishes of the diocese.

However, we have to plan for clergy retiring over the next few years. Last year the Bishop of Arundel and Brighton - our neighbour, of course - caused some shock when he said he intended to replace the existing 85 parishes with just 11 'Team Parishes'.

Fr Ashley told me in an email the other day that the first of these has now been set up, in

Brighton and Hove. Last October the Bishop of Lancaster told me, at the ordination of one of my colleagues from the Beda, that he was reducing the number of parishes in his diocese from around 90 down to 25 or so. We can't expect Beckenham to escape. *It is useless to speculate on details* - there is consultation with clergy in the near future to decide these - but generally it is clear that parishes are going to be merged and grouped together in a new way. I expect that there will still be more than one priest at St Edmund's but, rather than seeing them as St Edmund's priests exclusively, we need to understand they are priests for other local churches too as they may need to go there on a regular basis.

All of this means extra work for Fr Steve as the local Dean, but it does ensure that needs are met. In some ways it would be good for our over worked catechists and volunteers to do some things - confirmation? - on a deanery basis. Things will be *different* rather than *worse*, but if we plan, they can be *good*. These changes are likely to come into play over the next few years rather than immediately, but they are coming.

Fr Andrew

Source <https://www.psephizo.com/life-ministry/the-demographic-crisis-in-church-of-england-ministry/> accessed 7/10/25



**13 October
2.30 pm
in the Hall**

The Catholic Women's League has invited Roy Peachey from Mary's Meals to speak at their meeting.

Mary's Meals, founded in 2002, provides a nutritious meal every school day for 3 million school children across 16 countries, enabling them to thrive and learn.

Please join the CWL in the Hall on Monday to hear more about the history, important work, and vision of this children's charity.

FR JOHN OLANIRAN

31 October at 7.00 pm

St Theresa of the Infant Jesus

Haig Rd, Biggin Hill, Westerham TN16 3LJ

Fr John would be delighted to welcome his St Edmund's friends at his Induction Mass.

If anyone thinking of attending would let the Office know we might be able to arrange car shares, or a minibus.

Please get in touch by Wednesday 22nd.

FAMILY MASS FORUM

There will be a follow-up meeting for parents and all parishioners in the hall on Tuesday 14 October at 7.00pm where we can further discuss ideas and provision for young families at the 9.30 Mass. We look forward to seeing you there.

ENTRY INTO CATHOLIC PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS 2026

All applications to Catholic schools need to be accompanied by a Certificate of Catholic Practice signed by a priest.

We have arranged three signing sessions so that parents and carers can have their forms signed.

The signing sessions are:

Sunday 12 October - 12.30 - 2.30 pm in the Hall

Thursday 16 October

3.00 - 5.00 pm in Meeting Room in the Hall
6.00 - 8.00 pm in the Presbytery

Sunday 19 October

10.30 - 12.30 pm in Meeting Room in the Hall

These sessions allow parents and carers of children entering **secondary school** sufficient time to submit their forms before the closing date.

There will be a further signing session on:

Sunday 23 November

10.30 - 12.30 pm in Meeting Room in the Hall but this will only be for primary school applicants.

Please attend at the designated times. Due to the volume of applications we are not able to arrange individual appointments.

Certificates of Catholic Practice can be downloaded online but there will be copies available if needed.

URGENT REQUEST FROM THE SVP

A family being helped by our SVP is in urgent need of a table and at least four chairs.

If anyone is able to offer some help please contact: beckenhamsvp@gmail.com or call 07789 497 482 and leave a message or send a text.

Thank you

CHARISMATIC PRAYER MEETING

Church Hall, Wednesday 8 October

7.45 pm Praise and worship

8.00 pm Holy Mass

Celebrant Fr Boniface

Followed by informal prayers
ending at 10.00 pm



BABY LOSS AWARENESS WEEK

The 9th-15th October is Baby Loss Awareness Week, which provides an opportunity for the baby loss community and others to come together to honour and remember the babies we have loved and lost. It is also a time to raise awareness of the profound impact of pregnancy and baby loss, the importance of bereavement support, and the ongoing work needed to improve pregnancy outcomes and save babies' lives.

Here at St Edmund's Church, we have a special Remembrance Tree on the altar where you are invited to add a ribbon with your baby's name. Locally, Beckenham Crematorium will hold a remembrance service called 'Remember Our Babies Ribbon Service' on Wednesday 15th October at 6.30pm in the Chapel.

CHRISTMAS SHOEBOX APPEAL



Unbelievable but it is Christmas shoebox time of year again!

Leaflets for this year's appeal are at the back of church; it would be wonderful if you could fill a box for our St Edmund's Blythswood appeal this year. Once again, all the boxes we collect will be distributed in Kosovo.

There is more information about the 2025 shoebox appeal and videos of last year's boxes being distributed on Blythswood's website <https://blythswood.org/shoeboxappeal/>

If you can share details about the shoebox collection with family and friends to help us collect as many boxes as possible, we would be very grateful.

It is easy to choose gifts for people who have so little. Shampoo, a pair of socks, a notepad, a small toy, a bag of sweets – things we take for granted are luxuries to people living in poverty.

By filling a shoebox with simple things you can bring hope this Christmas.

This year please bring your filled boxes to the Parish Office – boxes can be dropped off until **Sunday 2nd November.**

If you have any questions, then do get in touch.

Lucienne Vella 07884 184534 or
Susie Watchorn 07956 574789.

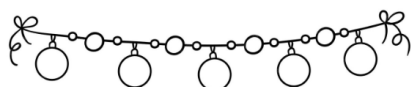
MASSES

Sun 12 Oct	Twenty-eighth Sunday Day of Prayer for Prisoners & their families
6.00 pm VIGIL	Delisa & Crescenzo Panetta RIP
8.00 am	For the people
9.30 am	Arthur Quinn RIP First Holy Communion Enrolment Mass
11.00 am	Katie Severs RIP
5.30 pm	Edward Platek RIP
Mon 13 Oct	St Edward the Confessor
10.00 am	Anna Knell RIP
Tues 14 Oct	Feria
	Monica Grima RIP
12.00 pm	Requiem of Maude Herring
Wed 15 Oct	St Teresa of Jesus (of Avila)
10.00 am	Baby Charlotte Flannery RIP No Adoration
7.30 pm	Charismatic Mass in Hall
Thurs 16 Oct	Feria
10.00 am	Dec'd benefactors & promoters of the Claver Sisters
6.00 pm CLAVES	Adoration
Friday 17 Oct	St Ignatius of Antioch
10.00 am	Clara Mayungbe (b'day)
Sat 18 Oct	St Luke, Evangelist
10.00 am	Piers Hanlon RIP
6.00 pm VIGIL	Ronald & Eileen Furlong RIP
Sun 19 Oct	Twenty-ninth Sunday World Mission Day
8.00 am	For the people
9.30 am	For dec'd members of Ransford & Marbach Families
11.00 am	Fabiola Zorilla RIP (1st anniv)
LATIN	
5.30 pm	Manuel Pampin Mosquera RIP (3rd anniv)

Confessions are every Saturday from
10.30 - 11.00 am and 5.00 - 5.55 pm,
and usually during Adoration

There is Rosary every Monday, Wednesday and
Friday at 9.30 am and Adoration after
morning Mass from Monday to Saturday,
unless otherwise announced.

The team preparing Christmas Wreaths for the Parish
Christmas Fair would be grateful for any unwanted
Christmas decorations. You can leave your donations
at the Office and we will pass them on. Thank you



We pray for all who have died: Desmond Johnson,
Fr John Ryan, Maude Herring, Paul Stone,
Fr Patrick Hayward, William Kelly, Monica Lajwii,
Marie-Therese Sinon, Peter Kuhn, Rose Westgarth,
Betty Stephens.

**Please pray for those whose anniversaries are
at this time:** William Fitzgerald, Anna Knell, John
Wallis, Peter Fagan Snr, Geoffrey Burnham,
Frances Wilson, James McGilloway, Poppy Howie,
Patrick Cummins, Fr Paul Weir, Billy Cannon,
Eileen McGrath, Paula Marbach, Betty Banfield,
Christopher Gunapala, Dave Webb, Bernadette
Murray, Ilie Florian.

**We pray for all who are in ill health, for their
families and for their carers:** Fr Ray Brennan,
Terry Woollard, Wendy Adams, Elizabeth,
Rosanna, Hans Halpin, Paul M Williams, Norma
Powell, Joan Morris, Paul Hixson, Mary-Jo
McCarthy, Jacqueline Djasrabe, Margaret
Brocklehurst, Leyla Pattison, Janice McIntosh,
Jessica Ram, Zygmunt Sobolewski, James
Creedon, Sarah-Marie Kench, Duncan, Grace, Nora
Haugh, Marie Benham, Ilean Curry, Mary Totterdell,
Sue Shaw, Linda Magness

DIARY

October

Mon 13	CWL Meeting with guest speaker from Mary's Meals. 2.30 in Hall. All welcome
Tues 14	Requiem for Maude Herring at noon.
Sat 18 & Sat 25	Retreat days for Lectors & Eucharistic Ministers
Friday 24	Requiem for William Kelly at 12.30

November

Tuesday 4	Requiem for Peter Kuhn at 12.30
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December

Sat 6	Christmas Fair
Sat 13	Advent Carol Service

Meditation every Monday in the Hall from
5.30 - 6.20 pm, except for the first Monday of
each month and bank holidays.
Please respect the need to arrive promptly and
observe the silence

Contemplative Saturday is on a Saturday once
a month from 11.00 am to noon.
Date will be here.