

ST THOMAS MORE – PARISH NEWSLETTER

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SUNDAY 4TH FEBRUARY 2024

FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (Year B)

St Valentine's Day Mass

Since this year Ash Wednesday falls on 14th February, St Valentine's Day, we have moved our traditional celebration of Christian Marriage forward a few days. It will be on **Friday 9th February**. Mass will be celebrated at **6pm**, followed by a reception in the Hall, starting approximately at 6.45pm.

All married couples, especially the recently married, and those preparing for marriage are most welcome to attend. This event has been much appreciated in previous years, providing an opportunity to meet other married couples of different ages and benefit from each other's friendship and support.

A list has been left on the table in the Narthex. If planning to attend please add your name to the list so we have an approximate idea of the numbers coming.

Tea and Coffee 4th February

There will be tea and coffee after the 11am Mass on Sunday 4th February on the lower floor of the parish hall. It provides an opportunity to get to know fellow parishioners better, and also to buy items

from the parish shop (repository), also located on the lower ground floor.

Offertory Collections 31 December 2023–28 January 2024

Sunday offertory collection: £1,692.73
(Envelopes: £625.75; Loose: £1,066.98)

Contactless card machine: £1,031.42

Grand total: £2,724.15

Many thanks for your generous contributions to the upkeep of the Parish.

Club Lodwar January Prize Winners

1 st	£164.80	78	Fiamma Truvert
2 nd	£123.60	90	Evelyn McNally
3 rd	£ 41.20	100	Don Williams
4 th	£ 41.20	32	Maggie Ainsworth
5 th	£41.20	69	Pauline Ainsworth

Thank you for your support. Membership is still available and it would make a very nice Valentine Gift for that someone special in your life. Applications are available in the church narthex or by request.

Parish Film Club

The film club started up again last week. The two videos by Bishop Robert Barron were very well received and were the basis for a helpful discussion. The plan is to project a number of religious films and programmes on certain Wednesdays before Easter. The initial plan is to meet on the following Wednesdays: 21st February, 28th February and 20th March at 10.45am after the 10am Mass.

Annual Mass of Our Lady of Lourdes

On Saturday 10th February at 2.30pm the Cardinal will celebrate the annual Mass of Our Lady of Lourdes in the Cathedral, which will include anointing of the sick. Please note that anyone who requires the Sacrament and any helpers will need tickets. If this is the case please contact Fr. Nicholas who can ask for tickets for this parish.

February Magnificat

Magnificat is a monthly publication containing the readings and prayers for Mass, with a meditation from the great spiritual writers of the Church, the Morning and Evening Prayer of the Church and much else. Some copies of the February Magnificat (£5) are still available for sale in the Narthex. You can pay using the card reader in the entrance or by putting cash in the collection box in the wall of the Narthex marked Newspaper/leaflet.

Annual Mass for Matrimony in Westminster Cathedral

The annual Mass for Matrimony will be celebrated in the Cathedral by Cardinal Nichols on Saturday 25th May at 2.30pm for couples celebrating significant wedding anniversaries. Full information and an invitation will be issued shortly, but in the meantime parishes have been invited to note the date and begin to advertise this very popular and important celebration.

Prayer and Fasting for Life

From Stuart McCullough at the Good Counsel Network: "On Saturday 10th February, the Vigil of the Feast Our Lady of Lourdes, please pray and fast for the end of abortion in this Country. Through God's grace we have seen thousands of Mothers in our counselling centre continue their pregnancies in very difficult circumstances. Please help us to help save lives with your prayers, fasting and support. www.GoodCounselNetwork.com"

First Holy Communion Classes

There is now a break in the first Holy Communion classes for the school half term. Classes will start again on Saturday 24th February 11.00am to 12 noon.

Area for young children during Sunday Mass

If you are new to the parish it may help to know that during the 9.30am and 11am Masses on Sundays we generally open the parish hall and project a view of the sanctuary onto the screen in the seminar room (top floor). This enables parents with small children who become restless to follow the Mass from there if they so wish. Please help to make newcomers aware of this helpful area in the parish hall.

Mass Intentions

Please use the brown Mass intention envelopes in the Narthex to request a Mass. These can be handed to a priest or put through the letterbox of the presbytery. Please speak to Maggie Ainsworth in the Parish Office (Tuesday or Friday mornings) or email her at swisscottage@rcdow.org.uk about any Masses you wish to be offered on a specific day.

If your Mass intention is for someone who has recently died or is seriously ill, we shall try to allocate a Mass as soon as possible. However, bear in general that it is not

unusual for Masses to be offered several weeks after they have been requested.

Commentary on Sunday's Gospel

From the Angelus Address of Pope Francis in St Peter's Square 8 February 2015

Today's Gospel (cf. Mk 1:29-39) presents us Jesus who, after having preached in the Synagogue on the Sabbath, heals many sick people. Preaching and healing: this was Jesus' principle activity in his public ministry. With his preaching he proclaims the Kingdom of God, and with his healing he shows that it is near, that the Kingdom of God is in our midst.

Entering the house of Simon Peter, Jesus sees that his mother-in-law is in bed with a fever; he immediately takes her by the hand, heals her, and raises her. After sunset, since the Sabbath is over the people can go out and bring the sick to Him; He heals a multitude of people afflicted with maladies of every kind: physical, psychological, and spiritual. Having come to earth to proclaim and to realise the salvation of the whole man and of all people, Jesus shows a particular predilection for those who are wounded in body and in spirit: the poor, the sinners, the possessed, the sick, the marginalised. Thus, He reveals Himself as a doctor both of souls and of bodies, the Good Samaritan of man. He is the true Saviour: Jesus saves, Jesus cures, Jesus heals.

The reality of Christ's healing of the sick invites us to reflect on the meaning and virtue of illness. This also reminds us of the World Day of the Sick, which we shall celebrate on 11 February (...)

The salvific work of Christ is not exhausted with his Person and in the span of his earthly life; it continues through the Church, the sacrament of God's love and tenderness for mankind. In sending his disciples on mission, Jesus confers a double mandate on them: to proclaim the Gospel of salvation and to heal the sick (cf. Mt 10:7-8). Faithful

to this teaching, the Church has always considered caring for the sick an integral part of her mission.

"The poor and the suffering you will always have with you", Jesus admonishes (cf. Mt 26:11), and the Church continually finds them along her path, considering those who are sick as a privileged way to encounter Christ, to welcome and serve him. To treat the sick, to welcome them, to serve them, is to serve Christ: the sick are the flesh of Christ.

This also occurs in our own time, when, notwithstanding the many scientific breakthroughs, the interior and physical suffering of people raises serious questions about the meaning of illness and pain, and about the reason for death. They are existential questions, to which the pastoral action of the Church must respond with the light of faith, having before her eyes the Crucifixion, in which appears the whole of the salvific mystery of God the Father, who out of love for human beings did not spare his own Son (cf. Rom 8:32). Therefore, each one of us is called to bear the light of the Word of God and the power of grace to those who suffer, and to those who assist them — family, doctors, nurses — so that the service to the sick might always be better accomplished with more humanity, with generous dedication, with evangelical love, with tenderness. Mother Church, through our hands, caresses our suffering and treats our wounds, and does so with the tenderness of a mother.

Let us pray to Mary, Health of the Sick, that every person who is sick might experience, thanks to the care of those who are close to them, the power of God's love and the comfort of her maternal tenderness.

ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Tel: 020 7435 1388

5th Sunday in Ordinary Time

4th February – 10th February 2024

<https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/swisscottage/>

	MASS	OTHER ACTIVITIES
SUN 4th February Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Readings. Year B)	9.30am People of the Parish 11am Mass Club Lodwar/People of Lodwar 6pm Mass For victims of persecution and war	The Church opens at 9.15am 10.30am Confessions 5.30pm Confessions
MON 5th February Saint Agatha, Virgin and Martyr	10am Mass Persecuted Christians	Church opens at 9.30am Monday to Saturday Church closes about 1pm on Mondays, other weekdays about 6pm
TUE 6th February Saint Paul Miki and Companions, Martyrs	10am Mass Joanna Bush (RIP)	
WED 7th February Feria	10am Mass Patrick Slater (RIP)	
THU 8th February St Josephine Bakhita, Virgin	10am Mass Ana Strbac (intentions)	
FRI 9th February Feria Friday abstinence	10am Mass Holy Souls 6.00pm Mass celebration of Christian Marriage (St Valentine's Day)	10am to Noon Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
SAT 10th February Saint Scholastica, Virgin	10am Mass Esrom Ephrem (RIP)	The Church opens at 9.30am Half Term - No First Holy Communion Class

Prayer Intentions:

Recently deceased: Ken Brown; Fr Dominic McKenna; Jeanette Francise-Tabet; Robinson Emmanuel; Joan Ross; Maria Maguire; Mervyn Agnew; Fr Terry Murray OMI

Anniversary: Cristina Pancha; Jamil Tayar-Tabet; Erik Karlsson; Maria Fernanda; José Miguel Vargas Alvoraz; Mark Sharman; Mabel Bull; Nick Aldridge

Confessions:

Weekdays: before and after 10am Mass

Saturday: before and after 10am Mass

Sunday: 9.30am then 10.30am and 5.30pm (before Mass)

Forthcoming liturgical celebrations:

14th February: **ASH WEDNESDAY (Day of Fasting and Abstinence)**

18th February: **FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT**

19th March: **SAINT JOSEPH, SPOUSE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**