ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC CHURCH EPSOM NEWSLETTER
24 DECEMBER 2023

CANON BILL'S UPDATE

We will celebrate the Christmas story again this year as we welcome "The Word who is Life". Jesus our Saviour born for the salvation of the world, that is for us and all of creation in the humblest of circumstances, a stable in Bethlehem. It will be good to see family and friends again and to enjoy this festive time but remember the fish syndrome: Three days max after that it goes off! to seize the moment and let the cares of tomorrow wait until these days are done.

In the New Year we can discuss the final draft of the Pastoral Plan and the call to mission and perhaps join Bishop Richard's Webinar on the 10 January at 7.30pm, for now let us look forward with joy and welcome the Christ-child into our hearts and our homes and share the Good News of him who brings love to the world. And now for a Christmas Poem for the young at heart to enjoy by Clement Clarke Moore:

"T'was the night before Christmas, when all through the house not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse; the stockings were hung by the chimney with care, in hopes that St Nicholas soon would be there; the children were nestled all snug in their beds, while visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads; and mamma in her 'kerchief', and I in my cap, had just settled down for a long winter's nap…… and so it continues for many more verses which you can find on the net.

A warm welcome to all parishioners, families and friends who will be joining us this Christmas. Let us truly welcome the Word who is Life into our hearts and pray especially for peace in the land of His birth, and for the safety of our planet.

On behalf of Father Stephen and myself every blessing to you and yours.
Happy Christmas to all.
Canon Bill

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
SUNDAY 24 DECEMBER 2023

This year, the fourth Sunday of Advent is swallowed up in Christmas Eve. Perhaps we can celebrate it early so as not to lose the riches of this final week: the Lord is very near.

In our First Reading ***(2 Samuel 7: 1-5, 8-12, 14, 16)***, God does not allow David to build him a physical house but promises rather to build him a house, a dynasty, that will last forever.

The Psalm ***(Psalm 88)*** reinforces this promise, and emphasizes God's fatherly love and faithfulness.

St Paul, in the Second Reading ***(Romans 16: 25-27)***, tells of how God's mystery, kept secret through the ages, has now been revealed in the person of Jesus Christ.

In the Gospel ***(Luke 1: 26-38)***, the well-loved narration of the annunciation to Mary, we note how the Angel emphasizes that her son will be of the house of David. Mary willingly agrees to be part of God's plan. Tomorrow is Christmas Day: may we hold out our suffering world in yearning to the Prince of Peace.

Opening Prayer

Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord, your grace
into our hearts,
that we, to whom the incarnation of
Christ your Son
was made known by the message of an Angel,
may by his passion and cross
be brought to the glory of his resurrection.

DATE		MASS INTENTION
Sat 23 Dec	10.00am 5.30pm 7.30pm	NO MASS Mr and Mrs Collins' Intention The Youth of the Parish
Sun 24 Dec	***Fourth Sunday of Advent***	
	10.30am 3.00pm 5.30pm 9.00pm	People of the Parish Michael Dallison R.I.P. Tommy and Noel Lee and Tommy Harrigan R.I.P. Bernard and Monica Brennan R.I.P Marie Bliss
Mon 25 Dec	***The Nativity of The Lord***	
	8.30am 10.30am	Matilde Sabado RIP Mansoor Bholah and Rex Truscott RIP
Tue 26 Dec	***Feast of St Stephen, First Martyr***	
	10.00am	Mnsgr Seamus Conway RIP
Wed 27 Dec	***Feast of St John, Apostle and Evangelist***	
	10.00am	John Kinnick RIP
Thur 28 Dec	***Feast of The Holy Innocents, Martyrs***	
	10.00 am	Michael Smith RIP
Fri 29 Dec	***Feast of St Thomas Becket, Bishop, Martyr***	
	10.00am	Richard Browning RIP
Sat 30 Dec	10.00am 5.30pm	Martin Farrell RIP People of the Parish
Sun 31 Dec	***Feast of The Holy Family***	
	10.30am 5.30pm	Carmine Grieco RIP Liam McSweeney RIP

CREATIVE LADIES

"A big thank you to all those who came and supported our Festive Lunch last Friday.

The donations for the lunch amounted to £760. We also sold cards, preserves and gifts which raised a further £300.

A £2000 donation was given to Faith in Action at the beginning of December. We now have well over £1000 more to donate to Faith in Action as a result of this event.

The Creative Ladies wish you all a peaceful and blessed Christmas and a happy 2024."

CAR PARKING STEWARDS AT CHRISTMAS MASSES

Please note that we still require car parking stewards to help at the following Masses:
Sunday 24 December: 10:30, 15:00 and 21:00
Monday 25th 10:30

24 DECEMBER 2023 – Mass at 9.00p.m.

Please note that there will be Christmas Carols commencing at 8.30p.m. before the Mass at 9.00p.m.

OUR CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Friday 22 December
5.00pm Christmas Mass for our Portuguese and Brazilian community

Saturday 23 December
5.30am Vigil Mass for Sunday 24 December
7.30pm Christmas Youth Celebration

Sunday 24 December Christmas Eve
10.30am Family Mass for 24 December
3.00pm Children's Mass
5.30pm Vigil Mass for Christmas Day
9.00pm 'Midnight Mass' preceded by Carols at 8.30p.m.

Monday 25 December Christmas Day
8.30am Dawn Mass
10.30am Family Mass

Tuesday 26 December Boxing Day
10.00am Mass

Canon Bill and Fr Stephen will also be celebrating Masses at St Michael's in Ashtead so you may wish to attend Mass there if the timings are more suitable for you.

BEREAVEMENT CAFE

Please note there will be no Bereavement Cafe during December. We know that Christmas can be a difficult time, especially if you are newly bereaved. If you feel you would like to chat to someone, please telephone either Paula on 07710 099682 or Theresa on 07867 625291.

ST JOSEPH'S STATEMENT OF ASPIRATIONS

At St Joseph's, we **show God's love to the world**. This means that we:

- are a welcoming community, where all can explore, develop and deepen their faith;
- help everyone to discover how much they are loved by God;
- participate in spiritually enriching liturgies and celebrate sacraments as signs of God's love for us;
- empower people to use their individual talents and skills for the service of others;
- put the Gospel into practical, loving action by reaching out to help others, especially the poor and disadvantaged in the local community and beyond.

MARY'S MEALS wants to collect all your foreign currency and turn it into cash to feed hungry children in the 18 countries it works in. You will find envelopes in the Narthex; please take one when you leave and put all your foreign coins and notes into it. Then pop your envelope into the Parish Office when it suits you.

Our Prayers are asked for all those who are ill:

Frances Walsh, Merlyn Soares, Ann Schifano, Emma Lee, Ian Watts, Steve Lee, Melitona Leander, Vanessa Tuff, Anita Hully, Joseph Poku, Angela Brett, Kay Pledge, Alan Lucas, Tom Makinson, Ethan Foley, Alice Nicolle, Sue Brackenbury, Matty Horkan, Lorraine Corsini, Jimmy Ward and Family, Graham Bell, Sandra McNamee and Baby Trevor Agius.

MISSIO RED BOX AUTUMN COLLECTION

Thank you to our promoters and red box holders who raised £949.14 in our Autumn collection. The total raised in 2023 is £1,578.07. Your support enables the Catholic Church to flourish in some of the most challenging places around the world and assists the Mill Hill Missionaries in their mission of love and service.

If you would like to be a red box supporter, please collect a box from the parish Office.

BAPTISMS AT ST JOSEPH'S

We very much look forward to meeting new parents and explaining our Baptism preparation which includes regular attendance at Mass prior to joining classes. You will find one of us (Baptism Catechists') near the font after 10:30 Mass on Sundays. Do come and say hello.

If you, or someone you know is struggling and would appreciate some help or just someone to talk to in confidence, please call Celia Flood on 07767 870035, or Terry Cruise on 07788 454774.

Request for Drivers to EMC Christmas Lunch

Epsom Methodist Church is once again holding their Christmas Day lunch. They need 2-3 volunteer drivers to transport people coming to their midday lunch and take them home again at 4 pm (no requirement to stay between).
To offer, please contact Paul and Janet Warren at pwarren@lineone.net

FOODBANK UPDATE

A massive 'Thank You' to our awesome Cubs of the 8th/14th Epsom Air Scout Group!!! On Wednesday night, they raised a staggering £780 for the Epsom and Ewell Foodbank, supported by the Beavers, young leaders and their families. The kilos of food and toys donated will make such a difference to those in our community who need it most.
The Scout leaders are incredibly proud of each and every cub as each patrol set up and ran their own stall, thinking of others during this time of advent, fundraising for such a worthy cause and spreading lots of Christmas cheer. Thank you once again for being little super stars!!

AYLESFORD PRIORY

We are planning a parish coach visit to Aylesford Priory on Saturday 23 March 2024. This is a Carmelite Priory, the origins of which go back to 1242, just outside the picturesque Kent village of Aylesford, not far from the M20.
It has a shrine dedicated to the Assumption of Our Lady with a main chapel and a number of beautiful, peaceful side chapels. There are also charming grounds, incorporating a Rosary Way and Peace Garden, a pottery open to the public, a tearoom and shop situated in a restored 16th century barn and a Pilgrims' Hall dating back to the 13th century, where we plan to have lunch.
We plan to join the community mass and attend Adoration during our visit.
Coach timings are: -
Depart Epsom (Church car park) at 09:00
Depart Aylesford Priory at 16:30
Costs
Depending on the number booking, the coach will cost in the region of £20. A one course set lunch in the Pilgrims' Hall will cost in the region of £12. We will ask for a £5 deposit when you book.

To join us, please e-mail jennyandjohnm@netscape.net or speak to Jenny or John Mortimer or leave a note in the Parish Office by Monday 8 January 2024, so that we can confirm our coach and lunch bookings.
All queries to Jenny and John Mortimer (01372 729048 or 07508 037083).

ST JOSEPH'S CONFIRMATION PROGRAMME 2024

Will commence with an introduction and enrolment session on Monday 22nd January at 7:30 pm in the Church. Please bring along a copy of the child's Baptism certificate and the registration fee of £30.

Day of Reflection for Ministers of the Eucharist
Saturday 10 February 2024

Bishop Richard will lead a day of reflection and formation for Ministers of the Eucharist at St Michael's, High Salvington, Worthing 11-4pm. The day will include theological and practical talks, Eucharistic Adoration and mass. Please register using the link W: Day of Reflection for Ministers of the Eucharist (10-Feb-2024) ChurchSuite Events

Bishop Richard has written a new Pastoral Plan for the Diocese which will be released in the New Year: 'The Word Who is Life: The Call to Mission'. As society becomes more secular our parishes must be ever-clearer beacons of light guiding people to Christ. The new Plan highlights how our community of faith can embrace this important time of renewal, forging diocesan parishes into communities of saints and strong, lively, and welcoming schools of discipleship. The Pastoral Plan will be released on the diocesan website on **Tuesday 2 January**: www.abdiocese.org.uk/diocese/pastoral-plan with hard copies available to read in each parish.

Bishop Richard met with members of Clergy earlier this week and will be hosting a Pastoral Plan Webinar for people across our diocesan community on **Wednesday 10 January at 7.30pm**. Please use the following the link to join the webinar: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86457734895.

Day of Reflection for Ministers of the Word
Saturday 20 January 2024

Bishop Richard will lead a day of reflection and formation for Ministers of the Word at Sacred Heart Church, Cobham, 11-4pm. Including Lectio Divina and Mass, plus talks on Sacred Scripture, the Liturgy of the Word, the Lectionary, and practical aspects of the ministry. Please register using the link W: Day of Reflection for Ministers of the Word (20-Jan-2024) · ChurchSuite Events

School Admissions 2024

If you have a child who is due to start school in September 2024 in Reception Class, please note that the deadline for applications to Surrey is January 15th 2024. You also need to submit a Supplementary Information Form, if applying to a Catholic school.

If you wish to view St Joseph's School, please call 01372 727850. We have one more tour date prior to that deadline. We will be able to offer places to all baptised Catholic children.

ST JOSEPH'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

Admissões escolares nas turmas de recepção em setembro de 2024

Estamos a contactar as nossas famílias portuguesas que assistem à missa na Basílica de São José. Se você tem um filho católico que deverá começar a escola em setembro de 2024, gostaríamos de encorajá-lo a considerar a escola paroquial, a Escola de São José. Sentimos fortemente que uma educação católica é importante e gostaríamos muito de acolher crianças da comunidade portuguesa que vivem na freguesia e nas paróquias vizinhas. Se você quiser visitar a escola, ligue para 01372 727850.

Parish Finances and Offertory

CHURCH OFFERTORY

Ways for you to contribute are as follows:

- **standing order**: this is our preferred method. Please set up your standing order directly with your bank, using the following details (this is a business account) - account name **RCD A&B St Joseph Epsom**; sort code: 40-05-20; account number: 71076221; bank reference: your name, along with "GA" if you are a member of our Gift Aid scheme. (If you aren't yet a Gift Aider, please do join the scheme! See below).
- **contactless devices**: these are located in the narthex and in the church (beside the hymn books). Simply choose "Church offertory" from the list on the screen, and please select the option to add gift aid if you are a tax payer. (Note: these devices can also be used for special collections)
- **gift aid envelope scheme**: please place your envelope in the collection bags
- **loose cash**: please place in the collection bags.

Thank you for your support.

Contact Us: Email: epsom@abdiocese.org.uk
Telephone: 01372 723573

PARISH OPENING HOURS
MONDAY, WEDNESDAY AND FRIDAY
8.30A.M. – 2.30P.M.