ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC CHURCH EPSOM NEWSLETTER

31 DECEMBER 2023

CANON BILL'S UPDATE

Christmas 2023 was a very happy occasion here at St Joseph's and I was very pleased to welcome so many people to be in the Church with us. Between all the Masses over Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, we had over 2000 people in attendance, a huge increase on the 1500 people who attended our Christmas 2022 services.

There are many individuals to thank for making our celebrations here at the Church successful. Special mention to John Flood and his Team for organising the layout of the Church, also to our Team of Welcomers and our Flower Arranging Team who made our Church look so beautiful. And a special thank you to all our musicians, sacristans, readers and Eucharistic Ministers who helped at all Masses. A special mention to our children who participated in the Gospel and readings at the 3.00p.m. Mass.

I hope that you all enjoyed the festivities and had a restful and safe time with your family and friends. Thank you for your good wishes, gifts and donations – they are really appreciated, particularly in the current economic climate.

Finally, my prayer for all our Parishioners is that you will be blessed with good health, happiness and peace in 2024.
Wishing you all a very Happy New Year.
God Bless
Canon Bill

FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY
SUNDAY 31 DECEMBER 2023

And when the day came for them to be purified as laid down by the Law of Moses, Mary and Joseph took Jesus up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. When they had done everything the Law of the Lord required, they went back to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. Meanwhile the child grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom; and God's favour was with him.

Whether you have spent these days surrounded by family and loved ones, or have been quietly by yourself, today we are invited to look at the Holy Family. Jesus, Mary, and Joseph are an example of what is best in human relationships. After pausing a moment to come to quiet, I read these verses from Luke. Then I spend as long as I need bringing to mind my own family, or those close to me. Maybe I recollect happy, warm memories, funny incidents, laughter … or maybe hurtful, difficult, bitter moments come to the fore. I pause, and speak to the Lord in gratitude for the good times. If I need to, I ask him for healing and support.

What light can the Holy Family throw on my particular situation? Perhaps I, too, was 'a child growing to maturity and wisdom', or maybe life was difficult, and I drifted away from everything those around me held dear. I reflect on my own personal journey, conscious that, even though I may not have been aware of it at the time, 'God's favour was with me'. I give thanks. Before concluding my prayer, I pray, with Pope Francis, for all those families who experience heartache and strife. I ask the Lord to give them the peace, harmony and forgiveness they need. When I am ready, I express, in my own words, my thanks to the Lord for giving me the opportunity of spending time with him and with Mary and Joseph

DATE		MASS INTENTION
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
Mon 1 Jan	***Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God***	
	10.00am	In Thanksgiving – Carmencita and Lolita
Tue 2 Jan	***Memoria Ss Basil the Great and St Gregory Nazianzen, Doctors of the Church***	
	10.00am	Margaret King RIP
Wed 3 Jan	10.00am	Marilyn Jones RIP
Thur 4 Jan	10.00 am	Sean McCashin RIP
Fri 5 Jan	10.00am	Alejandro Carino RIP
Sat 6 Jan	10.00am 5.30pm	Anna Maria Di Meglio RIP People of the Parish
Sun 7 Jan	***Solemnity of The Epiphany of The Lord***	
	10.30am 5.30pm	Onofrio and Antonina Montalto Monella RIP Angela Brown RIP

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.

The Year of Jubilee 2025

The Holy Father has decided that 2025 will be a year of Jubilee, something which happens every 25 years. The theme is "Pilgrims of Hope" and will be a year of hope and trust for a world suffering the impacts of war, the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the increased threats to the climate.

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.

BEREAVEMENT CAFÉ

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.

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."

Peace Sunday 2024 is Sunday 14 January and the theme chosen by Pope Francis is 'Artificial Intelligence and Peace'. Pax Christi have produced a series of resources to mark the day.

Prayer

God our creator and sustainer,
We thank you for the gifts of creativity you have given us, for the ability to explore science and understand your creation.
We ask your forgiveness for the times we have used science for evil and not for good, for war and not for peace.
Make us vigilant as we develop technology, that violence and discrimination may not take root, that injustice and inequality will not be fuelled, that the poot and vulnerable will not pay the cost.
May all that we create contribute to peace and justice.

Amen

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.

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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.

The Jubilee of Hope will begin in December 2024 with Pope Francis opening the "holy door" in St. Peter's Basilica, offering the world's 1.3 billion Catholics the possibility of obtaining a plenary indulgence and a year of special graces. The Jubilee of Hope will end on the feast of the Epiphany in 2026.
For more information on the Vatican's Jubilee Year go to: www.giubileo-2025.it/en

FOODBANK UPDATE

A special mention goes to the Sixth Form students at St Andrew's Secondary School. Through their fundraising activities and donations, they delivered a whopping 177.7 kilos of food last week. We know that our clients will feel so touched by your generosity, thoughtfulness and kindness. This December we have seen some of the highest numbers since the Foodbank began in 2012. With a projected 11% increase in demand from 2022 for the whole of 2023, we are expecting to see lots more families and individuals using our services in the coming weeks.

However, Christmas at the Foodbank is not just about acknowledging those who support us generously or meeting client's needs. It is about seeing the essence of Christmas in every session we run. Our clients often go on to share what they have received with their families and friends. And it is there we feel the true Christmas spirit. One which calls us to share and bless those around us.

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 15 January 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.