

Finding Us



**St
Mary's**

St Mary's Church car park is available to those attending our church services.

Giving to Church

WE ARE COMPLETELY DEPENDENT ON YOUR GIVING. ALTHOUGH SERVICES ARE LIMITED OUR BILLS GO ON IN FULL: water rates, electricity and gas all have a standing charge. We still have to pay for our priest. We still have to pay for the central church functions which are supporting us even now.

Online, you can go to www.justgiving.com/stmarys-swanley to give by credit or debit card.

All these allow you to enhance your donation with Gift Aid if you wish.

To offer your usual donation by standing order or BACS please

Our Week

Sunday

PANDEMIC PATTERN

Sunday Masses must be pre-booked. Weekday Masses do not need pre-booking.

Sat, 4.30pm: Children's Mass
Sun, 11am: Mass
Sun, 4.30pm: Mass

Monday

No Mass

Tuesday

Mass, 7pm

Wednesday

Mass, 11.30am

Thursday

Mass, 10am

Friday

Mass, 11am

Saturday

Mass, 10am



Our website:

www.swanleyparish.org.uk
where you will find a lot of
information, news & much more!

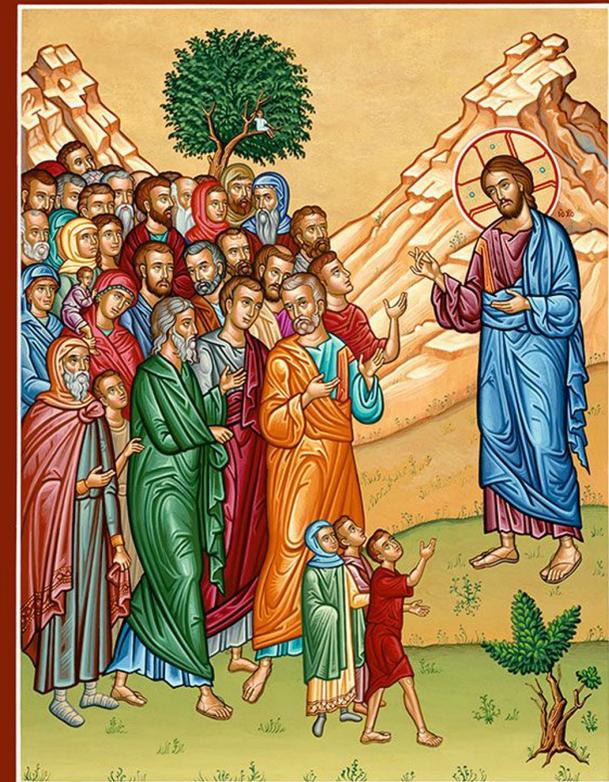
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News letter

30p

THE PARISH CHURCH OF
St Mary
the Virgin
SWANLEY

July 2021



Calendar for

July

3 Sat Saint Thomas the Apostle Mass, 10am

4 Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

THERE ARE NO WEEKDAY MASSES THIS WEEK. SUNDAY MASSES FOLLOW THEIR NORMAL PANDEMIC PATTERN. Booking this week only: email, Facebook or in writing.

11 Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Weekday Masses resume their usual times. Sunday Masses usual pandemic pattern.

18 Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Weekday Masses at the usual times this week. Sunday Masses usual pandemic pattern.

22 Thu Saint Mary Magdalene Mass, 10am

23 Fri Saint Bridget of Sweden Mass, 11am

25 Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Calendar Notes

First Week in July

There are no weekday Masses 5th-10th July, the Sunday Masses will follow the usual pandemic pattern but you will need to book in by email, snail-mail* or via Facebook as the vicarage answering machine will be switched off—booking confirmation may take longer than usual. From 11th July all is back to normal.

Where's St James the Apostle?

We celebrate St James on 25th July but because this year that's a Sunday, the Lord prevails, so the saint is omitted in 2021. The Latin for James is Iago, and Santiago de Compostela is Saint James' Cathedral in Compostela in Spain. They have a thurible (an incense burner) which is around 6ft high and wide and when loaded with charcoal and incense is swung along the nave producing huge clouds of smoke. Fr Dane wonders whether we could have something similar..... Obviously don't tell Sandra because each time the Botafumeiro (as it's called) is used, it costs £400!

*snail mail is a letter via Royal Mail or through the Vicarage door!



ST MARY THE VIRGIN,
SWANLEY
is in the
Diocese of
Rochester
the Archdeaconry of
Rochester
and the Deanery of
Dartford

We are a
Forward in Faith
parish under the care of
The Right Reverend
Norman Banks
Bishop of Richborough

The right to present a priest
to be our Vicar when there is
a vacancy is held by the
parish patron, the Guild of
All Souls.

Hall Hire

No hirings at the moment but for full details of price, availability and facilities call Nicky on 07821 005632. We're grateful to her for all she does.

Baptisms

There is no charge for Baptism.

Here at S Mary's we baptize those who live in our parish - and will even baptize those from outside with their parish priest's permission.

Who's Who

Vicar

Father Dane Batley-Gladden
Saint Mary's Vicarage,
London Road,
Swanley, BR8 7AQ.
01322 662201
vicar@swanleyparish.org.uk

Churchwardens

Kevin Merrick
(also PCC Vice Chair)
Christine Parkes

Hon Secretary

Holly Attwood

Hon Treasurer

Sandra Merrick

Hall Lettings

Nicky Reeve

Servers

Kevin Merrick

Organist

Doug Blew

Choir

Ann Parkes

Safeguarding Officer

(Child & Vulnerable Adult Protection)
Toni Roast

Weekly Mass Booklets

Bob Jones

Anniversaries in July

- 2 Ann Furby
4 Mabel Rogers, Constance Clarke
5 Elizabeth Best-Shaw,
Gwen Trusson
7 Gertrude Skelton,
Lionel Thorogood, Pr
Herbert Webster,
Marjorie Turvey, Mary West
8 Sister Agnes Hope SSB
Marjorie Green
9 Albert Bailey
10 Harry Prior, Hazel Davies
12 Richard Fittock
13 Mabel Mortimer, Sue Mattock
14 Elizabeth Duff, Mark Firmager,
Joyce Blew
15 Nolan Glasspool, Emily Owens
17 Alicia Knight
18 Christopher Casstine,
Richard Crawford, Janet Russell
19 Mary Taylor, David Coleman,
Frank Hillyer
20 Reginald Gwyther
21 Edward Arnhard
22 Maria Long, Rosa Smith,
Dora Councer
23 William Petty
24 Annie Parker, John Faulkner
25 Jane Crawford, Esther Brown
26 William Hult, Elizabeth Hobbs,
Kate Parker, Thomas Maloney,
Denis Barker
27 Clare Lines, George Wapshott,
Peter Cox
28 Pamela Lipscombe,
Emma Wrighton, Isabel Rosser,
Phoebe Cowey, Marjorie Taylor
29 Peggy Wilson, Dorothy Long,
Horace Holmes
30 James Watson
31 Elizabeth Caton,
Michael Farren

Funerals in June

1st June

Thomas Simpson

St Mary's Church & Churchyard

22nd June

Anthony Russell

St Mary's Church & Churchyard

REST ETERNAL
GRANT TO THEM,
O LORD,
AND LET
LIGHT PERPETUAL
SHINE UPON THEM.

*“May they
rest in peace
and rise in glory.”*

In accordance with the law,
St Mary the Virgin Swanley
is offering limited
funeral services,
with a maximum number
of 39 mourners
or a service at a Crematorium
following their regulations,
(which will take into account
the physical constraints
of their chapel
and other facilities.)

Pandemic Relaxations: Not Yet But Not Never!

Obviously accurate forecasts are somewhere between difficult and impossible at the moment!

It is important to be clear: even when relaxations on personal freedoms were being expected, there was no guarantee that ***all*** present guidelines for places or worship were going to be removed. In particular, there was no suggestion that mask-wearing in places of worship would be discontinued, or singing in places of worship would be reintroduced, at the same time as the personal rules were eased.

It is NOT the Church of England which has prevented singing or the use of the Chalice: these are being regulated **by law**.

The government has to legislate for churches but also for other, more crowded, spaces which are used for worship by religions entirely unlike our own. They are having to assess fairness for all forms of religious worship and cannot give one priority over another. The four nations within the UK have different communities and different experiences and so their rules are changing because they have different circumstances.

It may be difficult to be patient, but that doesn't mean we are not called to follow the law and keep our impatience in check. We will all be glad for singing and the Chalice when they are once again available to us but they are not vital for our faith—however sustaining and enhancing we find them to be as individuals.

It will almost certainly be that before we are able to do away with social distancing entirely within churches, we will have to find a way of saying to people: 'keep back from my personal space, you're not welcome in it!' We will be discouraging hugging in churches for a considerable time because of the risks associated with going from person to person indiscriminately as this is exactly the sort of thing which enables the virus to spread and then to flourish. Even simply going up to people to chat to them, or plonking ourselves down on the seat next to them without having been invited or checking first that we're welcome so to do, is almost certainly going to be out of bounds for a long time to come. Keeping our distance will be important even when it is no longer the law.

People News

In June **Rose Ellis** took her next step in the religious life as she became a Novice within the House of Initia Nova which follows the Rule of St Benedict. This step sees her adopting a veil (which will make its way from the USA over the coming weeks) and will further extend the circumstances in which she becomes and inhabits Sister Sarah-Teresa the name which has been chosen for her by the Abbot of the community of which she is a member. The process of discernment is not quick and it is demanding; our prayers continue to go with her.

Yvonne Myers continues to battle with her macula degeneration: after receiving treatment far away, she's now back to being able to use Queen Mary's at Sidcup and they have been wonderfully kind. Injections in the eye not being pleasant, it's good to learn that they are making a difference and we hope that they might be administered less frequently over time if things continue to improve as they are.

Yvonne's grandson, **Spencer Myers**, is to take up a place on a motor mechanics course and we wish him well as he begins this new venture.

Nigel & Karen Conolly's son, **Michael**, is looking to buy a flat in the centre of Swanley—these things always take longer than you'd like so we wish him well throughout the process and send our prayers for patience and good fortune along the way.

A little bird tells us that **Holly Attwood** gained a distinction in her recent exam for playing the organ! Our congratulations go to her and good wishes, too, as she continues to explore her own musical versatility and that of the king of instruments—the pipe organ.

Flowers

What a delight it has been to see the return of flowers! Our thanks go to Chrissie and Joyce who have resumed their duties with their accustomed enthusiasm and expertise. Sponsorship for flowers is available but you can also just contribute to the general costs—like oasis, vases and other elements that support the way we glorify God through flowers—by speaking to one of the team, to Fr Dane or to Sandra.

Protecting Children & Vulnerable Adults

Those who have suffered abuse have been saying to the Church they are feel disbelieved and often feel that they are pushed away from their church family when they tell someone about abuse they have suffered. Members of churches often feel they are not equipped to deal with such serious matters and so they say that they can feel helpless in the face of a disclosure of something so important.

If you, or someone you're worried about is in immediate danger then call the police on 999.

For less immediate concerns, or for advice, there is always help available whether it's for victims and survivors or for those they tell: the diocese of Rochester has a professional safeguarding team who are available during usual working hours by telephoning 01634 560000. Over the weekends the charity thirtyone:eight has a helpline which you can access by telephoning 0303 003 11 11. The NSPCC has a telephone helpline on 0808 800 5000 and Stop It Now, run by the Lucy Faithfull Foundation, is on 0808 1000 900. Further resources and advice are available online.

Mission Partnership

The purpose of our Mission Partnership is to share expertise and experience across the four parishes serving Swanley, Bickley, Chislehurst and Belvedere. Our circumstances and challenges are different but learning from each other and supporting each other is a key feature of what it is to be church. After all, that's why we as individuals gather in our own church building, to emphasise that God calls us into relationship with Himself and

with one another and that we exist to serve others and contribute to their needs.

We will be having a Walsingham Day in September and originally that was to be at Belvedere but Fr Clive is going to take a half-sabbatical in the late Summer and so Fr Dane has offered to host the day at Swanley. We will be intending to incorporate some of the elements of a pilgrimage in a day of prayer and praise.

Armed Forces Day Flag Raising Ceremony



Picture Credit:
Cllr Connie Lee via Facebook

Sadly, Covid meant that Swanley's usual celebration of the commitment of our Armed Forces couldn't go ahead but the town still managed an uplifting flag raising blessing and ceremony.

The service was begun with prayer, then Deputy Lieutenant Rosemary Dymond spoke about the role of the Armed Services as our bodyguard and our lifeguard, stepping in to protect life and limb in the wake of disaster—be that natural or man-made—and the debt we owe to the courage and determination of those who serve. She spoke, too, of our continuing commitment to all who served in the past.

Armed Forces veterans were present—both from WWII and more recent service—together with Councillors from Swanley, Sevenoaks and Kent. After the Deputy Lieutenant, Cllr Paul Darrington (this year's Mayor of Swanley) spoke about the town's appreciation of the sacrifice of those who—together with their families—live among us and are serving or have served and he paid tribute to the cadets who are already making a difference to our community.

The Mayor then raised the flag where it will fly outside Swanley's Civic Centre until 5th July.

All of this was going on in the midst of all the bustle of the continued use of the Civic Centre as a Covid Vaccination Centre and each of the participants said they'd been asked on arrival if they were there for their job, and each one had been able to say with pride that they were already vaccinated!

This Month's Feasts

S Mary Magdelene is credited as the first person to encounter the resurrected Jesus and the first person to proclaim Him to others as resurrected. She is therefore known in some traditions (going back to the 9th century) as "The Apostle to the Apostles" having been sent out by Jesus to proclaim the resurrection to those whom he was sending out to proclaim the resurrection to the world.

Magdala, from which Mary came, was a small fishing village on the Sea of Galilee. The name Mary was very frequently used among first century Jewish families, and so where there was more than Mary (which happened often) they had to be distinguished from each other. One way of doing this was by the place each had come from, or another way was by the relationship to someone else, for instance 'mother of....', 'wife of....'.

Scholars contend that because Mary Magdalene is always listed first in any group of women of which she's a member, this shows that she was extremely important both to the group which the account is describing, but also to the writer of the account. There was a tradition which regarded Mary as a prostitute but this has been dismissed by scholars: it was an error which happened when two different stories (both featuring a woman called Mary) were brought together. The insult stuck: but it was wrong.

At a time when women's evidence was not valid testimony in Jewish law, Mary's role as the first to encounter the resurrection and then to proclaim it shows us that Jesus was not afraid to go beyond the contemporary norms and challenge traditions.

S Bridget of Sweden is one of six co-patrons of Europe. She was born in 1303 and founded a religious order, the Brigidines, in the 1340s comprising both men and women—not common today but extremely rare back then. They formed a single community but had separate cloisters and all lived a life of poverty—although they were allowed to own as many books as they liked. She took a small party to Rome and there established another community. She was much loved and it is said her face simply glowed with goodness. She agitated for Church reform: at a time when the Pope and the Papal Court had moved to Avignon in France, she stood firmly for its return to Rome and was hugely influential. She died in 1373, was canonized in 1391 and made co-patron of Europe in 1999.

Sunday Mass Pattern

All services in church and the churchyard are currently subject to an attendance limit of 39.

Our present Sunday pattern is:

4.30pm, Saturday: Children's Mass, First Mass of the Sunday

Adults are welcome, but the focus is on our young people!

11am, Sunday: Parish Mass

With music accompaniment.

4.30pm, Sunday: Parish Mass

A quiet and reflective unaccompanied Sunday afternoon Mass.

You can reserve your place for these Masses any time from the Wednesday before by phone, text, email or Facebook message.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC)
will meet on
Thurs 8th July 2021
Tuesday 14th September 2021
Wednesday 8th December 2021
via Zoom at 7.30pm

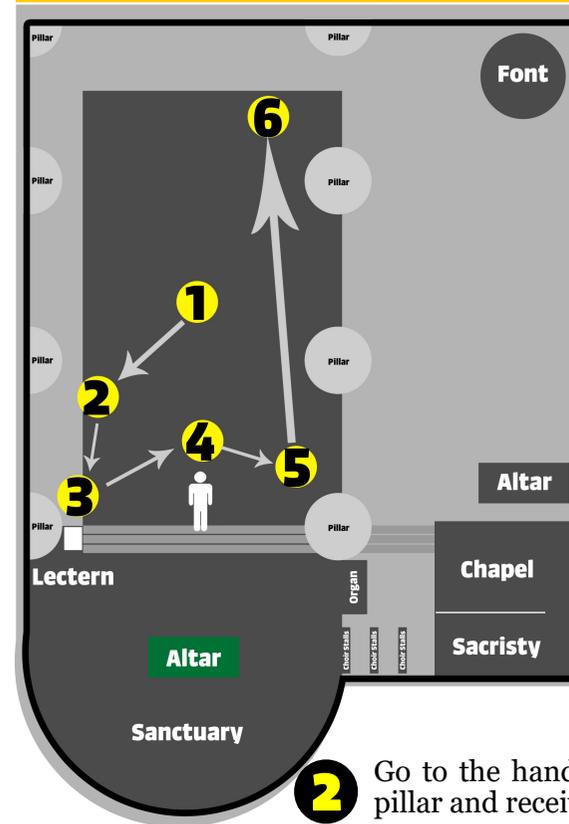
The Future of Otford Palace

The former Archbishop's Palace at Otford, Kent is a collection of early 16th Century buildings which has a rich history; none of the buildings are currently open to the public.

The Palace Conservation Trust want to use the site and buildings (mainly the North-West Tower of the Palace and the Gatehouse) to engage with a wide range of people from the locality and beyond to create a centre for the interpretation of the Darent Valley and its 4,000-year history. They want to recruit volunteers who will acquire new skills, particularly as visitor guides, and in undertaking museum tasks.

The Trust would like to know what uses the community can envisage for the site and buildings. They are asking for the views of Swanley residents: but rather than offering a survey asking people to rank possible uses the trust has suggested, they're inviting everyone to suggest ideas for the site's future. They have a budget (though it's not unlimited!). More information is available on their website, www.otfordpalace.org or their Facebook page. Ideas can be emailed to: secretary@otfordpalace.org

Receiving Holy Communion During the Pandemic



We are administering Communion in a rather different way from usual, so that we keep people safe.

The main point is that you receive your Communion and leave, don't go back to your seat.

It may look a bit complicated but in fact it's fairly easy to follow and we'll soon get into the habit.

1 Collect all your belongings: coat, bags, etc so you don't return to your seat.

2 Go to the hand sanitizer station by the pillar and receive one squirt of sanitizer.

3 Move to the lectern, where the strip of fabric hangs, and rub your hands together until the sanitizer has gone. Don't worry if it takes a long time, just keep going till your hands are dry!

4 Move to where the priest is standing: he will give you the Host: **he won't say anything and you won't say anything.** Move then to the statue of Our Lady.

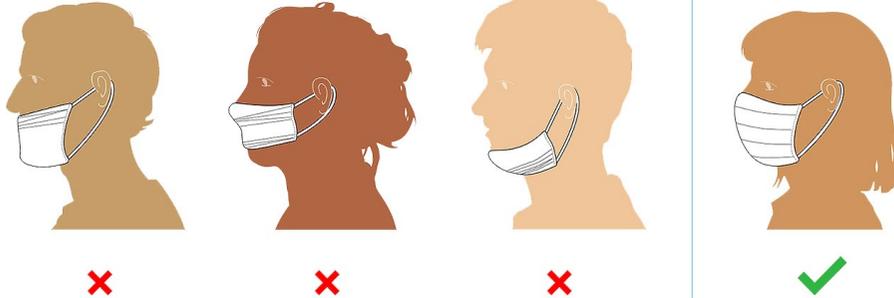
5 Once at the statue of Our Lady, you can consume the Host.

6 As soon as you have consumed the Host, go to the main door, sanitize your hands and go straight home.

Face-coverings Compulsory for all Services in Churches

A face-covering is required at Public Worship unless you are exempt, as defined by law.

A face-covering, or mask, must be sealed above the nose, below the mouth and the sides.



A visor may be worn by someone who is exempt but is not a substitute for a face-covering for anyone who is not exempt.

At present a maximum of 39 people can attend public worship or funerals here at St Mary's. This applies both within the building and outside in the churchyard.

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Notes on Gradual Re-opening

The Annual Meeting and the Church Council each reflected on the way ahead once we can begin to open up.

Some background notes: the ladies loo floor is drying out and it may be that we are able to reinstate the floor during July. We will need to follow advice regarding social distancing and a proper cleaning regime and at present that would mean the toilets remaining shut for the foreseeable future.

The hall remains full of the chairs which have been displaced from church.

Using the hall would mean setting a maximum number who could be in the building at any one time, then enforcing that number and requiring people to leave the building once that maximum had been reached. These are not popular tasks!

We will not re-establish a social events programme or anything like free access to church or hall before September.

There are a number of reasons for this: but amongst the most powerful is that we are intending to ensure that people can devote time in the summer to doing things they're allowed (at last) to do: including go away, see friends and family and also relax! We don't want anyone to feel that they 'ought' to be in church and find that an imposition or a crimp on their lives. Let us use this summer for ourselves, our families and our friends.

We will look to open the hall when we don't have to police numbers or take responsibility for the events which are happening there.



All are welcome to join the 100 Club: you pay £1 a week and each month three lucky numbers are drawn: the first wins £70, the second £40 and the third £20. The draws are done on the first Sunday of the month and you have to be up to date to be in that month's draw. This is a way of supporting the church and also having the prospect of a welcome win every now and then! If you'd like to know more, talk to Sandra Merrick.

In this series for 2021, we're examining ways in which we can show our love for our neighbours.

Our Scriptural focuses are:

Listen without interrupting

Proverbs 18:13

Speak without accusing

James 1:19-20

Give without sparing

Proverbs 21:26

Pray without ceasing

Colossians 1:9

Answer without arguing

Proverbs 17:1

Share without pretending

Ephesians 4:15-16

Enjoy without complaint

Philippians 2:14

Trust without wavering

1 Corinthians 13:7

Forgive without punishing

Colossians 3:13

Promise without forgetting

Proverbs 13:12

Ephesians 4: 15-16

"¹⁵ If we live by the truth and in love, we shall grow in all ways into Christ, who is the head ¹⁶by whom the whole body is fitted and joined together, every joint adding its own strength, for each separate part to work according to its function. So the body grows until it has built itself up, in love."



If you are making a chair for people simply to look at, you could make it out of rolled-up newspapers, painted and shaped to look like a chair. Of course, as soon as someone sat on it, it would be obvious that it wasn't a chair at all, it just looked like one.

We need to be careful to ensure that our Christian faith isn't merely a show, unable to bear any weight: ticking boxes, telling others how they should behave, but not actually fulfilling our calling, not playing our part.

We are part of the strength of the Church when we put our actual effort into the work of

faith. We cannot coast along, whilst fooling ourselves, thinking we have an active faith but not bearing the weight of one. Our task is to work for the good of others and the good of the Gospel.

Acknowledging that church is not a society of saints but a school for sinners, we need to recognize our own need for repentance—and then actually repent—way before we tell others of their need to recognize sin and defeat it in their lives. We need to identify much more as fellow-travellers and not as superior.

The building up in faith can only be done by love: there is

no carrot and stick in church, there is only God's law of love by which we are brought to know that we fall short and enabled to grow through love into something better, a person in whom grace, kindness, love, mercy and goodwill are seen by all. Anything other than this falls short and requires us to repent and change our ways and lives.

If we are stuck in a rut and are not showing forth the very best of the God who adores us, then we must earnestly pray and work for this change. If we are resistant to what we know is right, then we need to see that being inhabited by wickedness is no way to heaven! So we work, with God's Spirit within us, to overcome our hardness of heart. We can be confident of victory because God has overcome all that separates us from Him—even death.

Our proclaiming of the Gospel needs to be authentic: our sharing of love must be without pretence. Our humility before the Lord must be total. If all this sounds like hard work, well... it is! But it is worth it because not only do we transform ourselves when we overcome pretence, we help others learn and change, too.