

OUR LADY OF GILLINGHAM



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Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark CIO, Registered Charity 1173050

18th May 2025 FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER - Year C

Reading 1	Acts 14:21-27	<i>They gave an account to the church of all that God had done with them.</i>
Psalm	Ps 144:8-9, 10-11, 12-13	<i>I will bless your name for ever, O God my King. or Alleluia!</i>
Reading 2	Apoc 21:1-5a	<i>God will wipe away all tears from their eyes.</i>
Gospel Acclamation	John 13: 34	<i>Jesus said: 'I give you a new commandment: love one another, just as I have loved you.'</i>
Gospel	John 13:31-35	<i>I give you a new commandment: love one another.</i>

Readers this week

6.30pm Janette Alfayad Joseph Kuruvilla /	9.30am Tania Jackson/ Sharon Chinwuba	11.30am Michelle, Anush, Sussan	6.30pm Anastasia Ebifa/ Victoria Shosanya
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Readers next week:

6.30pm Imelda Cervantes/ Yolanda Danday	9.30am Edeji Family	11.30am Dinah Kansime/ Shakira Kara	6.30pm Daniella Ibeh/ Nidhiya Cicily Joseph
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✘ Please pray for Lewis & Danny Lee†, Pope Francis†, Marie & Eric Jones†, Angela Singh†, and Clive and Beryl Brookert†, who have recently died and for those whose anniversaries occur about this time:

✘ Pauline Clifford, Michael Cullen, Alice O'

✘ May their souls, and all the souls of the faithful departed, rest in peace. Amen

Collections: Last week's collection in church amounted to £638.54 of which £42.30 was Gift Aided and the second collection amounted to £134.53 of which £39.60 was Gift Aided. Thank you.



Use the QR code to be used for your weekly offerings and second collections.

Parish Notices

TODAY IS SAFEGUARDING SUNDAY - A letter from the Archbishop will be read. You can find out more about Safeguarding Sunday, including accessing the full pastoral letter, at rcaos.org.uk/safeguardingsunday25 or via the QR code. Information leaflets are available at the back of the church.



MAY IS THE MONTH OF OUR LADY – A reminder that the Rosary is recited before the weekday Masses at 9.30

Filipino May Procession next Saturday 24th May at 2pm following the Filipino Mass. Everyone is welcome.

HOPE IN ADORATION - As part of the Jubilee Year, Archbishop John Wilson is encouraging all people to turn to the Lord Jesus in Eucharistic Adoration and have their hopes “fulfilled by Christ”. **Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament** (Holy Hour) is every **Friday at 6.15pm** here at the Church. Please attend and receive the blessings of the Lord.

LEGION OF MARY - You are invited to join the **Legion of Mary** in our Parish; the Catholic lay faithful serving the person of Jesus Christ under the leadership of Mary, Queen and Mother. See poster at the back of the church or speak to Deacon Mike

ASSISTED SUICIDE PETITION - If you have returned signed petition sheets to our London office, THANK YOU. If not, send them please to: **Care Not Killing Alliance, 8 Marshalsea Road, London, SE1 1HL** in order that arrangements can be made for the petitions to be presented to Parliament before the final vote on the Bill which is looking more likely to take place next month in the House of Commons following last Friday’s debate. If you have not yet registered your concerns with your MP you can



do so as the **ONLINE** version of the Petition is being kept open for the time being. Please feel free to use this website link <https://carenotkilling.org.uk/petition/> OR the **QR code** so that we can send messages to Parliament.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION – Congratulations to all the children who received the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ last weekend. 11.30 Mass this weekend is for their Thanksgiving, followed by a Thanksgiving Breakfast.

CONFIRMATION –Preparation classes have started in the Parish Hall on Mondays at 7pm in the Parish hall for those children who are in Year 9 and above.

JUBILEE CELEBRATION AT AYLESFORD PRIORY – Archbishop John is inviting us all to join him at Aylesford Priory on Saturday 7 June, 10 am-5 pm, for our Archdiocese of Southwark Jubilee Celebration Day. It promises to be a great event! For more information, visit aec.rcaos.org.uk/jubilee_celebration. That’s also where you go to register for 90-minute ministry sessions for children (KS1+2) and young people (KS3+4)

DAY FOR LIFE 15 JUNE.- In preparation, the Bishops are inviting the faithful to pray the **Novena for Life** from 23 May until the Feast of the Visitation on 31 May. Details will be available shortly on the Bishops’ Conference website and at: <https://prayforlife.ie/>

PARISH DAY AND COMMISSIONING OF LAY READERS – will take place on Sunday 17th August at the 11.30am Mass. Also all our former lay readers shall be acknowledged

PASTORAL LETTER FROM ARCHBISHOP JOHN WILSON

In today's Gospel, the Lord Jesus speaks words to us which strike directly to the heart of our Christian calling: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

Love is not a mere sentiment, but an action. It is a way of living that demands our full faithfulness to Christ. And today - when we consider the role Safeguarding plays in the life of the Church - we are reminded that one of the clearest and most necessary ways we live out this love is by ensuring the protection, dignity, and wellbeing of the most vulnerable amongst us.

The Church, entrusted with proclaiming the Good News, must be a place where the vulnerable are safe; where the wounded are heard, and where all are welcomed with compassion. The safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults is not a peripheral issue. It is central to our faithfulness as disciples of the Lord Jesus. It is a sacred responsibility — and one that I, as your Archbishop, carry with deep humility and vigilance.

Paul and Barnabas encouraged the early Christian communities to remain faithful through their tribulations; and indeed, the Church continues to endure trials — including the painful reality of abuse that has harmed countless lives. But from such suffering, we are called to remain faithful to the authentic message of God's love. With repentance and resolve, we must commit ourselves to renewal, endeavouring to make the Church a sanctuary where trust is restored, the Good News preached without fear, and Christ's love is made visible in our care for one another.

Our beloved late Holy Father, Pope Francis, made safeguarding a priority of the Church's mission, reminding us that people who suffer abuse "are the Lord's wounded flesh." They must be met with justice and mercy. To this end, he urged every diocese in the world to establish clear systems of accountability, transparency, and accompaniment for survivors.

In the Archdiocese of Southwark, we have committed wholeheartedly to this vision. Our diocesan safeguarding structures are grounded in professionalism, collaboration, and continuous improvement. Clergy and Parish Safeguarding Representatives work with our central safeguarding team — a group of dedicated and experienced professionals who ensure safer recruitment, manage concerns, and support survivors with care and discretion.

We collaborate closely with the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency, statutory bodies, and safeguarding charities to ensure our practices are both rigorous and responsive.

Safeguarding is not the work of a few. It is a shared responsibility for us all. Each of us — clergy, volunteers, parents, parishioners — is called to remain vigilant and informed, and committed to the well-being of every member of our community.

Part of being a faithful Catholic today entails being someone who safeguards. If we want to be genuine in our discipleship, as followers of the Lord Jesus, we need to ensure that our parishes are places of integrity, accountability, and healing. It means taking safeguarding training seriously. It means reporting concerns without fear or delay. It means supporting survivors with prayer, compassion, and tangible care.

As the Psalmist reminds us today, we are called to reflect the divine mercy of God by creating communities where no one is overlooked, silenced, or left behind. In September this year — on the 24 September at 6pm, to be precise — we will come together for our annual *Archdiocesan Service for Those Harmed by Abuse* at St George’s Metropolitan Cathedral. It is a moment of prayer and solidarity, a public expression of our deep sorrow and our hope for healing. I invite all who can to attend. Let it be a sign that this archdiocese listens, and that it stands with those who suffer.

We also continue to make practical support available to anyone affected by abuse, whether it has occurred within the Church or elsewhere. Our safeguarding team is ready to offer a compassionate response, rooted in the message of love proclaimed in today’s Gospel.

And so, let me return to that Gospel: “Just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.” This commandment calls us to more than private devotion. It challenges us to become a Church of justice and protection, a place where Christ’s love is manifest in action. Our faithfulness is measured by how we care for the most vulnerable. Our discipleship is revealed in the courage to confront wrongdoing, to support those who suffer, and to build a future where the Church is safe for all.

Mass intentions for the week

Saturday 17 th May	10.00am	In Thanksgiving for 25 th Wedding Anniversary of Jennifer & her husband
Vigil Mass	6.30pm	Pro Populo
Sunday 18 th	9.30am	Repose of the souls of Clive & Beryl Brooker
	11.30am	First Holy Communion - Thanksgiving
	6.30pm	Repose of the soul of James Woodford
Monday 19 th St Dunstan, Bishop	10.00am	Repose of the soul of Danny Lee & wellbeing of Alfreda & Colin Smith
Tuesday 20 th St Bernadine of Siena. Priest	10.00am	Repose of the souls of Clive & Beryl Brooker
Wednesday 21 st	10.00am	Steve Dawson’ intentions & for Alfreda Smiths’ recovery
Thursday 22 nd St Rita of Cascia, Religious	10.00am	Repose of the soul of Lilian Huckings
Friday 23 rd	10.00am	Repose of the souls of Clive & Beryl Brooker & Theresa Cottam’s birthday
	7.30pm	Repose of the soul of Joseph Mackenzie
Saturday 24 th	10.00am	Intentions of Santana Ahares
	12.30	Filipino Mass
Vigil Mass	6.30pm	Repose of the souls of Danny & Lewis Lee