

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SOULS OF THOSE WHO HAVE DIED:

Brenda Kavanagh; Silvana Arzilli; Alia Abdulraheen Salim;
Faik Francis Hanna;
and all the faithful departed.

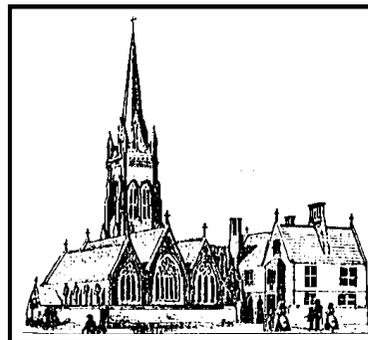
**OUR SATURDAY MORNING MASS IS OFFERED FOR
THE SICK AND THE HOUSEBOUND**

5th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME 2026
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Saturday	7th February		
		6.00 pm	Silvana Arzilli (RIP)
SUNDAY	8th	8.30 am	The People of the Parish
		10.00 am	Ints of Carmela Bertorelli (health)
5th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME		12 Noon	Ints of Caroline Gambles (health)
		6.00 pm	Brenda Kavanagh (RIP - anniv)
Monday	9th	9.30 am	-
Tuesday	10th	9.30am	-
		10.30am	Tuesday Morning Prayer Group
St Scholastica, Virgin		2.30pm	St Anthony Prayer Group
Wednesday	11th	No Mass today. Church is closed.	
Our Lady of Lourdes			
Thursday	12th	9.30am	-
Friday	13th	9.30am	-
Saturday	14th	9.00 am	Ints of Archbishop Richard
Ss CYRIL & METHODIUS		Church closed after Mass	
BISHOPS, PATRONS OF EUROPE		until 4.30pm	

**CONFESSIONS: SATURDAY 10.30 - 11.20AM ; 5.00 - 5.40PM
OR BY ARRANGEMENT**

**THE PARISH OFFICE IS OPEN MONDAY, TUESDAY, THURSDAY & FRIDAY
11AM - 3PM, (Closed on Wednesday)**



**CATHOLIC CHURCH OF
St THOMAS OF CANTERBURY, FULHAM**

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Administrator: Mr Gerald Daly**

**Safeguarding Representative: Ms Shirley Mills
Email: fulhamsg@safeguardrcdow.org.uk**

Dear Friends... *After last Sunday's Gospel, more about happiness...*
Once upon a time, fairy tales ended with "and they lived happily ever after." A more honest version that was recently shared online read: "*So the prince and princess lowered their expectations and lived reasonably contentedly ever after.*" Isn't that what the fairy tales meant in the first place?
Somewhere along the way, we stopped hoping for *good* and started expecting *perfect*. Perfect relationships that never disappoint. Perfect children who reflect our best efforts. Perfect bodies, holidays, careers, and even spiritual lives. Social media hasn't created all this pressure, but it has certainly amplified it - offering us a steady stream of beautifully filtered moments that suggest everyone else has it all figured out.
The trouble is not hope. Hope is essential. The trouble is confusing hope with entitlement, and then wondering why life feels so heavy. Expectations show up as that low-level frustration, the sense that things should be easier by now, or the nagging feeling that you're somehow behind. They slip into marriage, into parenting, into faith, into the way we rest - or fail to. And when reality doesn't cooperate, disappointment often takes the lead, followed by discouragement. Without realizing it, we begin to believe that contentment is something we'll reach once life finally looks the way we imagined it would.
But managing expectations isn't about giving up on joy. It's about growing into wisdom. Lowering expectations doesn't mean abandoning dreams or settling for less. It means learning to love life as it is, not as you hoped it would be by now, the quiet realisation that many of the most meaningful things - love, faith, growth, holiness - unfold slowly and imperfectly. They don't announce themselves with fireworks. They arrive gently, often disguised as routine.
There's a freedom that comes when you stop demanding that life performs for you. When you allow people to be human, plans to change, prayer to be dry at times, and love to look more faithful than flashy, something inside you softens. Gratitude finds space. Peace becomes possible.
Catholic wisdom has always understood this. Holiness is rarely dramatic. More often, it is faithful endurance, virtue in the everyday, choosing love again, staying present, and trusting that God is at work even when nothing looks extraordinary. And perhaps that's the real happy ending: not flawless joy, but deep contentment. Lowered expectations don't shrink a life, they make room for it. And honestly, that "*reasonably contentedly ever after*" sounds like a grace-filled way to live!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY IN GIVING

Don't forget you can also make an offering via the 'Touch & Tap' at the door. For details of methods of Planned Giving, see the leaflet at the door of Church. Parish bank account details are below, and on the website *Donate* page.

PARISH BANK DETAILS: HSBC

Sort code: 40-05-20 Acct. No.: 11263137

Acct name: WRC DT ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY FULHAM

CHANGES NEXT SATURDAY: On Saturday 14th Feb Saturday Mass will be at **9.00am**. Church will then be **closed** and there are no devotions or Reconciliation. Church opens again at 4.30pm for the evening Mass. This is because of the Installation of Archbishop Richard at the Cathedral.

CRIB OFFERINGS: THANK YOU for your support of the Crib Appeal during the days of Christmas in support of the Catholic Children's Society (Westminster). This raised £536.00 to support this valuable work.

IT'S TIME TO RETURN PALM CROSSES: Next Sunday (15 Feb 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time) is the **LAST DAY** you can return palm crosses to be burned to make ash in preparation for Ash Wednesday. A basket for the purpose is at the doors of church.

SOCIETY OF St VINCENT DE PAUL (SVP): Next planning meeting is on **Thursday 19 February at 7.30pm in No.62**. Open to any who are interested. We are now at the stage of processing membership applications. Whether you want to be involved in the new Conference of the SVP or not, please pray for this initiative.

ARE THE LIVING STONES STILL ALIVE? THE CHRISTIANS OF THE MIDDLE EAST: At Our Lady of Victories Parish Centre 16 Abingdon Road W8 6 AF; 7 -9pm Thurs 19 Feb. *6.30pm light refreshments. This event will be steamed via Zoom*

Dr Harry Hagopian **KSG KSL** *In conversation with* Dr Ruth Valerio, Programmes Director for *Embrace the Middle East*. Moderator: Bishop Jim Curry, Lead Bishop for the Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales for the Holy Land.

ANNUAL MASS OF THANKSGIVING FOR THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY MATRIMONY: Sat. 23rd May at 2:30pm in the Cathedral. The Archbishop is inviting to this Mass all couples in the diocese who are celebrating their **5th 10th, 25th, 30th, 40th, 50th and 60th (and every year over 60)** wedding anniversary of Catholic marriage in 2026. If you are celebrating an anniversary and would like to join the Archbishop, please contact the office with these details, **before 10th April:** Names of

both spouses; postal address and contact email (or telephone number, if no email); date and place of Catholic Marriage. ***This is always a wonderful and moving event.***

RETREAT FOR YOUNG WOMEN WITH THE LITTLE SISTERS OF THE POOR: The Little Sisters of the Poor invite young women, aged 17-35, for a 4 day retreat at St Anne's Home, 77 Manor Road, N16 5BL. From 3pm on 2 April (Holy Thursday) till 6pm on 5 April (Easter Sunday), although attendees are welcome to stay for 1-2 days only. A donation is suggested to cover costs. To register and find out more please email Sister Caroline at: ms.stanne@lsplondon.co.uk.

ARCHBISHOP RICHARD MOTH: On Saturday Archbishop-Elect Richard becomes our Bishop. He was born in Zambia in 1958 and grew up in Kent. He was ordained priest for the diocese of Southwark in 1982. He served as assistant priest in two south London parishes as well as training in Canon Law, in 2001 becoming Chancellor of the diocese and Vicar General. He was ordained Bishop of the Forces in 2009, being also a Territorial Army Chaplain, and then became Bishop of Arundel in 2015. He leads the bishops in liaison for prisons and the promotion of Catholic Social Teaching, and is closely involved with support to Holy Land Christians. ***Let us pray for him especially this week as he prepares for his ministry to us in Westminster.***

Come to see RISE Theatre's PASSION PLAY this Lent at St Thomas of Canterbury Fulham: Tuesday 10 March at 7.30pm (in the school, Estcourt Road)



A chance to experience this powerful one act, one hour drama: From John 1:1-18 "The Word Became Flesh", moving through Gospel moments - The Wedding Feast at Cana; the calling of Simon; the Miraculous Catch of Fish and then into the main Passion Story, Rise Theatre's unique style creates a fast-paced, emotionally impacting performance to enrich our Lenten devotions and preparation for Holy Week.

For tickets visit www.ticketsource.co.uk/risetheatre or from the Office or in Church after Mass today: £10 or £5 under 16 years.

See poster in church or visit www.youtube.com/risetheatrecompany to watch the trailer (*Passion Play Highlights 2024*).

(Performance 1 hour approx. and includes a dramatic interpretation of the crucifixion so Parental Guidance is advised for under 12s.

In aid of RISE Theatre and St Thomas of Canterbury S.V.P.