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 Parish Giving: [www.Parishofthegoodshepherd.uk/giving/](http://www.Parishofthegoodshepherd.uk/giving/)  
 St Paul's Mass Live Streaming: [www.churchservices.tv/dover](http://www.churchservices.tv/dover)  
<https://www.youtube.com/@stpaulsdoverstfinbarrsayle7499streams>



## FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT – YEAR A

### 21<sup>st</sup> DECEMBER 2025 - Missal P13 Order of the Mass P470



**CHRISTMAS CONCERT TODAY (SUNDAY) AT ST PAUL'S.**  
*Christmas songs and carols from a new choir, including winning members from the BBC TV show 'Sing While you Work'. 6.30pm tonight at St Paul's. Doors open at 6pm. Free Entry, Raffle & Refreshments. Raising money for Parish Funds- 'World Youth Day, 2027' for our young people.*

**PRIEST'S CORNER:** I would like to thank our Choirs at both Churches for all the efforts in preparing for



the Christmas Carols and for the beautiful rendition last Sunday at Dover and last Wednesday at Aylesham. Your ministry of Singing brought so much joys to our both Churches and we are grateful for what you do. Thank you also to the events team for preparing all the refreshment for our many visitors on the carol night. Thank you and Merry Christmas. Fr. Leo

**GOSPEL REFLECTION: FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT YEAR A.** The promise made by God through the prophesy of Isaiah that a Savior of the world will be born became a reality when the Angel Gabriel visited Mary and she accepted the will of God in her life. Again, the message that the Savior will come through the line of David became possible through Joseph who accepted to keep Mary as his wife even when circumstances surrounding her pregnancy was not clear to him. The humility of Joseph was so significant in the whole of God's plan for the world. He wanted to send Mary away without disgracing her publicly after hearing Mary's side of the story which was a little bit difficult to understand and accept with the limited human mind. Joseph by paying attention to the Angel who spoke to him in a dream, he gave up his plan and took Mary as his wife. Even though the angel referred to the prophesy of Isaiah regarding the pregnancy which Joseph may know, that doesn't make it any easier for him to digest and accept. This is where faith and trust in God played significant role in his final decision to take Mary into his home. Is it possible for us to learn a lesson from the noble plan Joseph had before the Angel revealed to him his role in salvific story? He chose not to disgrace Mary. Sometimes we want to see the person who seemingly betrayed us go down and disgraced. Joseph took a noble path of not hurting back. This time of Christmas is an opportunity for us to redress our thoughts about others and seek reconciliation. The Angel may as well tell us something about that frightening decision of forgiving and letting go those who hurt us which may affect our joys at this time.



**CHRISTMAS OFFERING** Envelopes are available at the back of both churches for your Christmas Offering to support our Clergy. Please keep them in your prayers and may God bless you and your families for your generosity especially during this Christmas season.



## MASS AND CONFESSION SCHEDULES OVER CHRISTMAS 2025



CHRISTMAS CONFESSIONS-PENITENTIAL SERVICES	22 <sup>ND</sup> DECEMBER, 11AM - 12PM 23 <sup>RD</sup> DECEMBER, 6-7PM	ST. PAUL'S, DOVER
CHRISTMAS CONFESSIONS-PENITENTIAL SERVICES	23 <sup>RD</sup> DECEMBER, 11AM-12PM	ST. FINBARR'S, AYLESHAM
CHRISTMAS VIGIL 24 <sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER	6PM MASS WITH CHILDREN'S NATIVITY (CAROLS AT 5:30PM) ----- 10PM MASS (CAROLS AT 9:30 PM)	ST PAUL'S, DOVER
CHRISTMAS VIGIL 24 <sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER	7PM MASS (CAROLS AT 6:30PM)	ST FINBARR'S, AYLESHAM
CHRISTMAS DAY	10AM MASS	ST PAUL'S, DOVER
CHRISTMAS DAY	10.30AM MASS	ST FINBARR'S, AYLESHAM

**CHRISTMAS FLOWERS** collections raised £347.65. Thank you for your generosity.

**APPRECIATION** St Finbarr's pastoral service team would like to sincerely thank all our parishioners and friends of the parish who contributed generously in cash and kind to our two recent fundraising projects - the tombola at the Aylesham Christmas Fair and sale of Christmas raffle tickets. We had many happy winners! Together, we raised a total of £258. To the team, including our young volunteers who worked tirelessly to ensure the success of both projects, we are truly grateful. All proceeds go towards parish projects. Every little helps! Thank you, thank you, thank you.

**PLEASE PRAY FOR** Peter Grilli, the brother of Theresa Gordon, who has passed away. Peter was a regular attendee at Mass at St Paul's. Peter's Requiem Mass will take place on **Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> January at 1pm** at St Paul's followed by burial at St James' Cemetery. Also, please pray for Jeanette Peters who has died. Jeanette was a parishioner of St Finbarr's. Funeral details to follow. May Peter and Jeanette Rest in Peace, Amen.

**SUNDAY MORNING COFFEE** There will be no coffee at St Paul's on **Sunday, 28<sup>th</sup> December** after the 9am Mass. The Sunday Morning coffee team are in desperate need of more volunteers to enable it to continue. Please contact Anne Castle if you would be willing to join the rota. Tel 07833 593599

**FIRST HOLY COMMUNION (FHC) 2026 GROUP** St Paul's and St Finbarr's commences on **SATURDAY 3<sup>rd</sup>, January 9.30am, St Paul's Church Hall**, and on **SUNDAY 4<sup>th</sup>, January 9.30am, at St Finbarr's Church**. This is the first of the weekly preparation classes and will continue on successive Saturdays at St Paul's and Sundays at St Finbarr's until June 2026, with the exception of half and end of term school holidays. Both at St Paul's and St Finbarr's every child **MUST** attend each of the FHC sessions and **STAY** with their parent throughout. This helps parents to: better understand the program; support their child's ongoing development and meet and support other FHC parents. **FHC application forms are available** at the back of both churches, or by emailing Deacon Barry [barrybarton@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:barrybarton@rcaos.org.uk) or Carina at [carinamjarvie@aol.com](mailto:carinamjarvie@aol.com) or downloading a copy from the parish website, along with additional information at: <https://www.parishofthegoodshepherd.uk/reconciliation-first-holy-communion/> Deacon Barry, Carina Jarvie.

**MUSTARD SEEDS** will be having their **Christmas Party** for both the Junior and Youth groups after **11:00 Mass** today, **Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup> December, 12pm- 2pm**. Thank you to all those children who have joined us throughout the year.

**THE MUSTARD SEEDS CHRISTMAS NATIVITY.** Families who would like their child or children between the ages of 3-15 to take part in the Nativity at St Paul's Catholic Church during the **Christmas Eve Mass on Wednesday, 24<sup>th</sup> December**, are warmly invited to join us! **Rehearsals continue today**, after the 9:00 a.m. Mass. Rehearsals last for around 30 minutes. Squash and snacks will be provided. We will meet in the **Upper Room** in the church hall.

**THE ADULT RCIA COURSE** is on a break and will restart on **Monday, 19<sup>th</sup> January 2026**.

**HOLY ROSARY AND BIBLE STUDY AT ST PAUL'S.** No sessions on 25<sup>th</sup> December or 1<sup>st</sup> January. Will restart on **Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> January**.

**CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM ARCHBISHOP JOHN WILSON**, “The beautiful truth of Christmas is that because of God in Christ we are never lost. God chose to be near us, to stay close to us always, to draw us to himself, always. In his endless mercy, the Lord Jesus chose to love us, so we could know and believe that “God is love” (1 John 4:16). In turn, all the Lord Jesus asks of us is to not be afraid and to say yes to him, to draw close to him, to love him”. You can watch and read the full message at [rcaos.org.uk/christmasmessage2025](https://rcaos.org.uk/christmasmessage2025)



**WINTER SOUP KITCHEN (WSK) ST PAUL'S CHURCH HALL:** Every Sunday afternoon from 4pm - 6pm. We provide a warm space for those who are homeless or lonely or just needing a place to chat on a Sunday. Caring for the homeless and the needy in our community is a duty in Christ. Let's do our bit for the Lord. Fr. Leo.

**ADMISSION TO PRIMARY SCHOOL IN KENT 2026, ST RICHARD'S, DOVER AND ST JOSEPH'S, AYLESHAM** Apply online at <https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/school-places/primary-school> closes midnight on Thursday, 15th January 2026, for children born between 1 September 2021 and 31 August 2022, transferring to Primary School in September 2026.

**2026 CATHOLIC DIARIES**, Advent Calendars, Christmas and other cards plus rosaries, etc. are on sale in St Paul's Hall every Sunday between 10am and 10:55 am

Parish of the Good Shepherd Dover and Aylesham 'Called to Bear Fruit': Parish Renewal, 2025		
Mustard Seed Children's Liturgy	Every Third Sunday 9am Resumes January 2026	St Paul's Upper Hall, Dover
St Jude's Prayer Group	Every Third Monday 2pm – 3pm	St Paul's Hall, Dover
Winter Soup Kitchen	Every Sunday 4pm – 6pm	St Paul's Hall, Dover
Fides Prayer Group	Every Wednesday 6:40pm for 7pm Resumes 14 <sup>th</sup> January 2026	St Paul's Hall, Dover
Junior Youth Group	Every First Saturday 1pm – 4pm Resumes January 2026	St Paul's Hall, Dover
RCIA Course	Every Monday 7pm Resumes 19 <sup>th</sup> January	St Paul's Upper Hall, Dover
Christmas Nativity Rehearsals	Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup> December After 9am Mass	St Paul's Upper Room, Dover

### FAMILY PRAYER- BEFORE THE CHRISTMAS TREE



Holy Creator of Trees, bless with your abundant grace this our Christmas tree, as a symbol of joy. May its evergreen branches be a sign of your never-fading promises. May its colorful lights and ornaments call us to decorate with love our home and our world. May the gifts that surround this tree be symbols of the gifts we have received from the Tree of Christ's Cross. Holy Christmas tree within our home, may Joy and Peace come and nest in your branches and in our hearts. Amen." —Author Unknown

#### Please Pray for those who are unwell:

**St Finbarr's:** Audrey Stitt, Elisabet Sulianti, Gabriela le Bohec, Charlie Golden, Tina Isaacs, Ray Deverson, Lucy Purbrick, Amanda Dennis, Jadon Michael Kalp, Denise Mastro, Tara Conklin, Jamie Chitwood.

**St Paul's:** Mary Mee, Carol Manton, Oliver O'Connor, Helen Scopes, John Doyle, Maria Frost, Roz & Rob Pain, Rosa Mazzitelli, David Meadows, Roselene Hindle, Sr Rani Xavier, Thanima Jayan, Janice & Livra Fernandes, Catriona Stark, Mary Pressnell, Gaby Anaya Amor, Pat Evans, Shirley Lazarus, Shirley Jefford, Gail White, Neil Stevens, John & Joyce Nix, Bailey Turner, Peggy Merrell, Ryan Whittall, Iris (Tilly) Ball, Jean Ann Dowle, Norman Woolhouse, Ted Peel, Christopher Browne, Angela, Alice Wilson, Angela Henbrey, Madison Woodall, Elisa Gomez Melero, Ann Tomalak, Cathy Huntley, Emin Jain, Pat & Patricia Sherratt, Chris Roy, Mary Mee.

#### Please Pray for those whose death anniversaries occur this week:

**St Finbarr's:** Bryan Peter Finn, William Phelan, Maria Agnes Borgarello, Elizabeth Symcox, Carlos Monge, Mary Knight, Patricia Ann Golden, Gerard Patrick Moore, Teresa Breen, Helen Brazier, Ellen Jane Jarvis.

**St Paul's:** Pamela Curd, Elizabeth Ann Chidwick, Fr. David Maher, Bobbie Crascall, Eugenia Gluchowska, Ernest Alfred Huntley, Dennis Casey, Kathleen Smith, May Carroll, Victor Grant, Pauline Mahon, Bernard Skippen, Edith Millar, Brian Munro, Bernard King, Kathleen Bowles, Cliff May, Bob Francis, Isabel Baleste Fontbuena, Bob Wright, Bishop Francis Walmsley, Silvana Prus, Sr. Margaret Crawford DC.



**WISHING ALL OUR  
PARISHIONERS A VERY  
HAPPY AND HOLY CHRISTMAS**



**EVENTS THIS WEEK AT ST. FINBARR'S**

<b>FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT</b>	<b>Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> December</b>	<b>11am</b>	Mass for Liz and Fran RIP (Bett)
	<b>Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> December</b>	<b>11am</b>	<b>Christmas Confessions until 12pm</b>
<b>CHRISTMAS VIGIL</b>	<b>Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> December</b>	<b>7pm</b>	Mass for People of the Parish Christmas Vigil (Carols at 6:30pm)
<b>THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD</b>	<b>Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> December</b>	<b>10:30am</b>	Mass for People of the Parish
<b>THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH</b>	<b>Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> December</b>	<b>11am</b>	Mass for Orphans and Widows Worldwide

**EVENTS THIS WEEK AT ST. PAUL'S**

	<b>Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> December</b>	<b>10am</b>	Mass in St. Edmund's Chapel for Fr John Ryan RIP (Nicholas Harby)
		<b>5pm</b>	Confessions in the Church (until 5:45pm)
		<b>6pm</b>	Mass for G/E Donor 'F'
<b>FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT</b>	<b>Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> December</b>	<b>9am</b>	Mass for David Maher RIP
		<b>11am</b>	Coffee after Mass
		<b>3pm</b>	Mass for Pauline Mahon RIP (Jim)
		<b>4pm</b>	Exposition and Divine Mercy Chaplet
			Winter Soup Kitchen in the Hall until 6pm
	<b>Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> December</b>	<b>10am</b>	Mass for Staff of Dover House Care Home (Theresa)
		<b>11am</b>	<b>Christmas Confessions Until 12pm</b>
	<b>Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> December</b>	<b>10am</b>	Mass for Harry and Mary Curtin RIP (John and Mary)
		<b>6pm</b>	<b>Christmas Confessions Until 7pm</b>
<b>CHRISTMAS VIGIL</b>	<b>Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> December</b>	<b>6pm</b>	Mass for Children of the Parish with Children's Nativity (Carols at 5:30pm)
		<b>10pm</b>	Mass for People of the Parish (Carols at 9.30pm)
<b>THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD</b>	<b>Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> December</b>	<b>10am</b>	Mass for People of the Parish
<b>SAINT STEPHEN, DEACON, THE FIRST MARTYR</b>	<b>Friday 26<sup>th</sup> December</b>	<b>10am</b>	Mass for Altar Servers of the Parish
<b>SAINT JOHN, APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST</b>	<b>Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> December</b>	<b>10am</b>	Mass in St. Edmund's Chapel for Spread of the Gospel in 2026
		<b>5pm</b>	Confessions in the Church (until 5:45pm)
		<b>6pm</b>	Mass for Peter Grilli RIP (Bong Crave)
<b>THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH</b>	<b>Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> December</b>	<b>9am</b>	Mass for Peter Grilli RIP (Mena Nardone)
		<b>11am</b>	<b>No Coffee after Mass</b>
		<b>3pm</b>	Mass for The Frances Family 'F'
		<b>4pm</b>	Exposition and Divine Mercy Chaplet
			Winter Soup Kitchen in the Hall until 6pm

**PARISH SAFEGUARDING REPRESENTATIVES CONTACT EMAIL**

Stephen Carton for St Finbarr's [ayleshamsg2@safeguardrcaos.org.uk](mailto:ayleshamsg2@safeguardrcaos.org.uk)

Keith Wells for St Paul's [doversg1@safeguardrcaos.org.uk](mailto:doversg1@safeguardrcaos.org.uk)

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For a newsletter emailed weekly, or to suggest articles/additions, contact the Editor: [dovernewsletter@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:dovernewsletter@rcaos.org.uk)

Newsletter items received after 6pm Thursday may not be included that week. The Editor reserves the right to edit articles.

A Parish of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark CIO Registered Incorporated Charity Number 1173050

# Readings for Sunday

## 21<sup>st</sup> December 2025

### First Reading

Isaiah 7:10-14

*'Behold, the virgin shall conceive'*

On that day: In those days: The Lord spoke to Ahaz: 'Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.' But Ahaz said, 'I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test.' And Isaiah said, 'Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel.'

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### Responsorial Psalm

Ps 24(23):1-2. 3-4b. 5-6. R cf. 6

*Let the LORD enter; he is the king of glory.*

*Or: Alleluia*

The LORD'S is the earth and its fullness,  
the world, and those who dwell in it.  
It is he who set it on the seas;  
on the rivers he made it firm.

*Let the LORD enter; he is the king of glory.*

*Or: Alleluia*

Who shall climb the mountain of the LORD?  
Who shall stand in his holy place?  
The clean of hands and pure of heart,  
whose soul is not set on vain things.

*Let the LORD enter; he is the king of glory.*

*Or: Alleluia*

Blessings from the LORD shall he receive,  
and right reward from the God who saves him.  
Such are the people who seek him,  
who seek the face of the God of Jacob.

*Let the LORD enter; he is the king of glory.*

*Or: Alleluia*

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### Second Reading

Romans 1: 1-7

*Jesus Christ, descended from David, Son of God.*

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an Apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations, including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ.

To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

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### Acclamation before the Gospel

**Alleluia, alleluia.**

Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel — which means, God with us.

**Alleluia.**

**Matthew 1:23**

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### Gospel

**Matthew 1:18-24**

*Jesus was born of Mary, who was betrothed to Joseph, son of David.*

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to send her away quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, 'Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.'

All this took place to fulfil what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

'Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel' — which means, God with us.

When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife.

### LINK TO MASS READINGS FOR CHRISTMAS

<https://universalis.com/europe.England.southwark/20251225/mass.htm#j4294967291x0>

### Act of Spiritual Communion

**My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You.**