

FREE (but £2 donation suggested)

Sacred Heart Wimbledon

Annual Report
June 2026

EDGEWAYS

Vol. 37 No. 5



Introduction from Canon David

It seemed to me that there ought to be an Annual Report to the people of the parish, including important matters like our financial situation, but also giving an opportunity to each group in the parish to report on what they do. I am grateful to **David Hurst**, the Editor, and **Matteo Baccaglini**, Graphic-Designer-in-Chief, for agreeing to lend one issue of *Edgeways* to this report.

The usual rounds of Masses, Confessions, baptisms, weddings, and funerals have of course continued throughout 2025, and there were many groups, events, and activities. Here, let me try my best to pick out the highlights and significant events without going on at great length.

Changes in personnel

Firstly, there were some changes in personnel – starting from the top. In May, the Conclave elected a new Bishop of Rome: **Pope Leo XIV**. Then in September, our Archbishop helpfully transferred both our Assistant Priests at the same time, **Fr Jackson Sebastian** to St George’s Cathedral and **Fr David Hunter** to Kent. Their replacements, **Frs Edwin Raj and Peter Mudu Frank**, settled in very quickly – and especially for their first time in England! We also welcomed **Marlon Oliveira**, a seminarian for the Diocese, on Sunday placements. Meanwhile, **Deacon Shaun Crocker** has now retired from active ministry.

Lorraine Dolan-Walsh retired as Headteacher of Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School; I am pleased that an experienced replacement was recruited in **Sarah Norville**. **Jenny Cairns**, the founder and leader of the Memory Lane Club, retired; with help

from the diocesan Caritas office, we appointed **Madeleine Jarratt** as the new leader of this very vital club for those with dementia and their carers. Lastly, **Amy Lam** stepped down as Parish Accountant to help look after elderly parents; **Gerry Kerins** took her place.

We must also record Pope Leo’s appointment of **Bishop Nick Hudson**, former Parish Priest at the Sacred Heart, as the new Bishop of Plymouth.

Prayer and liturgy

2025 was the **Jubilee Year of Hope**, and Sacred Heart Wimbleton was designated as a Jubilee Church, where you could obtain the special Jubilee Indulgence. I am not sure that the Jubilee Year quite caught the imagination as some other years have, but we hosted a number of pilgrim groups, a Deanery Jubilee Mass – presided by Fr Peter Gallagher, Provincial Superior of the Jesuits in Britain – and other gatherings.

There were few changes as regards liturgy, although we did introduce **Adoration on the First Monday** of the month after the 6.30pm Mass, led by the young adults from Favre House.

In January, we again hosted a **Youth 2000 retreat**. We seem to have become the London venue for these gatherings, which attract large numbers of young adults from the London area and beyond. In Advent, the early morning **Rorate Masses** (Masses of Our Lady by candlelight, in Latin) also drew many, mostly young, people.



Finally, for the first time in a number of years, a very grace-filled **parish pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes** took place.

Other landmarks

Various other landmarks included a well-attended **Sacred Heart Garden Party** in June, attended by no less a person than the Papal Nuncio – enormous thanks to Ruth and Thelma, the chief organisers. In Lent, I gave a series of **talks on ‘The Mass’**, and we held **Sycamore discussion evenings**. Several groups made a response to the diocesan **Called to Bear Fruit** consultation, one of the largest responses of any parish. South London Listens also recognised the parish as a **Be Well Hub**.

Schools and community engagement

We were unable to hold our traditional Christmas Day Lunch, so we instead distributed **Christmas hampers** to those in greater need. The initiative was a pleasing cooperation between the parish and **Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School**.

Links between the parish and the primary school considerably improved and strengthened last year, to the benefit of both. Ongoing engagement with Wimbledon College, the Ursuline High School, and Donhead Preparatory School has continued.

Audits and legal matters

In 2025, we had a successful five-yearly **financial audit** and also received approval as part of an archdiocesan **safeguarding audit**.

Finally, and perhaps most significantly, in March, the Society of Jesus and the Archdiocese of Southwark at last reached agreement to the **transfer of the whole property** to the Archdiocese. In civil law, this means that the diocesan trustees own the land and buildings; in canon law, it means that the parish controls things. This is why we are only now embarking on a major restoration project of the church. Nonetheless, relations with the Jesuits remain cordial, and their priests have often come to help out.

In conclusion, I owe enormous thanks to the other members of the Parish Pastoral Team, to parish staff, and to the very extensive list of volunteers who, together, make Sacred Heart Wimbleton one of the most vibrant parishes in the country.

They say that there are certain things even the Holy Spirit doesn’t know: I suspect one of them is how many groups there are in this parish ...

Canon David



New to the parish? Welcome!

We’re so glad you’re here. Please introduce yourself to a member of the Parish Pastoral Team after Mass, and make sure you’ve registered to receive the parish’s weekly newsletter at sacredheartwimbledon.org.uk or by filling out a registration form from the back of the church.

We hope this Annual Report inspires you to join one of our parish’s many groups – please reach out to any groups you would like to join using the contact details provided.

Annual Report at a glance

- p.2 **Introduction from Canon David**
- p.4 **Our Parish:** Parish Pastoral Team • Parish Pastoral Council
Parish Office Newsletter • Edgeways • Safeguarding
Finance Committee • Collection Counting Teams
- p.14 **Supporting the Liturgy:** Altar Servers • Ministry of Welcome
Extraordinary Ministers • Readers at Mass • Children’s Liturgy of the Word
St Martha’s Guild of Church Cleaners • Parish Flower Group
- p.19 **Music and Arts:** Music at the 10.00am Mass • 12 noon Mass Choir
Music at the 5.00pm Mass • Edge Hill Players
- p.23 **Faith and the Sacraments:** Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults
Sacramental Programmes • Wimbledon Newman Circle
- p.26 **Prayer and Spiritual:** Evangelisation Prayer Group • Mothers Prayers
Week of Guided Prayer • Lectio Divina • School of Community
Teams of Our Lady
- p.29 **Pastoral and Welfare:** Be Well Hub • Counselling Services
Memory Lane Club • Bereavement Support Group
St Vincent de Paul Conference • Widows Support Group
Thursday Group • Environment Group • Winter Night Shelter
St Theresa’s Home for the Elderly
- p.34 **Social and Recreational:** 9th Wimbledon Scouts
28th Wimbledon Guides and Rangers • Young Adults • Favre House
Wimbledon Catenians • Social Club • Christian Yoga
Continental Breakfast / Café in the Lounge • Friendship Group
- p.39 **Schools and Convents:** Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School
Donhead Preparatory School • Wimbledon College • Ursuline High School
Daughters of the Heart of Mary • Sisters of St Anne • Sisters of Christ
- p.44 **Beyond the Parish:** Churches Together in West Wimbledon
Merton Faith in Action Homelessness Project • Christian CARE
The Manna Society • Merton Citizens • Raphael Pilgrimage to Lourdes





Our Parish

About Sacred Heart Wimbledon

The Church of the Sacred Heart, Wimbledon, was consecrated by Bishop John Butt on 17 June 1887, the Feast of the Sacred Heart.

The church was the vision of Edith Arendrup, a Catholic convert and heiress of the wealthy Courtauld family, who settled in Wimbledon in 1877. Wimbledon was a strongly Protestant suburb, and Catholics had to travel five miles to the nearest Mass centre in Roehampton. With the permission of the local bishop, Edith built a private chapel at her home, with an altar dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. By 1886, it could no longer contain the crowds at the Sunday Mass, and Edith bought the land on the slopes of the hills of Worple Road.

The church building was designed by Frederick Walters in the Decorated Gothic style. After the nave was opened, building continued with the sanctuary and south aisle (1895), back chapels (1896), north aisle and sacristy (1898), and the west front (1901). The large rood above the altar was installed in 1887, the statue of Our Lady of Lourdes in 1896, and the altars to the Holy Souls and English Martyrs in 1915.

The church grew in such numbers that chapels of ease were built at St Winefred's, South Wimbledon, in 1905 and Christ the King, Wimbledon Park, in 1928. Both later became parish churches.

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School was established in 1930 to provide a Catholic education to young people, following Wimbledon College (1892) and Donhead Preparatory School



Sacred Heart Wimbledon photographed in 1910

(1933), both run by the Jesuits, and the Ursuline High School (1892), run by the Ursuline Sisters.

In 1990, the church's sanctuary was reordered by architect Austin Winkley, with a new high altar designed by David John. The parish's halls were extensively refurbished in the late 2000s.

For almost 130 years, the church was administered by the Society of Jesus, a religious order of the Catholic Church founded in 1540 by St Ignatius of Loyola, to whom a chapel in the church is dedicated. The Jesuits still have a notable presence in the parish, including their two schools and the headquarters of Jesuit Missions, the

international development charity of the Jesuits in Britain.

In 2014, the parish's administration was transferred to the Archdiocese of Southwark, a process completed in 2025 with the transfer of the land. Canon David Gibbons KCHS has been Parish Priest since September 2023.

Today, Sacred Heart Wimbledon is one of the largest Roman Catholic parishes in England, with 1,300 congregants across six Sunday Masses. We are blessed with a vibrant offering of liturgical, social, welfare, and cultural groups, and strong connections with the local community and wider Merton Deanery. It is this full parish life that we hope to showcase in this Report.



Learn more about our parish's history and our church's architecture at sacredheartwimbledon.org.uk/history.

The Parish Pastoral Team



Canon David Gibbons
KCHS
Parish Priest



Father Edwin Raj
Assistant Priest



Father Peter Frank
Assistant Priest



Deacon Julian Burling



Please contact the Parish Office to get in touch with our clergy.



Sr Dorothy Perrott OSU • Parish Sister

dorothyperrott@aol.com

As Parish Sister, I support the other members of the Parish Pastoral Team, those who work in the Presbytery, and the parish as a whole. What I actually 'do' from day to day is varied and in many ways is in response to whatever the immediate situation requires.

On a weekly basis, I am heavily involved in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA), which is a programme for adults who consider becoming full members of the Catholic Church.

Additionally, I regularly visit sick and housebound members of the parish, taking Holy Communion to them and spending time with them. I also make occasional visits to the various care homes within the parish boundary.

Generally, I attend most Masses at the weekend, apart from the 8.00pm, and welcome people as they come into the church.

Having been involved in schools for many years, I am happy to maintain a link with the Ursuline High School and Donhead Preparatory School.

I am an Ursuline Sister. I have lived in Wimbledon since 1981, joining the Parish Pastoral Team in 2000. Working in schools and in the parish, I feel my role is to be a living witness to the Ursuline motto of 'Serviam' – to be present, available, and welcoming.



Sr Dorothy (left) with candidates at the Rite of Election at St George's Cathedral, March 2025



Rob Hitchcock • Parish Faith Minister

wimbledonpfm@rcaos.org.uk

As Faith Minister, I oversee sacramental programmes, including First Holy Communion and Confirmation, school engagement, post-Confirmation groups, and young adults groups. Last year marked my first full academic cycle in this role.

The Parish Office is a hive of activity, and I strive to be a positive presence while assisting the Clergy in their daily ministry.

Our schools

I visit Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School weekly to meet with prayer leaders, focusing on the liturgical calendar and Catholic Social Teaching. Once a term, students join the Parish Mass, a highlight for both the children and parishioners. The visits conclude with workshops that bring to life the Religious Education (RE) curriculum.

I collaborate monthly with the lay chaplains at the Ursuline High School and Wimbledon College to run Growing In Faith Together. This youth group provides a space for students to explore their faith and discuss the unique challenges of modern society.

Deanery collaboration

In deanery collaboration, I have met regularly with RE leads and chaplains from the Sutton and Merton Deanery as schools transition into the Sancta Familia Academy. We collaborate on curriculum ideas and host retreat days; recent themes have included the environment and sainthood.

Some Definite Service

Additionally, following Some Definite Service, the Archbishop's vision for the Archdiocese – focusing on catechesis, evangelisation, and formation – I serve as the Merton Deanery Mentor for Catechesis. In this role, I support local catechist teams and coordinate with the Agency for Catechesis and Evangelisation to ensure we are aligned with the diocesan mission.

2025 in nos.

80 Baptisms
(72 in 2024)

89 First Holy Communions
(113 in 2024)

75 Confirmations
(62 in 2024)

2 Receptions
into Full Communion

26 Marriages
(22 in 2024)

56 Funerals

1,301 Sunday Mass attendance
(weekly average; 1,337 in 2024)



The annual Garden Party in June 2025

The Parish Pastoral Council



Will Morris • Chair

✉ wg.morris@aol.com

🌐 sacredheartwimbledon.org.uk/ppc

The Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) functions as an advisory body to the Parish Priest, and has been refocused to concentrate on evangelisation, catechesis, formation, and pastoral care, matching the major areas for a missionary Church in the Archdiocese of Southwark's Some Definite Service programme. We have also addressed some of the questions in Called to Bear Fruit, the Archdiocese's process of missionary renewal.

The PPC has met on the first Thursday of most months. The Parish Priest is the President, but meetings are chaired by a member – that would be me, Will Morris – chosen by the body.

The membership has changed over the year, and we thank those who have stepped down and those who have assumed membership.

The PPC has offered advice on a number of matters over the past year, including the establishment of the Be Well Hub and closer links with the parish's primary school, Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School.

In June, the PPC also established a Halls Committee, which includes representatives of the Parish Office, Finance Committee, the PPC, and hall users. The Halls Committee discusses matters including how to encourage more bookings of our parish's halls and any upgrades needed.

A retreat was guided by Canon David, Rob Hitchcock, and Henry Gates. The PPC spent a morning digesting Called to Bear Fruit and thinking about how the parish can further grow and develop. It is the desire of the PPC to take seriously the Archbishop's call to become an evangelising parish.

Over the coming year, the PPC will continue to advise the Parish Priest and his ministers on our various pastoral priorities. They include – but are in no way limited to – establishing a greater and more effective online presence, offering suitable formation for post-Confirmation teens, providing a full termcard of speakers for adult formation, preparing for the parish's sesquicentennial (that's 150th!) anniversary, and ensuring we continue the parish's outstanding pastoral provisions.

If you have any views on these matters – or anything of relevance to the PPC – please get in touch with me at wg.morris@aol.com. Please also get in touch if you would like to observe a meeting to see the PPC at work.



The Procession on Palm Sunday

Members

The Parish Pastoral Council consists of the Parish Pastoral Team, and:

- Nina Beltran
- Jerric Chong (Secretary)
- Maria Christopher
- Teresa Engley
- José Garibaldi
- Henry Gates
- Graham Kennedy
- Jude Mariadoss
- William Morris (Chair)
- Annette Mulholland
- Peter Taylor
- Chris Woodward

Parish Leads

Jude Mariadoss
for Evangelisation

Rob Hitchcock
for Catechesis

Nina Beltran
for Formation

Parish Office & Reception

The **Parish Office** is the parish's 'nerve centre', overseen by Thelma D'Costa, our Executive Assistant. Located in the Presbytery, it is open from 9.00am to 4.00pm, Monday to Friday. Please contact the Parish Office for all enquiries, hall bookings, baptisms, marriages, first sacraments, and funerals. Please email wimbledon@rcaos.org.uk or call **020 8946 0305**.

The most important change of the year was that, at the end of 2025, George McLennan retired as **Caretaker**, a very important post given the extent of the parish estate. The role is now filled by Leo Nicolaou.

The **Reception** is the frontline team of volunteers who receive visitors to the parish, answer and transfer telephone calls, and deal with administrative tasks, such as booking Mass intentions. We have sometimes struggled to recruit volunteers for these important duties, so if you can spare a morning or afternoon a week, please contact Thelma.

Newsletter

The parish's weekly newsletter collates parish news and events, including any changes to the parish's usual liturgical schedule. The newsletter also maintains a list of parishioners who have died recently, whose anniversaries occur about this time, and who are sick. The newsletter is distributed by email, online at sacredheartwimbledon.org.uk/newsletter, and in print copy at the back of the church. Please send any notices by Tuesday evening to the Editor at wimbledonnewsletter@rcaos.org.uk.

Edgeways

Dating from 1972, *Edgeways* is the parish's magazine, available online at sacredheartwimbledon.org.uk/edgeways and in print copies. In 2025, *Edgeways* celebrated its 400th edition.

We welcome articles from contributors on a wide range of topics related to faith and parish life – please get in touch at wimledonedgeways@rcaos.org.uk. Everyone has a story, and we would love to hear and publish yours. With 24 pages in full colour, the magazine is always 'a good read'. There are plans for a regular Youth Section with articles from students from each of the parish's schools.



A Youth 2000 retreat was held in our parish in January 2025.

🌐 sacredheartwimbledon.org.uk/reception

👤 **Thelma D'Costa** • Executive Assistant

✉ wimbledon@rcaos.org.uk

☎ 020 8946 0305

👤 **Leo Nicolaou** • Caretaker

✉ wimledoncaretaker@rcaos.org.uk

🌐 sacredheartwimbledon.org.uk/newsletter

👤 **Matteo Baccaglini** • Editor

✉ wimbledonnewsletter@rcaos.org.uk

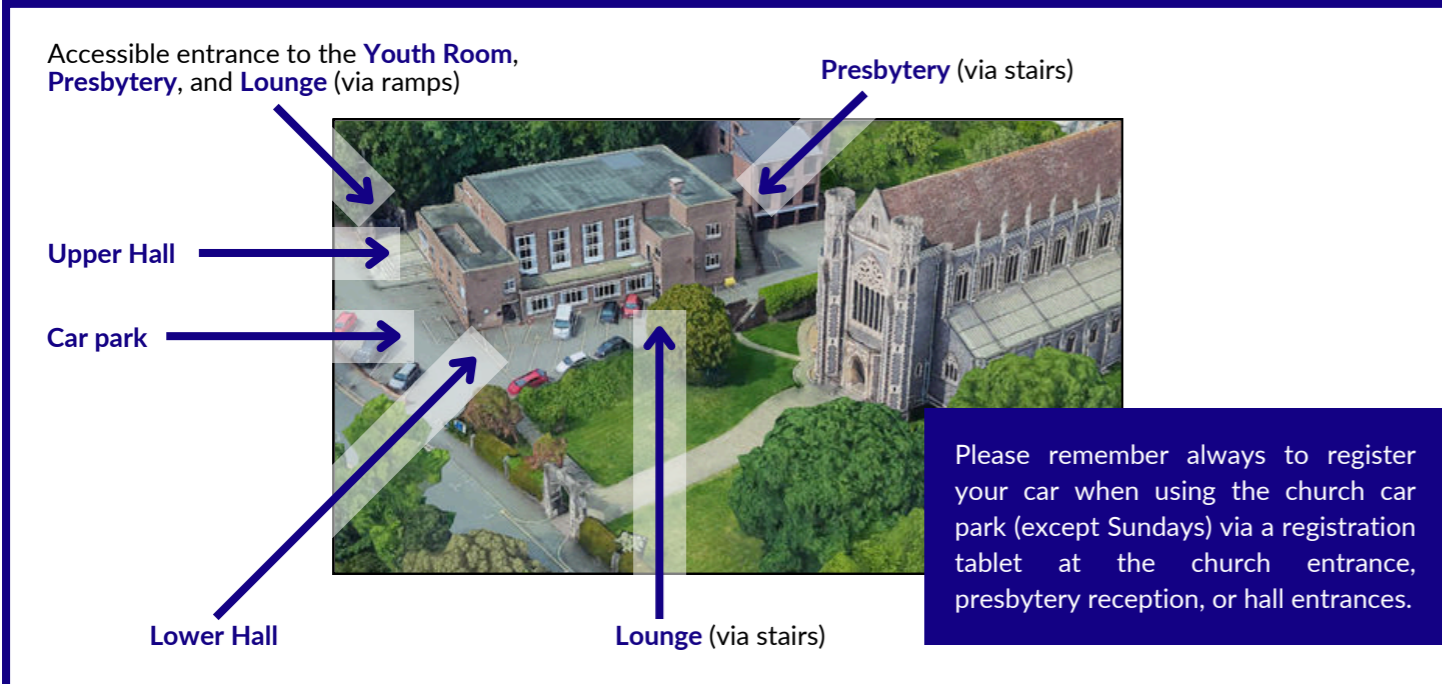
🌐 sacredheartwimbledon.org.uk/edgeways

👤 **David Hurst** • Editor

✉ wimledonedgeways@rcaos.org.uk

👤 **Matteo Baccaglini** • Designer

A handy guide to our halls and rooms



Could our parish be the venue for your next event?

Our halls and meeting rooms can be hired for community and private functions. For enquiries and quotes, please contact the Parish Office: email wimbledon@rcaos.org.uk or call 020 8946 0305. For further information, please visit sacredheartwimbledon.org.uk/halls.

All our halls and meeting rooms include access to a projection screen and sound system, chairs and tables, a kitchen, and toilets (male, female, disabled, and baby changing facility).

Upper Hall

Capacity:
220 seated (with tables)
350 theatre
(seated w/o tables)
380 standing



Lower Hall

Capacity:
120 seated (with tables)
150 theatre
(seated w/o tables)
160 standing



Lounge

Capacity:
60 seated (with tables)
80 theatre
(seated w/o tables)
90 standing



Safeguarding

sacredheartwimbledon.org.uk/safeguarding

 Victoria Wheatley
 Maria Christopher

 wimbledonsgt@safeguardrcaos.org.uk
 wimbledonsg5@safeguardrcaos.org.uk

Last year, the Archbishop decreed that Sunday 18 May 2025 would be 'Safeguarding Sunday'. A pastoral letter was read out at all Masses; it started with Jesus' commandment to love one another as He had loved us. The Archbishop went on to say that the protection of our young and vulnerable was a responsibility of each and every one of us, and by doing this, we are carrying out Our Lord's commandment.

To this end, we have a very active and dedicated safeguarding team within the parish. We are delighted that Maria Christopher has joined me (Victoria Wheatley) as a Parish Safeguarding Representative, and we would like to say a huge thank you to Siobhán Heffron, who is stepping down from the role.

We are all volunteers and carry out our roles on behalf of the Archdiocese, enacting the rules and regulations as laid down by them and the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA).

Not surprisingly, with such an active parish, safeguarding continues to be a busy aspect of our parish's life. We now have 185 volunteers who are in positions where a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate is required, and these certificates must be renewed every three years.

Over the past year, we have welcomed 45 new volunteers across our many parish groups who work with children or vulnerable adults, all of whom had to go through the required safe recruitment process, provide references, and apply for a DBS certificate before they could start

volunteering. Another 47 volunteers renewed their DBSs so that they could continue in their roles.

We also work with group leaders and their groups, and have been involved in supporting the parish becoming a Be Well Hub.

In 2025, the CSSA audited safeguarding throughout the Archdiocese of Southwark. Three parishes were chosen to be part of the inspection, and we were included in that number. I am delighted to report that the auditors were very impressed with our safeguarding standards and practices, as well as how safeguarding is embedded within the parish.

Another aspect of safeguarding in the parish is to be a point of contact if anyone has safeguarding concerns, be they new or historic. We pass concerns raised onto the Archdiocese Safeguarding Team, who take them forward. To this end, contact details are on the parish website, in the parish's weekly newsletter, and on noticeboards around the church and parish halls.

Finally, I would like to thank all our volunteers for their invaluable efforts to help our community. It is a pleasure and an honour to help the Sacred Heart Parish remain a safe and loved community.

Victoria Wheatley
Parish Safeguarding Representative



Pupils from Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School sang at the annual Garden Party.

Finance Committee sacredheartwimbledon.org.uk/financecommittee
 Chris Woodward · Chair wimbledoncof@rcaos.org.uk

Parish finances are run under the regulations and accounts system of the Archdiocese of Southwark. The Parish Priest has ultimate responsibility for making decisions on the parish's finances, but is required to appoint a Finance Committee to advise him.

The Committee's main activities involve preparing an annual budget for the financial year (January to December), monitoring income and expenditure on a regular basis, examining critically new projects and large items of expenditure, and considering reports on the condition of the premises and plant, including health and safety matters.

In 2025, the Finance Committee comprised the three priests and nine lay members, and we met on eight occasions. We were very saddened by the death of Mike Cairns, who had given many years of service to the Committee, particularly on building and site matters.

The parish employs an accounts manager, Gerry Kerins, to carry out the day-to-day management of payments and the accounts. We are also very grateful for the voluntary services of Margaret Wright and Jo Granger, who manage the Gift Aid administration, and to the four collection counting teams led by Tim Everson.

Members

The members of the Finance Committee are:

- Paul Duffin
- Rehana Edun-Noys
- Justin Hamilton
- Ike Nwafor
- Rorie Rigley
- Alain van West
- Chris Woodward (Chair)

Jesus Tamara Velasco has recently stepped down; we thank him for his service.

Audits

The Finance Committee also has an independent role to ensure that the accounts are properly managed. As the accounts are subsumed within the overall diocesan system, they are no longer subject to an annual scrutiny by an independent examiner. Nevertheless, the parish was audited towards the end of 2024 with particular reference to Gift Aid administration. The auditor concluded that, in general, the parish has strong financial control, but made a number of recommendations for improving processes, many concerning the diocesan Finance Office.

Church repairs

A significant development this year was the final transfer of the church and Presbytery buildings from the Jesuits to the Archdiocese. The long delay in completing the agreement has meant that we have not been able to undertake important external works to the fabric of the church that the conservation architects identified through the Quinquennial Inspection. Many of these defects are long-standing and dependent on further investigation once safe access to all parts of the roof has been installed.

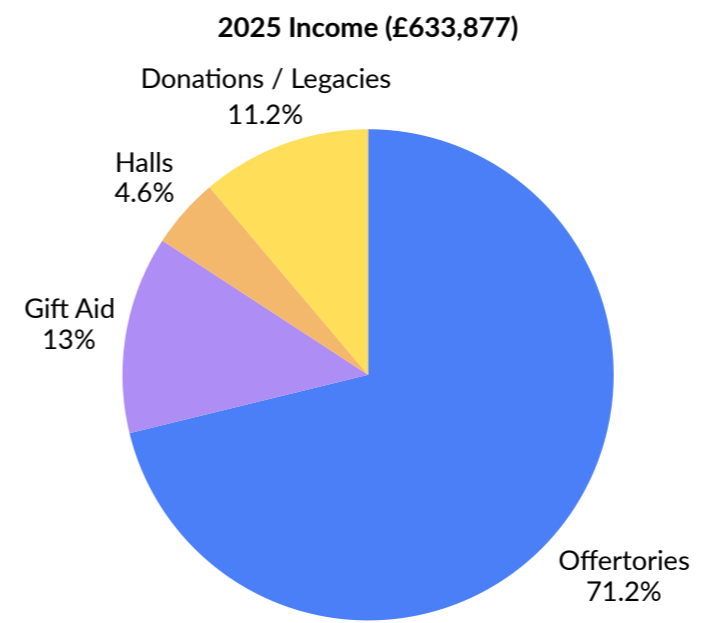
Income and expenditure

The budget for 2025 predicted a deficit of £36,600. As a result, the Committee launched a planned giving appeal, ably presented by Canon David, at Masses in June, such that we ended up with a surplus of £22,300 at year-end. Further details of the 2025 accounts and balance sheet can be found on the parish website.

Projects

The Committee has been looking at schemes to install emergency lighting in the church and solar panels on the roof of the Upper Hall. We are very grateful to Paul Duffin for an ingenious scheme, whereby the solar panels charge batteries which can power the ordinary lights in the church in the event of a power failure without installing separate emergency lights. The estimated cost of the latter approximated to the cost of installing the panels. The panels also provide power for the church lighting and the Presbytery, with a modest income from passing the surplus to the National Grid. We anticipate some useful overall annual saving in the electricity costs.

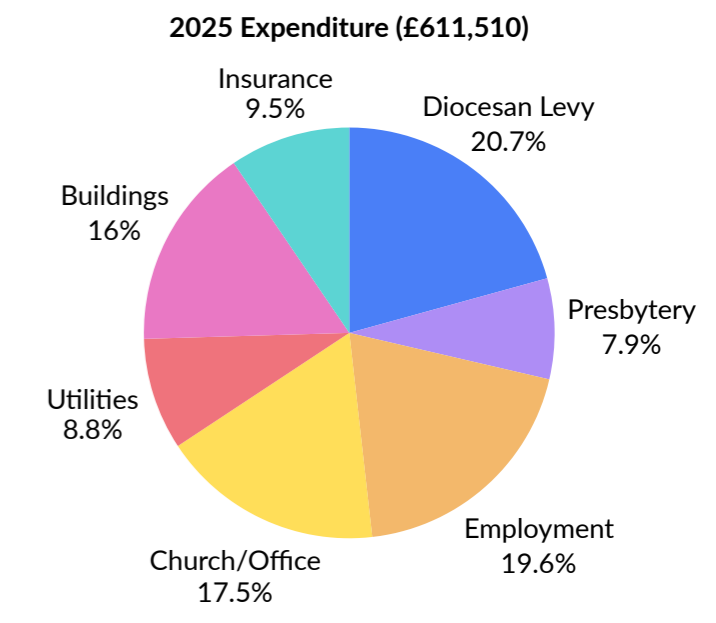
The security of the Presbytery and halls complex has been an ongoing issue for many years as it has proved impossible



to control the issue of keys to the many organisations using the premises. The Committee has now installed a digital locking system for the external locks. The issue of electronic keys/fobs is now centrally controlled and linked to the halls booking process so that unauthorised access is prevented.

Reserves

The parish currently holds reserves of £2,353,896 – of which £1,640,564 is 'restricted' and can only be used for capital repairs to the church. During the Covid outbreak, we were very fortunate to receive a very generous Gift Aided donation of £1,000,000. The reserves are deposited in the diocesan loan account and CCLA, a charities investment fund, as advised by the diocesan Financial Secretary.



We anticipate that these reserves will be needed to fund the church's external repairs and improvements to its lighting and sound system. It will be necessary to mount a further appeal to fund the full works. This will involve applications to fund granting bodies as well as support from parishioners.

As well as the major works, the Committee plans to explore further the marketing possibilities of the halls to outside bodies and to replant the bank to the left of the church driveway with low-growing shrubs to secure the stability of the ground – sorry, children: no more muddy slides!

Chris Woodward
Chair of the Finance Committee

Collection Counting Team tim.everson@btinternet.com

Although many parishioners now contribute to the parish through standing orders or by using the card machines at the back of church, many prefer to use cash. This is especially true of visitors and those who come to church only occasionally. Others prefer to use Gift Aid envelopes, which also go into the collecting baskets.

We have four teams of three members, each counting once a month on a Monday or Tuesday morning. Every few months, the foreign paper money, which also accumulates in the church collection, is changed into sterling and paid in. Foreign coins are also collected and auctioned off, so nothing is wasted!

All this needs to be counted – along with cash paid for candles, the poor, the St Vincent de Paul Society, Jesuit Missions, and so on and so forth.

We currently do have a vacancy so, if you are interested and can spare one morning a month, please get in touch.

Tim Everson



Supporting the Liturgy

Altar Servers

 Paul Davis · Sacristan
 wimbledonsacristan@rcaos.org.uk

Altar servers are an important component of good liturgy, especially on Sundays. We have a good team of servers, serving at all Masses on Sunday.

But we can always do with more, so don't be shy: young people, please speak to a priest if you would be interested in serving at the altar. (You must have made your First Holy Communion.)

The full round of daily Masses, funerals, weddings, and so on makes the Sacristy a busy place. We owe a debt of gratitude to our Sacristans, Paul Davis and Rehana Edun-
 Noys, for their diligent service over the year. They are also our Authorised Persons, responsible for the civil registration of marriages. Paul also acts as the Parish Registrar, recording the details in the parish registers, and as the Parish Webmaster.



Annabelle Marshall (left), Richard Adams (centre), and Adrian Krvyvach (right) have each received a Guild of St Stephen Silver Medal for long service at the altar in recent years.

Ministry of Welcome

 Sr Dorothy Perrott OSU
 dorothyperrott@aol.com

Those who act as welcomers at Mass do more than just hand out the Mass sheet or hymnbook. Theirs is a pastoral role, focussed on fostering hospitality, and often acting as the first point of contact for parishioners and visitors. Being a welcomer is an excellent way to make all who come through the doors feel at home; it also offers a chance to get to know people.

We are very grateful to everyone who currently fills this role, and we are in need of more people who would like to join them.

The requirement is that you come about 10 minutes before Mass starts and then stay for a few minutes at the end of Mass to put away the Mass sheets and hymnbooks, ready for the following Mass. With sufficient volunteers, a rota could be created for each Mass, so that one would act as welcomer just one Sunday a month.

If you would like to become a welcomer, please email me, leaving a phone number and indicating which Mass time is convenient for you.

Sr Dorothy Perrott OSU

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

 Cathy Dickenson
 wimbledon@rcaos.org.uk

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion may have a long-winded title, but their ministry is vital, both in assisting in the administration of Holy Communion at Mass and in bringing the gift of Jesus Christ Himself to those who are ill, housebound, or in care homes. Cathy Dickenson has the difficult task of coordinating both the Sunday Mass rota and the schedule of home visitors.

Readers at Mass

I have been coordinating the Readers Rota since mid-2024, having taken over from Rock and Wendy Tansey, who ably did the task for many years. Currently, 24 readers read across all Sunday Masses (apart from the 10.00am Mass, which is Sr Dorothy's domain). I send out a rota by email every two months. We also have a WhatsApp group so that readers can swap dates if needed or disseminate

other information. We have a good spread of men and women from all backgrounds. Likewise, we have readers of all ages. Our youngest reader is in their early teens.

We always need additional readers, so if you can speak clearly and have had some experience of reading in public, please do get in touch. Depending on which Mass you would read at, it

Tara Philpott

tara.philpott@outlook.com

07957 566495

would be a commitment of once every four to six weeks.

In the meantime, may I take this opportunity to thank all our readers for their continued commitment to this important ministry.

Tara Philpott

Children's Liturgy of the Word

We run a Children's Liturgy of the Word programme during the 10.00am Family Mass for children in Reception, Year 1, and Year 2. We invite children to the front of the church after the welcome, process together to the Lounge, and return to the church before the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

The programme runs every two weeks during term time; the dates are published in the parish's weekly newsletter. It is a way of explaining the Gospel of the Lord in a child-friendly way, with discussions and activities reinforcing the message of the Gospel.

We have a group of very creative and dedicated volunteers but unfortunately, some have recently left and we need some more! The application process is quite easy: the parish will need to run a DBS check, and then you can assist and observe for a few sessions until you feel ready to lead. It is not a huge commitment – only about six to eight sessions a year – and we are a very friendly group who will support you.

If you are interested, please contact me.

Elizabeth Bottriell

Elizabeth Bottriell

elizabethbottriell@hotmail.com



The Children's Christmas Crib service on Christmas Eve



Święconka, the Polish blessing of Easter baskets, on Holy Saturday

St Martha's Guild of Church Cleaners

Our church is a well-visited, warm, and welcoming church, and the St Martha's Guild is responsible for upholding its cleanliness. Our friendly team welcomes you to join us and become responsible to clean a designated area of the church, preferably after the 10.00am Mass on Monday, or by arrangement at another time to suit your willingness to help. Please do get in touch.

Anne Remedios

Anne Remedios

anneremedios@outlook.com

020 8946 3653

Parish Flower Group

2025 was another busy year for the Parish Flower Group as we continued to decorate our beautiful church.

The parish hosted 26 weddings during the year. So many weddings bring several challenges for the group, from coordinating decorative themes to managing the logistics of multiple events. Despite these demands, the team – all of whom are volunteers – continues to work together in a spirit of cooperation while generously giving their time and talent.

A new development in 2025, and as part of a drive to be as sustainable as possible, was that we developed a relationship with a local flowergrower, who is developing a cutting garden within a mile of our church. As a result, on a few occasions we were able to use flowers in the church that had been grown within the parish. We are looking to develop this relationship further this year.

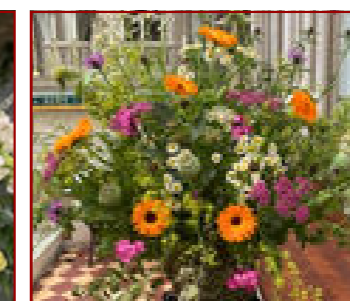
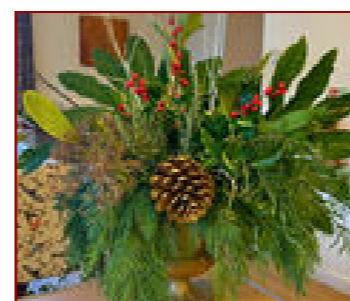
The Flower Group was pleased to take part in the Garden Party, giving us a great opportunity to chat to parishioners and other parish groups about the work we do. The loss of some valued members of our team in 2024 meant that we had to make an adjustment to our way of working in order to reduce the workload on some of our team. Fortunately, the number of volunteers in the group remained fairly settled in 2025 and I am grateful for the continued commitment of our team of flower arrangers.

We are always pleased to hear from anyone interested in joining our group. All we ask is that potential volunteers show a willingness to learn and to make a commitment to the group. This is a lovely way to volunteer for the parish. If you would like to know more about the group or how you can volunteer, please get in touch.

Patricia Turner

Patricia Turner

sacredheartflowers@outlook.com







Bob Rathbone • Director of Music

✉ robert.rathbone@mac.com

🌐 sacredheartmusic.co.uk

Liturgical music has occupied a central place in the life of our parish since its opening in 1887. This long and rich history of musical excellence is documented on our dedicated website, sacredheartmusic.co.uk.

I recently celebrated 30 years as Director of Music at the Sacred Heart (see *March 2026 Edgeways*), and I am delighted to report that our choirs and music groups continue to support the church's liturgies in a wide variety of styles.



John & Rachel Marshall

✉ rachel@marshallmail.net

Music at the 10.00am Mass

John and Rachel Marshall continue to lead the music at the 10.00am Mass – 22 years and counting! They are joined by other instrumentalists, including several younger people. The children's choir leads the hymns; they stand on the Sanctuary to sing with a beautiful physical proximity to the Eucharist, where they can clearly see and be part of the liturgy.

There is no formal membership. The group is delighted to welcome new singers at any time, with no commitment to sing every week. It would be great for parents to encourage their children to participate in the liturgy through their singing, so that we can have a strong and enthusiastic choir

every week. While there is no rehearsal, we ask parents to arrive ten minutes before Mass starts so that we can run through more unfamiliar hymns with the children. Please come and chat with us. Remember: to sing is to pray twice!

The congregation at the 10.00am Mass is made up of all ages, and music is chosen to reflect this, incorporating traditional and modern hymns, Taizé-style chants, occasional plainsong, and even compositions which arrive hot off the press! The psalm settings are very often written by John and Rachel themselves, composed in the spirit of Ignatian creativity.

Rachel Marshall



Katy Lees (above) performed as Soprano in *An Evening with Haydn*, the 2025 June concert of the Sacred Heart Chorus and Orchestra. See *June 2025 Edgeways*.



The Putney & Wimbledon Brass Band (above), played in our church for Katy's Songbirds Christmas Concert (below). See *January 2026 Edgeways*.



12 noon Mass Choir

Bob Rathbone

✉ robert.rathbone@mac.com

The 12 noon Mass Choir has grown to over 20 members, and we have welcomed Linda Ofori and Dee Parmer into the Soprano section. Three of our number have had enforced sabbaticals for medical reasons, but I am delighted to say that they are (mostly) able to sing regularly again, aided by the prayers and goodwill of our community. We are always delighted to be joined by Sophie Hamilton and Robert Tabbron when university terms allow.

In 2024, we were privileged to perform two new pieces commissioned by Canon David: *Love Divine* by Simon Mold and *Litany to the Sacred Heart* by Mark Bellis (see *September 2024 Edgeways*). For the Feast of the Sacred Heart in 2025, we sang the extremely effective *Litany* again, and we hope to repeat *Love Divine* in 2026.

We continue to maintain the wonderful legacy of Catholic music, and in 2025, we celebrated the 500th anniversary of Palestrina's birth by singing several of his motets and Masses. Plainsong occupies a central place in the history of

the Church (in its widest sense), and we make great use of it in most Masses, but especially on the first Sunday of the month, when the Mass is celebrated in Latin (in the Ordinary Form). Additionally, in November 2025, Deacon Julian organised a second Gregorian Chant Day, led by Iain Simcock and the Schola Gregoriana of Cambridge.

The 12 noon Mass is led from our magnificent 1912 Walker organ (restored in 2012), usually played by David Gammie (pictured below, left). David continues to inspire us all with his superb accompaniment and thoughtful voluntaries, reflecting an amazing repertoire of organ music. We recently celebrated 25 years of David as Organist and Assistant Director of Music (see *April-May 2026 Edgeways*).

We are always willing to recruit new members, especially Basses. Please visit sacredheartmusic.co.uk or contact me for details. Previous choral singing experience is desirable.

Bob Rathbone



Music at the 5.00pm Mass

Bruce Mackett

✉ bruce.mackett@gmail.com

We are a small group consisting of choir singers, keyboard, guitar and bass. We try to provide a mixture of traditional and contemporary praise and worship hymns. The intention is to get as many people as possible engaged (singing) and taking part in worship to the Lord our God.

We welcome new members into our choir family. The musicians rehearse at 7.30pm on Fridays and the singers at 3.30pm (before Mass) on Sundays. If you would like to join the Choir, please contact me. God bless!

Bruce Mackett



Edge Hill Players

We opened 2025 with our annual pantomime, *Dick Whittington*, at the end of January (see February 2026 *Edgeways*). As per tradition, Dick was performed by a woman, the Good Fairy was a pearly queen, there was a villainous King Rat, and our usual cohort of primary school children were rats, kittens, and tinklybells. We pride ourselves on turning no one away from panto auditions – which is why we ended up with almost a hundred people in the cast.

Our musical, which played to packed houses in September, was *Annie* (see September 2025 *Edgeways*). This was an amazingly professional production with very talented children, superbly drilled dancers and adults. Bob

Rathbone – the parish’s Director of Music, who happens to be our Musical Director as well – conducted a professional orchestra. Meanwhile, parish organist David Gammie was at the keyboard, and there might even have been a performing dog!

We are planning to use our profits this year to replace the stage curtains, which are currently held together with safety pins and gaffer tape. We welcome new members as actors, dancers, singers, writers, sewers, painters, propmakers, carpenters, and crew of all descriptions. Just check out our website, edgehillplayers.com, and send us an email.

Wendy Tansey

Wendy Tansey

edgehillplayers.com



Faith and the Sacraments



Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) – more recently referred to as OCIA (substitute ‘Order’ for ‘Rite!’) – is a group of adults who feel drawn to explore the Roman Catholic Church, with a view to possibly becoming members of the Church.

The group meets regularly on Monday evenings with a team of catechists who journey with them.

RCIA is a shared journey of faith – an experience and exploration of the Christian faith, both individually and as part of the community, according to the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. It is for any adult wishing to

explore their journey of faith; who feels drawn to discover more about the Roman Catholic Church, its teachings, and its practices; and who is considering becoming a full member.

Some RCIA participants will already be baptised in other Christian churches. Some will be unbaptised but have an affiliation with a Christian community. Some will have a non-Christian faith. Others will come from no particular persuasion. Participants journey at their own pace, supported by a sponsor. Those wishing to join the Church would normally expect to spend at least one full year in preparation for Reception.

 **Sr Dorothy Perrott OSU**

 dorothyperrott@aol.com

There are currently 16 adults in the group; at Easter, three were baptised and three received the Sacrament of Confirmation. The other members of the group continue their journey together in discovering the Catholic Church, its teachings, and its customs, having the Scriptures and the Person of Jesus at its heart.

The sessions are ongoing. If you have any questions, or would like to join us, please get in touch with me.

Sr Dorothy Perrott

Sacramental Programmes

2025 was an encouraging year for the sacramental life of our parish. It was a ‘year of firsts’ for our First Holy Communion and Confirmation groups, as both cohorts piloted new resources that were very well received.

In 2025, 89 children received their First Penance and First Holy Communion, while 71 candidates were confirmed by Bishop Gerard Bradley. Our team of catechists has grown,

but we are always looking for new volunteers. If you feel called to this ministry, please reach out to me.

POD (Pocket of Disciples) is our post-Confirmation formation group, where teenagers explore their faith more deeply. The group meets fortnightly on Tuesdays. We are currently seeking adult volunteers to help develop this vital group, and Confirmed teenagers are most welcome to join.

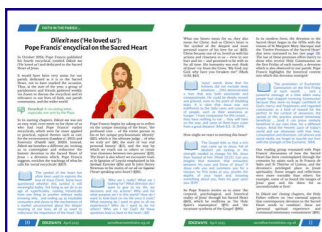
 **Rob Hitchcock**

 wimbledonpfm@rcaos.org.uk

Rob Hitchcock



You can relisten to Canon David’s series of Lenten talks on ‘The Mass’ at sacredheartwimbledon.org.uk/talks.



At the start of 2025, a parish group met weekly online to read and discuss *Dilexit nos* (2024), Pope Francis’ encyclical on the Sacred Heart. A four-page summary of the encyclical and the group’s reflections was published in April 2025 *Edgeways* (pictured). Matteo Baccaglini reflected: ‘We exchanged faith and friendship with parishioners and friends across ages, backgrounds, and spiritual persuasions.’

Wimbledon Newman Circle

The Newman Association, a nationwide organisation, exists to ‘promote open discussion and greater understanding in today’s Church’. Everyone is welcome to our talks, but we would encourage you to join the Association, which produces an excellent publication, including the full text of talks from other branches.

Speakers and events in 2025 included:

- Fr Toby Lees OP, Priest Director of Radio Maria England (pictured) – on why he left his career as a solicitor after seven years and became a Dominican priest.
- Fr Michael Holman SJ, Superior of the London Jesuit Community and former Headmaster of Wimbledon College – on the ‘Ignatian Examen’.

- Simon Potter OBE, former Head of English at Wimbledon College – on how education has significantly changed from 1968 to 2009.

- Julian Hoskins, parishioner and Strategic Head of Family Services at HMP Service – on rehabilitating prisoners in the United Kingdom.

- Film screening of *Francesco*, a documentary about Pope Francis.

- Rob Hitchcock, Parish Faith Minister – on evangelisation and how we can be evangelists today.

- Liam Allmark, Head of Communications, Fundraising, and Advocacy at the Jesuit Refugee Service – on ‘Love the Stranger’, a Catholic response to migrants and refugees.

 **Paddy Stone**

 wimbledon@rcaos.org.uk

Events are advertised in advance in the parish’s weekly newsletter.

Rock Tansey

Rock recently retired as Chair of the Wimbledon Newman Circle, and is now replaced by Paddy Stone. We thank Rock for his service.



The Synod and Synodal Process

Coordinated by the Synod Office in Rome, the Synodal Process is now in its third phase – the Implementation for a Synodal Church – which will continue until December 2026. Each diocese has been invited to share how our understanding of synodality has changed and how synodal practices have been, or might be, implemented in the life of our parishes.

A key aspect of this phase is a reading of the *Final Document* from the XVI General Ordinary Assembly of the Synod of Bishops. This reading is to be supported and sustained by communal and personal prayer, centred on Christ and open to the Holy Spirit. The *Final Document* proposes to the whole Church and to every baptised person the prospect of a journey of conversion: ‘The call to mission is, at the same time, the call to the conversion of each local Church and of the whole

Church.’ This will inform the continuing diocesan renewal process, Called to Bear Fruit.

Accordingly, the Archbishop has asked for the appointment of two parish lay delegates, who will attend a day gathering with the Parish Priest in June. Our two delegates are Will Morris, Chair of the PPC, and Rachel Marshall, Cantor at the 10.00am Mass on Sundays.

The gatherings will be followed by:

- parish conversations, via small group discussions;
- an online gathering in November or December 2026;
- the publication of a Study Guide in January 2027, which parishes will be invited to use, as a further step in Called to Bear Fruit;
- and a Diocesan Evaluation Assembly in June 2027.

Prayer and Spiritual

Evangelisation Prayer Group

 Sr Gretta McCormick

 020 8543 0594

We meet weekly from 8.00pm to 9.00pm on Wednesdays at the Sisters of Christ Convent (Norlands, 2b Mayfield Road, SW19 3NF). We meet in the Convent Chapel, where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved.

Our prayer usually starts with a hymn or chorus, followed by prayer of adoration, praise, and thanksgiving. We pray for the power of the Holy Spirit to anoint, transform and guide us as disciples of Christ. We read a short passage from the

following Sunday's Gospel and reflect on the attitudes, values, and virtues of Christ. This leads to prayer that we and all Christians might imitate Him and grow to be like Him. Free intercessory prayer is followed by saying together the Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory be to the Father.

Come and unite with us for one hour of prayer together once a week. You are always welcome.

Sr Gretta McCormick



Week of Guided Prayer

 Sr Anne DHM

 wimbledon@rcaos.org.uk

For the third year running, the parish hosted a Week of Guided Prayer during Advent and Lent. The Week offers participants the opportunity to deepen one's prayer life with a focus on the Word of God and being listened to by an experienced guide. This meets a deep desire of the person to be given the space to share their experience of prayer and to discern the path of God in their journey. For many, the Week can be an opening up in their journey with God in prayer - indeed, for many, the Week leads to a renewing and deepening of that friendship and relationship with God.

In 2025, we also hosted two Ignatian Prayer Days (see *October 2025 Edgeways*), which were good opportunities to look at the gift offered to us by Ignatian spirituality to help us discern God's spirit in our lives and invite us to choose the way to greater love and service.

Sr Anne DHM

Mothers Prayers

 Marcia Butacci

 07950 019369

A Mothers Prayers Group has been meeting in the parish for almost 15 years. We meet from 8.00pm to 9.00pm every Thursday on Zoom. We pray for our own children and the children of the world. We use a prayer book of the worldwide Mothers Prayers Community.

Everyone is welcome; please ring me if you would like more details or to join us. Also, if you would like to know how to set up your own group, either on Zoom or in person, please get in touch!

Marcia Butacci

Lectio Divina Group

 Bridget Handley

 07981 941516

A Lectio Divina Group has been meeting in the parish for over 20 years. We meet on Zoom from 11.00am to 12 noon every Friday. We read and reflect on the Readings for the following Sunday's Mass. It is not a Bible Study, but a prayerful reading and sharing. We end with short intercessory prayers.

Everyone is welcome. Why not come for a taster session? Please ring me for more details.

Bridget Handley



School of Community

Fabiano Lacono
 soc.wimbledon@gmail.com

Our story starts in 2021, when we met with some parishioners and a beautiful friendship was born. This event made us reflect on the grace that we have received through the charisma of Fr Luigi Giussani, founder of the ecclesial movement of Communion and Liberation, and the fact that we wanted to share this treasure. We then decided to start School of Community, our weekly meeting of education in the Catholic faith.

Last year, we worked together on the first pillar of the educational path proposed by Giussani, *The Religious Sense*, which helped us realise how crucial a tender gaze is to our humanity, with all its desires, questions and needs, to understand who Christ is. This year, we are working on the second book of the path, *At the Origin of Christian Claim*, that follows Christ in the Gospel and faces His claim to be the Son of God, the answer to man's desire.

In our meetings, we share reflections on the texts in light of our personal experience, rediscovering the beauty and reasonableness of the Catholic faith. Everyone who has joined us during the years has been struck by the freedom of the atmosphere, the freshness of the friendships, and the richness of the dialogues - where every question is taken seriously as a provocation to take one further step in personal faith. Everybody is welcome!

Fabiano Lacono

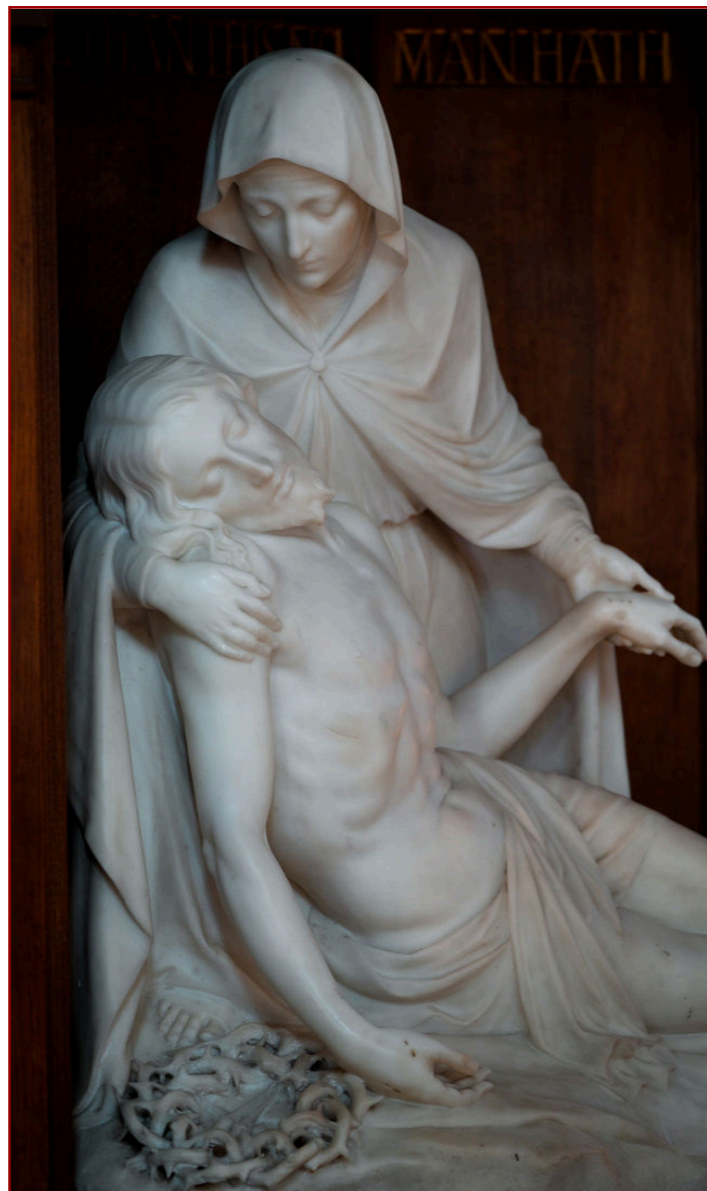
Teams of Our Lady

Chris & Luisa Elliott celliott138@gmail.com

Teams of Our Lady, or more simply Teams, is an international, welcoming community of Christian married couples, rooted in the Catholic faith. Teams helps couples grow in love for each other, deepen their relationship with God, and live their marriage as a shared spiritual journey. Couples are supported through friendship, prayer, and regular meetings with others who understand the joys and challenges of married life. Today, Teams is the largest lay Catholic movement in the world.

For more information or to join us, please contact us or visit teamsgb.org.uk.

Chris Elliott



Pastoral and Welfare



Be Well Hub

Graham Kennedy

wimbledonbwhc@rcaos.org.uk

At the start of 2025, conversations with parishioners and clergy revealed that some parishioners at the Sacred Heart were carrying anxiety, loneliness and wellbeing concerns, and that the parish was being called to respond with compassion, welcome and hope.

In January 2025, with the approval of the Parish Pastoral Council, a proposal set the parish on the path to recognition as a Be Well Hub, strengthening its ability to offer listening, practical support, and signposting within its wider pastoral mission. Over the months that followed, the vision took root: parishioners trained as Be Well Champions; the initiative was shared at the parish feast day and in parish communications; we developed partnerships with South London Listens, South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust, Merton Council, and parish groups; and the parish received a social outreach grant from the Archbishop's Appeal to help raise awareness of and celebrate this ministry.

In September 2025, the Parish launched its Be Well listening and signposting service, and by October, it had been recognised as an official Be Well Hub. Later work on safeguarding, safer recruitment, and operating practices laid firm foundations – and in early 2026, the ministry continued to grow through more trained champions, clearer diocesan support, and a widening programme of wellbeing activity.

Sacred Heart Wimbledon is a Be Well Hub – a space for you to turn to when you feel your mental health is low or you feel isolated.



Be Well Hubs are an initiative by South London Listens, a unique partnership between three local mental health trusts, Citizens UK, local authorities, and community organisations. Be Well Champions at each hub are trained to listen to people in the community and provide information, resources, and signposting to mental health support. The hubs help local communities to build relationships, offer practical support and signposting, and act on structural and systemic inequalities and injustices that impact mental health.

Logo by Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

The parish is now hosting monthly talks to offer practical encouragement, thoughtful conversation, and a warm welcome to parishioners and local community residents.

Graham Kennedy
Be Well Hub Lead

Counselling Services

Anthony Lee

wimbledon@rcaos.org.uk

Anthony Lee provides free counselling and psychological services to parishioners. Anthony has a Master of Social Work from the University of Hong Kong and a Master of Science in Psychology from the University of Westminster. He is a registered social worker and graduated member of the British Psychological Society, with more than 30 years of professional experience in Hong Kong, Canada, and the United Kingdom.

Therapy is a human experience and tailored to fit the individual's needs and situation. Throughout the therapy journey, clients are in a caring, safe and welcoming environment. Support and guidance are provided to help the client build their self-confidence in developing possible solutions.

We have recently been excited to extend Anthony's services to pupils, parents, and staff at Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, including helping pupils in Year 6 in their transition to secondary education, helping staff in managing anxiety and stress, and providing individual psychological counselling to students with special needs.

Anthony's services are strictly confidential and adhere to the codes of ethics set by professional regulatory bodies. To make an appointment, please contact the Parish Office: call 020 8946 0305 or email wimbledon@rcaos.org.uk.

Memory Lane Club

Madeleine Jarratt

wimbledonmemlanec@rcaos.org.uk

The Memory Lane Club is a friendly, lively, informal drop-in space, welcoming people in the local community living with memory loss or dementia and their carers. We meet 10.30am to 12.30pm on Wednesdays in the Lounge.

2025 saw our founder, Jenny Cairns, stepping down and Madeleine Jarratt stepping into her not-inconsiderably-sized shoes. With the wonderful team of volunteers supporting Madeleine, the transition was smooth and the Club continues to go from strength to strength.

We currently have a regular attendance each Wednesday morning of about 16 members with their carers. They have recently enjoyed Musical Mobility, Tai Chi, crafting activities, biscuit decorating, visits from local Catholic schools, music from Songs on Wheels and Pielarks singing groups, wellbeing sessions, hand massages, and so much more! Most of all, each Wednesday, we all experience friendship and fun – and let's not forget the cake that is kindly donated by our baking volunteers!

Thank you to all of you who give your time so generously to volunteer with Memory Lane Club. It could not happen without you.

As many of our volunteers have been with us since we started in 2015, we are looking for new able-bodied volunteers who can help on Wednesdays between 9.30am and 12.30pm with setting up, talking to members and their carers, serving refreshments, and clearing up at the end.



If you're not able to come on Wednesdays but you like to bake, we would also love to hear from you to join our baking rota – this is not a regular commitment, but only once every couple of months or so.

If you would like to know more about joining or volunteering for the Memory Lane Club, please contact me.

Madeleine Jarratt

Bereavement Support Group

Breeda Fitzgerald & Luisa Elliott

wimbledon@rcaos.org.uk

Our Bereavement Support Drop-In offers a gentle and welcoming space for anyone experiencing loss. Rooted in compassion, we invite those who are grieving to come as they are – whether to share or simply sit in quiet companionship.

We meet on the last Saturday of each month at 10.30am in the Lounge. Supported by a small team of caring volunteers, we seek to walk alongside each person, offering comfort, friendship and hope. All conversations are treated with sensitivity and strict confidentiality, creating a safe and trusting environment. Please do join us for a coffee and biscuit - you are not alone.

Rehana Edun-Noys



St Vincent de Paul Conference

Chris Woodward
 presidentA190704@svp.org.uk

The Sacred Heart St Vincent de Paul Conference meets to help those living locally in need. All enquiries are dealt with confidentially. In 2025, the nine members of the Conference met regularly during the year in prayer and discussion to support those in need. Many of our clients are elderly, lonely people. New volunteers are welcome to join us in our work; please get in touch.

Chris Woodward



For Christmas 2025, the parish teamed up with Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School to deliver hampers to families and people in need in our community. Twenty-six hampers were lovingly put together by pupils at the school and distributed to people identified by the school, Parish Office, and our parish's St Vincent de Paul Conference.

Many thanks to everyone who volunteered to organise this initiative, including Rob Hitchcock and Siobhán Heffron, and to everyone who donated items or money towards the hampers.

Widows Support Group

Sadie Smith mrssadiesmith3@outlook.com
 020 8946 5198
Sheila Kelleher 020 8946 1792

The Widows Support Group was founded in 1981 and meets every Tuesday between 2.30pm and 4.30pm at 96 Durham Road (SW20 0TL), near Raynes Park. It is a non-structured 'drop-in' group to which all widows are welcome. There is no obligation or membership. It is simply a very cheerful meeting place, a time to share as much or as little of their daily life experiences as they wish over a cup of tea, and friendships grow out of it. New members are most welcome, no matter how long they have been bereaved.

Sadie Smith

Environment Group

David Hurst dthurst52@gmail.com

The Parish Environment Group had up to 14 members and was active in areas including switching the parish's waste management supplier, better management of waste collection, and planting a wildflower garden and new hedgerows. In 2020, the group helped the parish to achieve the CAFOD Live Simply award, proudly displayed in the entrance to the church. The group hopes to reform later this year with big ideas. Please contact JP de Quay or me.

David Hurst

Thursday Group

Sr Peggy SSA peggySSA14@yahoo.com
 07749 300964

The Thursday Group was formed over 30 years ago and has continued ever since. The purpose of the group is to offer support in a safe and friendly setting to anyone with mental health problems. It provides an opportunity for sharing, confidentially, any difficulties people might be experiencing. Close bonds and friendships have been made at the group, and support has been shared by many over the years.

We currently meet every Thursday in the Lounge between 3.00pm and 5.00pm. We start by looking at the Sunday's readings, followed by a short discussion on what they mean to us. We then have time to chat over a cup of tea and biscuits/cake. We warmly invite you to come and see us one Thursday, with no strings attached if it is not for you.

Sr Peggy SSA

Winter Night Shelter

Chiaralisa Giaco
 wimbledon@rcaos.org.uk

From January to March 2025, our parish hosted the Merton Winter Night Shelter, run by Faith in Action. Once a week for seven consecutive weeks, our dedicated team of more than 60 volunteer parishioners tirelessly provided twelve homeless men aged between 26 and 65 food and shelter. Following a delicious homecooked meal on Thursday evenings, our guests slept over in the Lower Hall, leaving on Friday morning after a hearty cooked breakfast and with a packed lunch.

Evening volunteers ensured a warm welcome, a safe place to chat, play board games, and use the WiFi to stay in touch with their families. Overnight volunteers slept in the Lower Hall with our guests, which was much appreciated by them as they perceived it as a levelling of hierarchy. The valiant breakfast team arrived at 6.30am to cook breakfast and clear up. Some volunteers did luggage runs (heavy rucksacks and sleeping bags) between venues, while others did laundry.

Guests were selected by Faith in Action, and as they became housed or reconciled with family, they were replaced with someone on the waiting list. For some, the shelter just offered respite over the cold winter months; for others, it was a life-changing experience.

22 guests went through the shelter in 2025 (twelve Polish, four British, and six from the rest of the world). Of these, 13 spent more than 28 days in the shelter. At the end of the shelter, 37% were housed with a private landlord or in social housing, 18% returned to living with family or friends, 9% went on to another shelter, and 36% remained homeless or did not stay in contact for follow-up.

Nandita Nelson

Nandita recently retired as our Parish Lead for the Winter Night Shelter, and is now replaced by Chiaralisa Giaco. We thank Nandita for her service.

St Teresa's Home for the Elderly

stteresashome.co.uk
 info@stteresashome.co.uk

We are a dual registered nursing and residential home for the elderly, located on 12 Lansdowne Road (SW20 8AN). Since opening in 1988, we have welcomed many parishioners as residents. We currently have five parishioners living here. Some may have had their children at St Teresa's Maternity Hospital (closed in 1988) and now find themselves at St Teresa's Care Home, thus coming full circle – so it is good that when they come, they know some familiar faces through the Sisters of St Anne. Having a chapel here is a great comfort to many, and we are blessed to have Mass celebrated twice a week. We know we can call the parish should we need a priest urgently – we are very grateful for their support.



Sr Patricia SSA

Upcoming Be Well talks

refreshments served beforehand

The mental health spectrum

Tuesday 22 September Lounge
 6.45pm for 7.00pm Dr Phil Hopley

Using listening to improve relationships

Tuesday 7 July Lower Hall
 7.15pm for 7.30pm Elisabeth Roger

Be well through being positive

Tuesday 27 October Lounge
 6.45pm for 7.00pm Anthony Lee



Social and Recreational

9th Wimbledon (Sacred Heart) Scout Troop

Our parish is delighted to continue to support the 9th Wimbledon (Sacred Heart) Scout Troop, a long-standing and much-loved part of our community, founded by the Jesuit Fathers back in 1931. Proudly wearing their yellow and white scarves – the papal colours – our scouts continue a rich tradition of friendship, faith, and adventure.



 9thwimbledon.com

 **Michael Orbell**

 michaelorbell@hotmail.com

The Troop meets every Monday from 7.30pm to 9.00pm in the Upper Hall with an exciting programme packed with team challenges, games, practical skills, outdoor adventures, and camps. It's a fantastic opportunity for boys aged 10 to 14 to build confidence, develop leadership skills, and make lasting friendships within a supportive, fun, and screen-free environment.



We currently have a limited number of places available for boys in Years 6 and 7, a wonderful time to join and begin the adventure! We are also keen to grow our group further and would warmly welcome new adult volunteers to help re-establish our Cub (ages 8-10) and Beaver (ages 6-8) sections. No prior experience is necessary – just enthusiasm and a willingness to get involved. Please get in touch.



Michael Orbell

28th Wimbledon (Sacred Heart) Guides and Rangers

Our unit for girls aged 10 to 17 meets on Friday evenings in the Upper Hall. Founded in 1941, we are a large and active unit with a focus on outdoor activities and camping. Girls develop independence and resilience by taking on responsibility, enjoying the outdoors, and problem-solving with their peers.



 **Sam Axbey**

Girls participate in the Duke of Edinburgh Award at Bronze, Silver, and Gold levels. Expeditions take place on foot and by canoe, with the Gold Expedition on rivers and lakes in Sweden. The annual weeklong summer camp rotates between four different sites: New Forest, Cannock Wood, Guernsey, and a fourth 'wild card'.



To join the Rainbows (ages 4 to 7), Brownies (ages 7 to 10), Guides (ages 10 to 14), or Rangers (ages 14 to 18), please visit girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-parents/register-a-child. For queries about the waiting list once you have registered, please contact sheryll@28thwimbledon.org.uk.



Sam Axbey



Young Adults

Rob Hitchcock wimbledonpfm@rcaos.org.uk

Our parish has a thriving community of Catholic young adults, comprising both students and young professionals, that meets regularly for faith and fellowship.

The core event is Prayer and A Pint, a relaxed social which takes place monthly on a Thursday evening. The group has been running for over a year, attracting 15 to 20 young adults from across London. We are currently exploring ways to expand our outreach for this growing community. Please see the parish's weekly newsletter for upcoming dates.

Our active WhatsApp community for Catholic young adults includes channels for Prayer and a Pint, meeting up for Masses, and even football! For an invite link, please email your phone number to wimbledonnewsletter@rcaos.org.uk.



In June, a group of our parish's young adults visited the Apostolic Nunciature to Great Britain at 54 Parkside. See June 2024 Edgeways.

Favre House

Will Morris favrehouse@outlook.com

Located on Edge Hill, we are a residence of fifteen Catholic young adults. We live in community, joined together by our shared faith and desire to grow in sanctity.

This past year has been a successful and busy one for Favre House, with residents organising a variety of parish events. Most regularly, Grace runs the First Monday Adoration.

Our week's peak is a shared dinner party every Wednesday prepared by two housemates. We have been delighted to host guests including their Graces Richard Moth, Archbishop of Westminster, and John Wilson, Archbishop of Southwark, and His Lordship Kenneth Nowakowski, Bishop of the Ukrainian Eparchy of Great Britain. We are delighted to share the news that two members of Favre House were married last summer, and two more will be married this summer. *Te Deum laudamus.*

If you are a practising Catholic and would like to explore the possibility of living at Favre House, please get in touch. Please pray for us, as we pray for the parish.

Will Morris



In 2025, our parish hosted several musical and artistic evenings organised by Poets & Prophets ([instagram.com/poetsandprophets.events](https://www.instagram.com/poetsandprophets.events)).

Wimbledon Catenians

William Rhind
williamrhind@hotmail.com

The Wimbledon Catenians for Catholic men meets in the Lounge at 7.30pm on the last Thursday of every month. Enquirers and new members are always welcome. Please get in touch if you are interested in learning more about Wimbledon Catenians or the Catenian Association in general.

November 2025 saw the return of our famous photographic competition and dinner (pictured, and see November 2025 Edgeways). Around fifty Catenians and their wives from across southwest London and Surrey came to show off their inner Cartier-Bressons and Eve Arnolds. Though technically a contest, an enjoyable evening was had by all, complete with a demonstration by professional sports photographer Leo Wilkinson of the tools of his trade. By the size of some of his lenses, we don't need to send people to discover new things on Mars: we can just take photos from the sportsgrounds of southwest London!

Socially, the circle had its customary Christmas party, pub nights, trips to the rugby, and participation in a wide range of other activities organised by the Catenian circles in the local area – whether they be quizzes, dinners, or dances.



Spirituality, the circle enjoyed its annual Mass in November in the Chapel of Wimbledon College, with a priest provided by the Apostolic Nunciature. Members of the circle also took part in the provincial, national, and regional days of recollections, Masses, and conferences as far afield as Farm Street, Westminster Cathedral, and Kenilworth.

William Rhind

Social Club

Sr Patricia SSA wimbledon@rcaos.org.uk

For over six years, the Social Club, of which I am Chair, has been hosted in the Lounge every Sunday from 8.30pm to 10.00pm. The Social Club provides an opportunity to meet with other parishioners and make new friends. It boasts a very affordable bar, which serves a variety of beverages, and from time to time makes a donation to parish funds.

Sr Patricia SSA

Christian Yoga

Anne Remedios anneremedios@outlook.com

Join us for £2 in the Lounge on Tuesdays from 10.00am to 11.15am. Yoga is a gentle exercise to improve strength, balance and flexibility, thereby staying active as you age. It offers physical and mental health exercise, including breathing techniques for people of all ages, relaxation, concentration, and meditation to balance body and mind. Either bring a yoga mat or do yoga seated on a chair. Please get in touch with me to join.

Anne Remedios



Join the Sacred Heart Wimbledon Facebook Group!
facebook.com/groups/221586015725496



Continental Breakfast and Café in the Lounge



Thank you to all the volunteers who provide these vital and tasty spaces for parishioners to meet and socialise. The Continental Breakfast takes place one Sunday a month after the 8.00am and 10.00am Masses in the Lower Hall; recent volunteers have included Tess Corrigan, Julian Hoskins, and Angela Maher (see *January 2026 Edgeways*). On other Sundays, the Café in the Lounge follows the 10.00am Mass, served by the Jones family – Sean, Penny, Sophie, and Sophie’s friend Agata (see *January 2025 Edgeways*). Do pop by! See the parish’s weekly newsletter for dates.

Friendship Group

Judy Ruston

judyruston@gmail.com

The Friendship Group started many years ago after a parish survey revealed that, in a parish as big as ours, it is sometimes difficult to make friends and feel part of a community; this applied particularly to older people.

We meet in the Lounge on the first Friday afternoon of the month. The meetings are advertised in the parish’s weekly newsletter. Everyone is welcome. There is always some kind of entertainment, such as a lecture or a film, and in December we have a Christmas Singalong (pictured above, with VE Day Celebrations below). We always serve tea and cakes. We ask for a small donation to cover our costs and the use of the Lounge.

Every May, we organise an outing; recent ones have included Hever Castle, Strawberry Hill, and the Watts Gallery. We have a small committee into which we would welcome new volunteers! Please get in touch.

Judy Ruston



Schools and Convents





Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

sacredheart.merton.sch.uk

At Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, our motto 'learning in love' and our core values of faith, hope and love are at the heart of all we do. As the parish school, we are proud to serve our community, nurturing each child to grow in faith, knowledge and compassion. We feel truly blessed to be part of such a vibrant and supportive parish community, where our shared mission is lived out daily.

Our close relationship with the parish remains a cornerstone of school life. We are proud to be the parish school, working in partnership to support the spiritual development of our children and to serve the wider community. We are especially grateful to Deacon Julian Burling, who serves as a school governor. Through his visits to observe Religious Education (RE) lessons and acts of worship, he offers both encouragement and valuable strategic support to the school. During the Spring Term, we were delighted to welcome Fr Peter each week to support RE lessons, work with our Prayer Leaders, and offer the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Clergy regularly support our liturgical life, including Masses and the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Advent and Lent. In addition, school staff contribute to parish life through attending Parish Pastoral Council meetings and supporting initiatives such as designing materials for the parish's Be Well Hub. This mutual service reflects the strength and unity of our partnership.

Living out our faith is central to our mission. Our Prayer Leaders and Year 4 pupils have demonstrated this through visits to the Memory Lane Club, showing compassion, respect and service to others as part of their faith in action. We are also grateful to Rob Hitchcock, Parish Faith Minister, who visits weekly to lead the Faith Club. Through this, pupils have deepened their understanding of Catholic Social Teaching, explored key liturgical seasons such as the month of the Rosary and Advent, and developed their confidence in planning and leading liturgies, including Advent and Lenten reconciliation services.



Prayer and worship remain at the heart of school life. Each year group attends Mass in the church at different points throughout the year, with these occasions complemented by a special workshop linked to the church and/or their RE topic. Together, these experiences provide meaningful opportunities to deepen their faith. Each year in December, Key Stage 2 pupils lead the Carol Service in the church, using drama and poetry to retell the Christmas story. Our KS2 Choir also regularly supports Sunday Masses, strengthening the connection between school and parish worship.

This academic year, we warmly welcomed our new headteacher, Mrs Sarah Norville, with a special Mass celebrated by Canon David, followed by an induction Mass at the 10.00am Family Mass on Education Sunday, where our choir sang beautifully.

As we look ahead, we are entering a period of exciting growth and opportunity. We are currently working towards joining the Sancta Familia Trust, which we believe will offer further opportunities for our children to flourish within a family of Catholic schools.

As the parish school, Sacred Heart remains deeply committed to working in partnership, united in faith and serving our community with love. We ask for the continued prayers of our parish community as we embark on this new chapter, keeping Christ at the centre of all we do and remaining faithful to our mission of learning in love, rooted in faith, hope, and love.

Siobhán Heffron
Deputy Headteacher



Donhead Preparatory School

donhead.org.uk

Donhead Preparatory School is a coeducational, Catholic Jesuit school for pupils aged 3 to 11, operating under the trusteeship of the Society of Jesus. Since its foundation in 1933, the school has been committed to forming 'Men and Women for Others' - individuals who lead lives of service, compassion, and integrity. Rooted in its motto, *Semper Magis* ('Always More'), Donhead encourages every pupil to develop their talents to the fullest, not only for personal excellence but also to make a meaningful difference in the world.

Donhead serves a diverse and globally connected community. Over 40% of pupils are baptised Catholics, with a further 27% coming from other Christian traditions, and families represent a wide range of cultural and religious backgrounds. This diversity enriches school life and strengthens a shared commitment to inclusivity and mutual respect. As a non-selective school, Donhead consistently achieves strong academic outcomes, with many pupils gaining senior school scholarships, reflecting the quality of its educational provision.

Our ethos is expressed through the Jesuit Pupil Profile, which encourages pupils to grow as grateful and generous, attentive and discerning, compassionate and loving, faith-filled and hopeful, eloquent and truthful, learned and wise, curious and active, and intentional and prophetic individuals. These values are woven into school life through assemblies, Mass, PSHE, and dedicated reflection time, guiding pupils to seek continual improvement in their learning and living for the greater glory of God and the common good. Faith, prayer, and service remain central to the life of the school, and pupils participate in a rich liturgical programme. In 2025, Ruth Pandole was appointed the Lay Chaplain.



Donhead benefits from a wide network of relationships beyond the school, enriching pupils' experience and strengthening its place within the wider church community. Its links with the parish are central, with pupils attending Mass, visiting the church, and celebrating the Sacraments as part of parish life. The school also works closely with other Catholic primary schools across the deanery and within Merton, taking part in shared events that allow pupils to meet and grow in faith together. In addition, Donhead is part of the British and global Jesuit network, which supports collaboration, mutual support, and shared development. These connections help the school to continue growing in its mission within the wider Ignatian community.

Catherine Hitchcock
Headteacher



Wimbledon College

wimbledoncollege.org.uk

Wimbledon College has a strong tradition as a Jesuit school for boys. At the heart of the Jesuit tradition is St Ignatius of Loyola's insight that God is to be found in all things. From this insight, Wimbledon College aims to create a caring and disciplined community in which pupils feel secure and are motivated to be involved in their studies and in a wide range of school activities; to encourage pupils to recognise the best in themselves and to work hard to develop all of their talents and to instil in its pupils an awareness of the needs of others and a commitment to putting their gifts and energies at the service of others.

The Lay Chaplain is the very experienced James Potter. In 2025, students and staff were welcomed at Pope Leo XIV's General Audience in the Vatican (see July 2025 Edgeways).

The school is redeveloping its alumni network. If you studied at Wimbledon College, please complete the alumni update form at wimbledoncollege.org.uk/about-us/alumni.



Ursuline High School

ursulinehigh.merton.sch.uk

Now a diocesan school for girls, Ursuline High School maintains a strong ethos inspired by the life and work of St Angela Merici, with the motto of 'Serviam'.

In October 2025, the school had its Catholic Schools Inspection, which awarded the school Outstanding (Grade 1) overall, with Grade 1 in each category: overall effectiveness, Catholic life and mission, Religious Education, and collective worship. The report can be downloaded on the school's website. Dominic Cunliffe is the Lay Chaplain.



Daughters of the Heart of Mary

dhmary.com

Our religious congregation was founded in France in 1791 by Pierre-Joseph de Clorivière SJ, who gave us four Gospel verses to orientate our life and mission. We have tried to embody these orientations through our presence in the Sacred Heart Parish and Our Lady of Lourdes, Harpenden.

'Behold your Mother'. During the past year, we have tried to live this invitation to honour Mary by our participation in the parish's daily rosary, and holding her feast days with special honour.

'I do not call you servants anymore but friends'. As a community, we desire to be a praying presence in our parish. We take part in the daily Eucharist, Adoration, and other parish liturgies and services. We encourage devotion to the Sacred Heart through monthly Holy Hours, focusing on biblical texts and writings on the Sacred Heart.

'Do whatever He tells you'. Listening to the Spirit, we have responded by being involved in pastoral ministry in the parish, in communion ministry, and in ministry of the Word and RCIA. We volunteer for administrative work in the Little Way Association, volunteering with the Jesuit Refugee Service, with Bakhita House for trafficked women, and by visiting the elderly in their homes. One member has a ministry of presence and prayer in the care home for the elderly. We are involved in retreat ministry and spiritual direction, both in person and online through the Jesuit Spirituality Centres in England and Wales.

'I ask you not to remove them from the World but to protect them from the evil one'. Conscious of this prayer of Jesus for us, we are aware of being sent into our environment – whether in Wimbledon or in Harpenden, to bring the good news of the Love of Christ to all.

Sr Anne DHM

Sisters of St Anne

sistersofstannewimbledon.org.uk

We have been serving the local community in Wimbledon for over 88 years. We are now five sisters in community, one of whom lives at our Care Home, St Teresa's, having worked in the parish for many years. Other members work in the care home and convent. Being 'Sisters of the Hour', we try to meet the ever-changing needs in the local community as best we can. In 2027, we will be celebrating the Centenary of the Founding of the Congregation, and remembering with joy all our sisters who worked tirelessly for the people.

Sr Patricia SSA



Sisters of Christ

soeursduchrist.fr/en

The Sisters' convent is 'Norlands' in Mayfield Road. The highlight of 2025 was the addition of a new member of the community: Sister Dins took her First Vows in Sacred Heart Church on 2 July, at a Mass at which Rt Rev'd Abbot Hugh Allan, O.Praem., Episcopal Vicar for Religious, presided.



Beyond the Parish

Churches Together in West Wimbledon

As eight churches, we offer common witness to the love of God for all people by working together in the service of our community. One of the many comments made at the Good Friday Ecumenical Walk of Witness reflected: 'It has never felt more important to me than it does today to witness to the Gospel, to show our love for one another and for humanity, and to be seen to do so.'

Our 2025 began with the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity service in January, which was led by the Wimbledon Quakers and hosted by St Saviour's Church, Raynes Park. In

March, the World Day of Prayer service was held at Christ Church, Cottenham Park Road.

On Good Friday morning, our walk of witness through Raynes Park took place supported by our wonderful 5.00pm Mass Choir, Alison Williams, and Deacon Julian Burling.

Our community activities have included hosting people experiencing homelessness through the Winter Night Shelter, now run by Faith in Action, which is managed by our parishioner Grace O'Neill, and carolsinging in local care homes. We

 **Cathy Dickenson**

 wimbledon@rcaos.org.uk

are planning other community initiatives and actions: we would love your ideas and thoughts!

Cathy Dickenson

The long-standing Chair of Churches Together in West Wimbledon, Rev'd Peter Kelly, Vicar of St Saviour's, stood down on his retirement from his parish. Our own Cathy Dickenson was unanimously elected Chair in his place.

Merton Faith in Action Homelessness Project

It has been an extremely busy year, not least as the current housing crisis continues to loom over the country and London in particular, with no easy fixes in sight.

In 2025, we hosted 102 drop-in sessions, welcoming 208 guests for their first time, alongside advice and practical support - including support into work and education, referrals to the Drug and Alcohol Service, opening bank accounts, immigration support, and registering people with GP surgeries. We provided 2037 hot showers (and the same number of new or clean boxer shorts and underwear); we completed 1,211 loads of laundry; and we offered 1,176 bed spaces through our Winter Night Shelter and supported 27 people into secure accommodation.

But these are just the figures, and behind each figure is a human story.

To read some of our case studies, learn more about what we do, and learn how you can support us, please visit our website, where you can read our Impact Report in full.

We are always looking for more volunteers, both for the drop-in but also outside it for promotion and fundraising. Please email Nicki Zisman at nicki@mertonfaithinaction.org.

Lastly, I want to say that none of this work would be possible without the amazing support (both in terms of the financial support and the time freely given by our wonderful volunteers) of so many of the faith groups in Merton, and not least the Sacred Heart Parish, who have been a part of our Winter Night Shelter from the beginning. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to you all.

Grace O'Neill

 mertonfaithinaction.org

 **Grace O'Neill**



Christian CARE

Jenny Clayton

jenny.clayton@christiancaremerton.org.uk

Christian CARE is a charity serving the London Borough of Merton, committed to the relief of poverty and supporting families in crisis. Made up of around 60 volunteers, many from churches of different denominations, the charity seeks to show care and compassion to our neighbours in need.

Each year, Christian CARE supports around 100 families, offering practical help through food provision, vouchers and household essentials, as well as ongoing support through trained befrienders. The work is rooted in dignity, respect and inclusivity, welcoming and assisting individuals

and families of all backgrounds, regardless of race, colour or religion. Through its outreach, Christian CARE brings hope, stability and a sense of community to those facing difficult circumstances. If you would like to join us, please get in touch.

The Manna Society

mannasociety.org.uk

Bridget Handley 07981 941516

Based at London Bridge, the Manna Society feeds approximately 100 homeless people, seven days a week, 360 days a year. It relies on volunteers and donations of food. At the parish, we organise a collection of food three or four times a year and take it to the Manna Society's kitchen. Volunteers are always welcome; do get in touch.

Bridget Handley

Merton Citizens

David Hurst

dthurst52@gmail.com

As founding members of Merton Citizens in April 2018, our parish – alongside Wimbledon College and fifteen other local groups – is active in community organising on issues that are important to many citizens: mental health (via the Be Well Hub), housing, encouraging employers to pay the living wage, and welcoming refugees. More volunteers are needed; to learn about our significant achievements and possibly to share in this work, please get in touch.

David Hurst

Raphael Pilgrimage to Lourdes

raphaelpilgrimage.org.uk

Angela Searle

A group numbering 45 travelled to Lourdes in August 2025. For a quarter of these, it was their first time with Raphael. Many will return to join this very welcoming family again.

We endured variable weather, often very wet, as we participated in a walking tour of the town, Blessed Sacrament and Torchlight processions and visits to the Grotto and Low Stations of the Cross. We stayed in our usual Hotel Padoue, which has disabled rooms and equipment for those requiring it. Social gatherings in the evenings were enjoyed by all: a quiz, a singalong accompanied by our flautist and guitarist, and the ever-popular Catholic bingo, with the numbers called in plainchant by our spiritual director, Father Leo. The party, otherwise known as 'Raphael's Got Talent', took place on the penultimate evening.



Planning for this year's pilgrimage began as soon as we returned home and we meet online every month to ensure everything is organised ahead of time. We are particularly keen to attract helpers to support our less mobile pilgrims, especially pushing wheelchairs when out and about. Please visit our website.

Angela Searle

Attributions and thanks

The Editor wishes to thank all the parish groups and parishioners that provided contributions to this Annual Report, with apologies to any groups that have inadvertently been missed. As Canon David says, even the Holy Spirit may not know how many groups there are in this parish! If your group has been missed, please help us to ensure it makes future reports and newsletter notices by emailing wimbledonnewsletter@rcaos.org.uk.

The Editor wishes to thank and recognise those whose photographs and images have illustrated this Annual Report:

- Images credited to photographer **John Stone**: p.2, pp.7–8, p.11, p.14, p.18, p.20, p.22, p.29, p.34, and p.36.
- Images credited to **Alvaro Garcia and the Archdiocese of Southwark** ([flickr.com/photos/rcsouthwark/albums/72177720327068730/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/rcsouthwark/albums/72177720327068730/)): front cover, p.3, pp.26–28, p.31, and p.44.
- Images credited to the **Archdiocese of Southwark** ([flickr.com/photos/rcsouthwark/albums/72177720324313339/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/rcsouthwark/albums/72177720324313339/)): p.6.
- Images credited to **Google Earth** (Landsat / CopernicusData SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO Airbus Images, dates 27/05/2015 – 26/11/2025): p.10.
- Images credited to parishioners **Yvonna R.** (p.16, p.18, p.23), **Alison Lobo** (p.21, p.47), **David Hurst** (p.25, p.38), and **Chris Woodward** (p.31, p.38).
- Images credited to **Youth 2000** (pp.10–11) and **Poets and Prophets** (p.18, p.36)
- Images credited to the **Parish Flower Group** (p.17), **St Teresa's Home for the Elderly** (p.33), **9th Wimbledon (Sacred Heart) Scout Troop** (p.35), **28th Wimbledon (Sacred Heart) Guides and Rangers** (p.35), **Wimbledon Catenians** (p.37), **Merton Faith in Action Homelessness Project** (p.45), and the **Raphael Pilgrimage to Lourdes** (p.46).
- Images credited to **Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School** (pp.39–40), **Donhead Preparatory School** (p.41), **Wimbledon College** (p.42), **Ursuline High School** (p.42), and the **Sisters of St Anne** (p.43).

For all comments and queries on this Annual Report, please contact wimbledonnewsletter@rcaos.org.uk.

