

ST THOMAS MORE PARISH



SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY [A]



4 January 2026

Please take the newsletter home with you for reference.

Parish Priest

Fr. Alessandro Renó,

1 Meeting Lane, Towcester NN12 6JX

✉ fralessandro.reno@northamptondiocese.org

Parish Office:

Closed till 4th of January

S.V.P. (Charity/Support):

Michael J. Emery

✉ michaeljemery@hotmail.co.uk

☎ 07157 613487

Safeguarding Parish Rep.:

Mary McAllister

Barbara Leay (support)

✉ safeguarding.towcester@northamptondiocese.org

💻 www.stthomasmorerc.org

TIMES & MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday 3 January –

5.30pm – **Vigil Mass** – Adriana Carlos

Sunday 4 January – Second after Nativity [A]

11am – **Mass** – Sheila Thompson

Monday 5 January – Vigil of Epiphany

6.00pm - **Mass** – Paddy Fitzgerald

Tuesday 6 January – The Epiphany of the Lord

9.30am – **Mass**

Wednesday 7 January

9.00am – **Rosary**

9.30am – **Mass** Paddy Collins & Maly Kate Collins

Friday 9 January

9.30am – **Mass** – Christy & Maura Collins Rip

Saturday 10 January –

5.30pm - **Vigil Mass** – People of the Parish

Sunday 11 January – The Baptism of the Lord [A]

11am – **Mass** –

Mass Readings:

Sirach 24:1-2,8-12 Psalm 147:12-15,19-20;

Ephesians 1:3-6,15-18; John 1:1-18

Health and Safety:

Anthony McAllister

✉ mcallister18@hotmail.com

Children Liturgy:

Rose Darwin

✉ rosiedarwin@aol.com

Music/Choir Group:

Chris Nikel

✉ chris@nikel.net

Finance Team:

Michael J. Emery: Chairman

Hugh Moran: Treasurer

Repository:

Chris Nash

✉ christinenash@btinternet.com

Psalm response:

The Word of God became flesh
and dwelt among us.

Gospel Acclamation

Glory be to you, O Christ, proclaimed to the pagans.
Glory be to you, O Christ, believed in by the world

Eucharistic Acclamation:

We proclaim your death O Lord,
We profess your resurrection,
until You come again.

CONFESIONS:

Saturday 27 December from 4.45pm to 5.20pm

EXPOSITION & ADORATION:

Saturday from 4.30pm to 5.10pm

ROSARY:

Wednesday at 9am

CHILDREN'S LITURGY CHRISTMAS

HOLIDAY BREAK: The Children's Liturgy for those children who have not yet made their First Communion at the 11.00 Mass every Sunday will NOT be held on December 28th or January 4th due to the Christmas Holiday. It will be back the 11th of January.

A HEARTFELT NOTE OF GRATITUDE AFTER OUR CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS

My dear parishioners,

As we continue to celebrate the Christmas season and look ahead to the New Year, I want to express my deepest and most heartfelt gratitude to all of you who made our Christmas Masses and celebrations so beautiful and faith filled.

The true spirit of Christmas—the joy of Christ's birth and the warmth of our community—was truly evident throughout the season.

- **To all who decorated our Church:** A special thank you for the countless hours spent adorning our altar, sanctuary, and grounds. The beautiful decorations created a welcoming and sacred space for all to worship and reflect on the Nativity.
- **To our liturgical ministers:** Thank you to the altar servers, lectors, musicians, cantors, and choir members. Your dedicated service and beautiful music elevated our liturgies and helped us all to pray and experience the presence of God more deeply.
- **To our dedicated volunteers:** For all those who worked quietly behind the scenes—our cleaning team, parish staff, and everyone who helped organize events and ensure smooth operations—your efforts do not go unnoticed. The parish functions because of your selfless service.
- **To all who offered their generosity:** I am deeply grateful for your generous contributions to our Christmas collections, and the gifts you shared with one another. I'd like to mention Edith and Marco, now in Mexico who donated the outdoor Nativity. Your stewardship reflects the true appreciation for the gift of our Catholic faith and our parish family.

Your love, devotion, and sacrifice are a testament to your appreciation for our shared faith. I am truly blessed to be the shepherd of such a vibrant and loving community.

May the Baby Jesus bless you abundantly with His peace, joy, and love throughout the New Year, and may you continue to experience His presence in your daily lives.

Fr Alessandro

TEA AND COFFEE after the 11.00 Mass in the LOMBARD ROOM

If you want to help to prepare, serve and tidy. Please, speaks with Chris Ash.



LAST SUNDAY COLLECTION:

Weekly collection: £ 424.59

MANY THANKS from myself to all of you for all your kind wishes, cards and gifts and for your generous Christmas Offering. May the Lord be with you and bless you all throughout the coming year.
Fr Alessandro

UPPER ROOM FINALISING CLEAR OUT:

We'd like to restore the upstairs room to normal use. A great deal of work has already been done by many volunteers who have dedicated their time to clearing it of various clutters. But there's still much to do. **Finalising clear out on the 6th of January at 11.30am.** If you want to be part of the helping team, please speak or contact Chris Nash: christinenash@btinternet.com.

THE SVP LUNCH: Lunch arranged by the SVP will be at *DnA Steak and Grill* on Thursday the 8th of January at 12.30pm. Main course £13.90. For further info please contact Chris Nash on 07941.188047

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION 2026:

22nd of January from 7pm till 8pm parents meeting at St Thomas More's (entrance by the side door) and **1st Class on the 25th of January** from 10am to 10.45am in the upper room (entrance by the side door).

PARISH WEBSITE

Keep visiting our parish website. You can log in and click for news, newsletters, interesting facts, photos, and much more at:

www.stthomasmorerc.org

CHURCH CLEANING ROTA

5 Jan: Emanuela Coy & Michelle Collins

19 Jan: Eileen Fitzgerald and Sheila O'Driscoll

2 Feb: Jim and Brenda Ince
16 Feb: Chris Nash and Christa Darragh

BAPTISM AND MARRIAGE: please contact Fr Alessandro Renó to book a date and to arrange the preparation course for the sacraments at: fralessandro.reno@northhamptondiocese.org

DIOCESE

DIOCESAN DIRECTORY for 2026 now available at £3 a copy.

RETROUVAILLE The Retrouvaille organisation exists to support marriages, and can bring hope and healing to relationships. Next programme begins on 12th February 2026. Visit: www.retrouvaille.org.uk for information.

THE THEOLOGY OF ST JOHN HENRY NEWMAN & ITS RELEVANCE FOR TODAY's CHURCH

Tuesday 20 January, 5.30pm

In celebration of St John Henry Newman's importance for Catholic education, the Margaret Beaufort Institute, Cambridge, together with the Newman Association, has developed a six-session short course designed to deepen your understanding of key themes in Newman's theology and their relevance for the Church today.

The course will be team-taught by leading theologians and delivered live online, one Tuesday evening each month.

Registration link:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-theology-of-john-henry-newman-its-relevance-for-todays-church-tickets-1906599794309>

OTHER

POPE LEO XIV has chosen Bishop Richard Moth of Arundel and Brighton to be the next Archbishop of Westminster when Cardinal Nichols retires. Bishop Moth is to be installed as 12th Archbishop of Westminster on 14 February next year. Please keep him and the retiring Archbishop, in your prayers at this time.

NEURODIVERSITY & FAITH RESEARCH

The Catholic Bishops Conference of England & Wales, and Birmingham Newman University are conducting research into Neurodiversity and our Faith. If you are an adult neurodivergent Catholic or a caregiver for such a person, they would like to hear from you. Your experiences will help them to become more inclusive and responsive to your needs. To find out more and to complete a short survey, please visit www.godwhospeaks.uk/neurodivergentcatholic-surveys

+Useful Websites:

<https://northhamptondiocese.org>
<http://www.catholicreadings.org>
<https://cbcew.org.uk>
<http://www.heavensroadfm.com>
<http://www.walsingham.org.uk>
<https://northhamptondiocese.org/donate/>
<http://cafod.org.uk>

CURIOSITY ABOUT CHRISTMAS TIME: It's a period of celebration, reflection, and togetherness, encompassing Advent, Christmas Day, and the festive days following, called Yuletide or Christmastide. The Twelve Days of Christmas, lasts 12 days, from 25 December to 5 January, the latter date being named as Twelfth Night. These traditional dates are adhered to by the Lutheran Church and the Anglican Church. In the "usus antiquior" of the Roman rite, per the general rubrics of the Roman Breviary, "Christmastide" includes both "the season of Christmas" (the 12 days seen earlier) and "the season of Epiphany," which is the eight days from the Epiphany on Jan. 6 to the commemoration of the Baptism of the Lord on Jan. 13. What is now called the season of Epiphany was, until 1955, observed as the Octave of the Epiphany.

But here it is the surprise!!! Candlemas, or the feast of the Presentation of the Lord, is Feb. 2. On this day, many Catholics bring candles to the church to be blessed. They can then light these candles at home during prayer or difficult times as a symbol of Jesus Christ, the light of the world.

Candlemas is the last day that the Marian hymn "Alma Redemptoris Mater" is sung at the end of the night prayer of the Divine Office.

The “Alma Redemptoris Mater” is used from the beginning of Advent through Feb. 2, and so Candlemas has come to be associated with the close of the Christmas season.

So what is the exact right time to observe the end of the Christmas season? That is largely a personal call based on your own traditions, customs, practical matters, and other factors. For safety reasons, I recommend that you take your tree down as soon as it starts shedding a lot of needles, but other than that, there's an argument for leaving things up as late as Feb. 2. Of course, your neighbours may disagree.

Happy Christmas
Season!



PRAYER AT CHRISTMAS TIME:

Lord, in this holy season of prayer and song and laughter, we praise you for the great wonders you have sent us: for shining star and angel's song, for infant's cry in lowly manger. We praise you for the Word made flesh in a little Child. We behold his glory, and are bathed in its radiance.

Be with us as we sing the ironies of Christmas, the incomprehensible comprehended, the poetry made hard fact, the helpless Babe who cracks the world asunder. We kneel before you shepherds, innkeepers, wise men. Help us to rise bigger than we are. Amen.

Entering the New Year
2026!

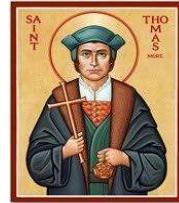
God of all time,
help us enter the New Year quietly,
thoughtful of who we are to ourselves and to others,
mindful that our steps make an impact
and our words carry power.
May we walk gently.
May we speak only after we have listened
well.

Creator of all life,
help us enter the New Year reverently,
aware that you have endowed
every creature and plant, every person and habitat
with beauty and purpose.
May we regard the world with tenderness.
May we honour rather than destroy.
Lover of all souls,
help us enter the New Year joyfully,
willing to laugh and dance and dream,
remembering our many gifts with thanks
and looking forward to blessings yet to come.
May we welcome your lavish love.
May we cast off the small, vindictive god our
fears have made.
May the grace and peace of Christ bless us
now and in the days ahead.

- Vinita Hampton Wright

A PRAYER TO ST. THOMAS

MORE, counselor of law and
statesman of integrity, merry
martyr and most human of saints!



*PRAY that, for the glory of GOD
and in the pursuit of His justice, I
may be trustworthy with confidences, keen in
study, accurate in analysis, correct in conclusion,
able in argument, loyal to clients, honest with all,
courteous to adversaries, ever attentive to
conscience. Sit with me at my desk and listen with
me to my clients' tales. Read with me in my library
and stand always beside me so that today I shall
not, to win a point, lose my soul. PRAY that my
family may find in me what yours found in you:
friendship and courage, cheerfulness and charity,
diligence in duties, counsel in adversity, patience
in pain—their good servant, and God's first.
AMEN.*

©Center for Thomas More Studies With ecclesiastical approval Bishop Joseph A. Galante March 5, 2003 This prayer is an adaption of “An Appeal to St. Thomas More” by Henry Bender, Jr., published in The Catholic Mind, Feb. 1951.

PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

to be used especially by those not receiving the Eucharist.

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