



After 10 years in South Norwood, it behoves me now to bid you all at Holy Innocents and at Saint Mark, a fond farewell and to wish you every blessing as you look forward to your new chapter. All being well, your new Vicar should be appointed between 9-12 months of 4th February 2024.

Until then, I can only encourage you to work together, which will most likely involve some stepping up and some stepping out, as you continue to bring God's kingdom in this part of South London.

Of course, this means loving one another too and working out what that looks like; looking out for each another and being kind to one other – it's all Gospel imperative.

The COVID pandemic taught us some new skills, not least how to think fast on our feet and how to be creative and innovative. Those online entertainment evenings which turned out to be super events, thanks to those who were willing to *stop shining their light under the bushel*.

I remembered it well, my first foray into South Norwood on Racial Justice Sunday, 9th September 2012 at the invitation of the then Curate (*now the Bishop of Ripon*) who was going on holiday so needed someone to provide Cover at Holy Innocents, 10am Eucharist complete with baptism of young Aaron, who has from September 2023, joined Year 7 at Whitgift, having completed Years 2-6 at our St. Mark's Primary School. The following year, 2013, I was Licensed to Holy Innocents on September 28th the *Eve of Michael and Archangels* by the then Bishop of Croydon, the Rt. Revd. Jonathan Clark.

Then on January 22nd 2015, I was duly Licensed to St. Mark, after a 3 months vacancy following Father Tom Hurcombe's retirement at the end of October 2014. Tom and I agreed it was best that I start at St. Mark School as Vicar, from September 2014 – from then onwards, it has been a total joy and delight, to engage with the children, the staff and governors. All three headteachers have been great advocates for the school, which has transitioned from *'being in special measures'* OFSTED category to currently *'a good school'*.

There were 3 commercial Banks on the High Street when I arrived, now there is none – must be something I said ☺ Must say though, that its current eateries are a good representation of the United Nations.

In the meanwhile, at the United Benefice, we started Joint Services as some occasions lend themselves to such – Palm Sunday (alternated, Maundy Thursday (SM) Good Friday (HI), Christmas Eve (SM), Christmas Day (HI). And at Holy Innocents, we started at 5.30am on Easter Eve, first Mass of Easter followed by champagne breakfast (*the Vicar's encouragement to congregants*); and placed Watch Night Eucharist and Covenant Renewal firmly in the Calendar.

So, it's only fitting that as I give thanks for all that has passed and look forward to all that is to come, my last Service should be on 31st December, 11pm, Holy Innocents, during which I shall be interviewing that South London lad 'done good', Richard Blackwood – see you there!

Welcome to the United Benefice of South Norwood, Holy Innocents and St. Mark

Sharing God's grace and love in our community



31st December 2023

Vicar: The Revd. Canon Roxanne F. Eversley
Priest (PTO): Mtr. Susan Wheeler-Kiley TSSF
Reader (PTO): Mrs. Cicelyn Hinds

**FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS
NEW YEAR'S EVE**

8.00am BCP Mass (St. Mark)

10am Parish Mass (Both Parishes)

*Isaiah 61.10-62.3 * Psalm 148 * Galatians 4.4-7 * Luke 2.15-21*

Access online worship via

www.youtube.com/c/StMarksSouthNorwood

CHURCH NOTICES

Today is Mother Roxanne's last working day in the Parish. She will be on leave from 1st January 2024, then moving to her new home in Bermondsey (London SE16) around mid-January so she can 'catch her breath' before her Installation as *Canon Librarian and Dean of Cultural Diversity* at **Southwark Cathedral (London Bridge) on 4th February at 3pm Evensong, to which you are all invited.**

For all parish Concerns, please contact in the first instance, the churchwardens (*Donald for St. Mark; John and Laurél for Holy Innocents*).

Mother Susan is available on 07890 780572 but not usually on Fridays.

We pray: **for** Archbishops Justin and Stephen; **for** the Bishops in this diocese, Christopher, Rosemarie and Martin; **for** the Bishops, priests, deacons and people in our link Dioceses of Zimbabwe and in the Anglican Church of Rwanda.

For the families of the Clergy in our Diocese.

For the sick – Richard, Jennifer & Reuben, Rose, Caroline, Susan, Sigi, Marie-Gabrielle, Colin (Castle), Carmen, Marina, Linda, Fred, Peter, Kay, Simon, Alec, Naomi, Michael, Rudolph, Malik, Dionne, Roy, Mick, Norman and Sacha.

For the bereaved – the Appiah, Gaisey, Robinson, Powell, Dempster families.

For the recently departed – George Kojo Appiah, Ruth Robinson, Lee Powell and Ron Dempster.

Years Mind (*those whose anniversaries of death occur at this time*).

Please note that the Prayer list will start anew from January 7th so please let [Margaret margaret.m.hall@btinternet.com](mailto:margaret.m.hall@btinternet.com) know whom you wish to be added to the List.