



St. James the Great Church & St Paul's Church

23rd Sunday of Ordinary Time 7th September

Church Notices



This Sunday's Gospel (Luke 14:25–33) delivers a stark call from Jesus: to be His disciple, we must prioritise Him above all—even family and life itself. This isn't about rejecting love but ordering it rightly, choosing the cross with open eyes. True discipleship means counting the cost, knowing the sacrifice, and finding freedom in surrender.

👉 Read the full reflection

A warm welcome to any visitors joining us for worship today. Please stay for refreshments after Mass—we would love to meet

Today's Services

🕒 8:00 a.m. Low Mass

🎵 10:00 a.m. Sung Parish Mass

👶 **Young Church Is Back!**

Term Time Young Church resumes Today during the 10:00 a.m. Parish Mass

We are delighted to welcome children and families back as Young Church begins for the new term!

Children start in church with their families, then head to the Pilgrim Centre for their own time of story, prayer, and activity, before rejoining the congregation for the rest of the Mass.

👶 For children aged 3+



Our Mission and Leadership - St James the Great Church is a parish of The Society

(under the patronage of S. Wilfrid and S. Hilda)

and a member of Forward in Faith, under the pastoral and

sacramental care of the Bishop of Richborough. Together, we strive to proclaim the love of Christ, upholding the fullness of the catholic faith and fostering a community where Christian faith, tradition, and prayer flourish.

Bank Account: PCC of St. James & St. Paul Colchester, Account no: 50791466

Sort Code: 20-22-67

SAFEGUARDING Our Parish Safeguarding Officer is Mrs. Clare Moles contacted in church or by calling 07751329314

The Diocesan Safeguarding Team can be contacted by telephoning the duty number 01245 294444

Prayer: Morning at 7.45am. Evening at 6pm

Out of the Arl Music License Certificate Number: OOTA-CERT-302926

Father James McCluskey SSC - 01206 860419 Churchwarden/Treasurer: Lucy Mason 01206 386766 Churchwarden: Dr. Desirée Campbell 01206 617263

Visit the web site of our Church School: - <https://www.st-james-colchester-essex.co.uk/> Church office infostjamesthegreat@gmail.com



Fun, faith-filled teaching
rooted in the Gospel

† Helping children feel at home
in the worshipping life of the
Church



Supporting families to grow
in faith together

Our Leaders and Safeguarding

All Young Church leaders are
DBS-checked and highly
experienced. This ministry is led
by our **Deacon and Curate, Fr
Jeff Graham**, a retired
headteacher and former member
of the Chelmsford Diocesan
Board of Education. He is
supported by a trusted team,
deeply involved in the formation
of toddlers, children, young
people, and adults.

Parents are welcome to
accompany their children until
they're confident.

If you're new or visiting — we'd
love to welcome you!

“Let the little children come to
me; do not hinder them,
for to such belongs the kingdom
of God.” (Mark 10:14)

Please Pray For The Infirm

and Housebound: Adam, Ava
Mills, Eileen and Ed, Gaby, Gill
Bernhart-Bellaerts, Christine &
Emma, Clive French, David
Beattie, Joyce & Ralph, Jon
Hawkings, Lubomira, Madeline
Bates, Naomi & family, Norma
Plummer, Ronnie, Sheila
Townsend, Sharon, Shirley, Mrs
Killiki Pitts.

Recently Departed Ann Allford.
John Edward Hyam Clarke (Katy
McCluskey's father)

Blessed Sacrament Lamp:

St James the Great Lamp:

Aumbry Lamp:

Year's Mind: 8th Stanley Clough
9th Graham West. 11th Herbert
Humm, Nevil Beedon. 12th Percy
Nicholls, Shelagh Joan Mettrick,
Diana George, Maureen Julian
Michael Bacon

✠ The Repose of the Soul of

Ann Allford 🌿 It is with
solemn hearts that the repose of
our dear parishioner,
“The souls of the righteous are in
the hand of God, and no torment
shall touch them.” (Wisdom 3.1)
Details of her Requiem Mass and
funeral will be shared in due
course. *May she rest in peace
and rise in glory.*

This Week

Monday 8th September Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Mass at Midday. Do come along -invite a friend.

Tues. 9th Sept. 9:00–10:30 a.m.
— Church Cleaning

9 am School Assembly

Wed 10th Sept 11 am Mass at Blomfield House

Thurs. 11th Sept 12.30pm Mass at St James the Great

Fri. 12th Sept

9.00am Year 6 Class Mass

12 Midday Rosary Prayers

☀️ **Saturday 13th**

September – A Big Day in Parish Life ☀️

Three major events take place at St James — all of which deserve your support and prayers, please:

1 Heritage Open Day 🏛️

St James will open its doors to visitors as part of the national Heritage Open Day weekend, welcoming guests to learn about our church's history and sacred architecture.

2 Ride & Stride 🚴

As part of the Essex Churches Trust fundraiser, cyclists will visit St James. Half the sponsorship money raised returns to our parish. Forms available at the back of church.

3 Children & Families

Mission Day 🌿

Theme: *Pilgrimage and the Pilgrim*

A day of evangelism and outreach focused on children, young people, and families. What does it mean to be a pilgrim? Together, we will explore how to walk in faith, follow Jesus, and live as modern-day pilgrims — with joy, trust, and love.

👥 **Guests:** Jane Southward from the Walsingham Education Department

🕒 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

🍽️ *Lunch provided for all*

📝 *Registration required on the day*

🙏 **Your prayers, encouragement, and participation will make all the difference.** To offer help, speak to **Fr Jeff or a member of the Mission Steering Group.**

👤 **Volunteers needed for:**

- Welcoming visitors
 - Church security
 - Refreshments
 - Ride & Stride reception.
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Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. 8th September



It is Our Lady's Birthday!

Join us at **Midday Mass** as we mark this great feast — a day of joy not only for Mary, but for the whole Church. In celebrating her birth, we celebrate the beginning of the unfolding of God's plan for our salvation.

Born to **Saint Joachim and Saint Anne** (see

Protoevangelium of James, c. AD 150), Mary is the dawn before the rising Sun, the child prepared by grace to become the Mother of the Saviour.

Her birth is a sign of hope — the first light before Christ, the Light of the world.

“From her He took flesh, by whom all things were made.” —
Mass of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Come and give thanks for Mary's life, her “yes” to God, and for the love and faith of her parents, who trusted in God's promise.

✧ Ordination and First Mass of Fr Jeff Graham ✧

We are delighted to announce that **Fr Jeff Graham** will be ordained to the **Sacred Priesthood at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday 27th September 2025**, at St James the Great, by the **Bishop of Richborough**, with the **Bishop of Colchester** present as Diocesan representative. He will celebrate his **First Mass on Sunday 28th September at 4:30 p.m.** here at St James.

✧ Help Needed:

- Friday 26th – Church prep, marquee setup
- Saturday 27th – Pilgrim Centre hosting
- Sunday 28th – Refreshments, clean-up



Ordination Gift

Please give generously towards a gift to mark this sacred milestone. “The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.” (1 Thess. 5:24)

☀️ **Deanery Day – Saturday**
11th October 2025 ☀️ One
day. One church. One Deanery.

🕒 **9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.**

📍 St John's Church &
Community Centre, Colchester
CO4 0HP

The whole Colchester Deanery
— 24 parishes strong — gathers
for a day of **inspiration,**
worship, fellowship, and vision.
It's free to attend (lunch
included!) and open to everyone.

Why come? Because this is
more than just another event. It's
a chance to stand together, be
encouraged, and catch a fresh
vision of what God is doing in
Colchester.

Unmissable highlights

Patrick Regan OBE —
international speaker on faith,
hope, and wellbeing.

Revd David Senior —
broadcaster and evangelist,
sharing the story of revival.

Bishop Roger Morris — “Meet
the Bishop” and hear his heart for
our Deanery.

Archdeacon Ruth Patten — on
finding joy in PCC life (!).

Workshops & seminars —
music, social media, calling &
vocation, youth ministry,
wellbeing, safeguarding, church
buildings, and more.

Children & teens — their own
activities, plus a Young People's
Choir leading the closing
worship.

The flavour of the day

☕ Coffee and pastries to begin

🙏 Worship that lifts the heart

💡 Ideas to spark fresh
imagination

🥗 A buffet lunch for everyone

🎵 Closing worship led by our
young people.


👉 **Register now** at
[colchesterdeanery.org.uk/deanery
day](https://colchesterdeanery.org.uk/deaneryday) or add your name to the
church sign-up list.


**Let's go together. Let's be
inspired. Let's see what God
will do.**


A Gentle but Serious Reminder **Health & Safety in Church during rising Covid cases**


As people of faith, we are called to love one another and protect the vulnerable in our midst. With Covid and other seasonal illnesses increasing, please be extra diligent in how we gather.


 **Sanitise hands** on entering and leaving church.

 **Be considerate:** some may prefer no handshakes or close contact.

 **If unwell, please stay at home** and join us in prayer until you are better.

 **Cough or sneeze responsibly** and dispose of tissues straight away.


 **At Holy Communion,** follow the directions given to receive reverently and safely. This is not about rules for their own sake, but about **Christian love in action** — caring for the weak, the elderly, and those with fragile health.


 *“Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.”* (Galatians 6.2)


Thank you for your care, patience, and love. Together, we keep our church a safe place of worship.


Parish Giving Scheme – Moving Fully to PGS


Our parish is now moving fully to the **Parish Giving Scheme (PGS)**. This means those who already give by standing order or Gift Aid envelopes are encouraged to switch.


 *Your generosity is honoured and valued*

 *The parish receives a secure, regular income*

 *Gift Aid is added automatically (25% extra at no cost to you)*

 *You can choose to index-link your giving to inflation*

 *Admin burden is reduced, freeing more time for ministry*

 *Forms available at the back of church*

 *Watch:*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B9MxcXudSGg>

Please speak with **Lucy Mason** (Churchwarden/Treasurer/Gift Aid Officer) for assistance.

“This is not simply about administration: it is about ensuring that our giving today provides for the life of the Church tomorrow.”



Gospel Reflection – Luke 14:25-33

This Sunday's Gospel (Luke 14:25–33) contains hard words from Jesus: “If anyone comes to me without hating father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters — yes, even life itself — he cannot be my disciple.” Surely Jesus isn't calling us to despise those we're commanded to love?

St Augustine clarifies that in Scripture, “hate” can mean to love less. Christ is reordering our affections, not abolishing them. As he says, “He who prefers father or mother to Christ, loves not father or mother as he ought.” When Christ comes first, our love for family is purified and strengthened. St John Chrysostom adds that prioritizing Christ makes every trial—dishonor, poverty, even death—bearable. Origen notes that “hating our own life” means rejecting the false self tied to sin and pride, allowing a new life of grace to rise.

Jesus illustrates this with two parables: a builder calculating the cost before laying a foundation, and a king assessing his strength before battle. Discipleship

demands deliberate commitment. You must count the cost and be ready to carry the cross.

We see this principle in action. In 1997, Steve Jobs saved Apple from bankruptcy by cutting projects from 350 to 50, focusing on what mattered. That discipline led to the iMac, iPod, and iPhone. James Dyson, after 5,127 prototypes, created a revolutionary vacuum by persevering through setbacks. Contrast this with Woolworths, which collapsed after spreading too thin, or WeWork, whose reckless expansion led to its downfall. They failed to count the cost.

Counting the cost in everyday life means putting Christ first in practical decisions. In family life, it might mean prioritizing prayer or church attendance despite busy schedules, or forgiving a loved one when resentment feels easier. At work, it could mean choosing integrity—refusing to lie on a report, even if it risks a promotion—or setting boundaries to preserve time for faith and family. For personal goals, it might mean pursuing a path aligned with God's call, like volunteering at a shelter instead of chasing personal ambitions.

These choices require discernment and courage to align daily life with Christ.

St Thomas Aquinas speaks of the *ordo amoris*—the ordering of love. When God is first, we love others more truly. When He is second, everything unravels. Here lies a vital distinction. It is one thing to say that loyalty to family must not trump duty to God; it is another to treat rejecting one's family as a test of loyalty.

In destructive groups, people may be pressured into giving up a friendship, a hobby, or even a pet, thinking that this proves devotion to God. In truth, such tests serve only to measure devotion to the group itself. By contrast, Christ's call is never coercive. He calls us into freedom — to follow Him willingly, to carry the cross with open eyes and open hearts.

The Gospel's paradox is that loss becomes gain. Renouncing possessions leads to heavenly treasure. Carrying the cross brings resurrection. Losing the false self reveals the true self. This is not joyless sacrifice but life in its fullness.

This Gospel is demanding. Jesus seeks disciples who know the cost, choose it willingly, and walk with Him to the cross—where life, joy, and an unshakable Kingdom await.

The cost is real. The joy is greater.

Amen. In the Cross of Christ
Fr James McCluskey.