



## Our Vision is a Person, Our Vision is Jesus Christ 23rd MARCH 2025: THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

### The Gift of the Sacraments

It is Saturday morning. As usual, after the 9.30am Mass, I go to the confessional for those who wish to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. After one penitent left the confessional, Fr Raffaele came in to tell me that he had received a call from the hospital in Winchester telling us that one of our parishioners was extremely ill and wanted to receive the Anointing of the Sick. Fr Raffaele had the Stars of Abraham group that morning, so he asked me to take the Anointing to this parishioner as soon as I finished Confession.

I went back to Confession and of course, as I was in a hurry, there were many people going to Confession that morning. I left the confessional at 11.20am and by 11.30am I was in the car driving to Winchester. As I was driving on the M3 I began to pray to the Lord: "Please Lord, don't let her die before I get there". As soon as I arrive at the hospital, I rush into and ask for information about the whereabouts of the woman I was to visit. Fortunately, it only takes a moment and I am in her room. As soon as I entered, I realised that the situation was serious. She had an oxygen mask on, her eyes were closed, her mouth was open and every breath was costing her dearly. Meanwhile, all the machines were beeping. I get closer to her, raise my voice and call her name. No response. I put a hand on her shoulder and call again. She opens her eyes and looks at me strangely. "I am Father Matteo, do you recognise me?" She shakes her head. Then I try again, "Fr Raffaele sent me, do you remember him?". Again she shakes her head. Then I play my last card: "I am the priest of Holy Cross in Eastleigh". At this point she flashes a smile and nods. Then I ask her again: "Would you like to receive the Anointing of the Sick?" and she nods. At that moment she closes her eyes, lays her head on her pillow and makes the sign of the cross. I begin the ritual, but after a few moments her breathing becomes more difficult and the beeping of the machines more insistent. I read the prayers quickly, so much so that at one point I wonder if I have Irish blood in my veins. She still has her eyes closed and wasn't responding to the prayers. After the Anointing I prayed the Our Father and she, still with her eyes closed, began to pray it with me. After giving her absolution with the Apostolic Pardon, her breathing returned to normal and the beeping reduced. I decided to stay for a few minutes to pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy. Towards the end, she opened her eyes and looked at me. When I finished, I said to her: "You are ready now, take care of me when you are with our Father in Heaven". She stares at me, trying to say something, and after a few tries I understand the question: "How can you be so sure?". I answer her: "You have received the Anointing, the Absolution and the Apostolic Pardon. You are ready. Take care of me when you are with our Father". She broke into a smile before closing her eyes. I left the room, however, although still struggling to breathe, she seemed more at peace.

On my way home, reflecting on what had happened, I thought about what an immense gift the Lord had given us by leaving us the Sacraments. For the Sacraments give us certainty. In the Eucharist we are certain that Christ is present in the host. In Confession, we are sure that the Lord has forgiven us. So this elderly parishioner, with the Anointing of the Sick, the Absolution and the Apostolic Pardon, was certain that she would go to the Father.

*Fr Matteo*

### GEM OF THE WEEK



This week's GEM is Bishop Philip's Pastoral Letter, "Belonging".  
If anyone has suggestions for GEMs please contact [website.sswp@gmail.com](mailto:website.sswp@gmail.com)

For the next Newsletter, items should be received into the parish office by **10am on Wednesday 26th March 2025**, please email your messages/notices to: [office@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk](mailto:office@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk)

If you wish to make a donation to our parish please go to: <https://www.stswithunwellsparish.org.uk/financesdonations>

# LITURGICAL INDICATIONS



**Sunday 23rd March 2025:** Year C - Year 1 - Psalter Week: 3 (In St Edward's, on Sunday 23rd March, readings from Year A are to be used because of the Scrutinies.)

**PSALM RESPONSE:** THE LORD IS COMPASSIONATE AND GRACIOUS.

**1<sup>st</sup> reading** Exodus 3:1-8a,13-15 **Psalm** 103 (102) **2<sup>nd</sup> reading** 1 Corinthians 10:1-6,10-12 **Gospel** Luke 13:1-9

**Sunday 30th March 2025:** Year C - Year 1 - Psalter Week: 4 (In St Edward's, on Sunday 30th March, readings from Year A are to be used because of the Scrutinies.)

**PSALM RESPONSE:** TASTE AND SEE THAT THE LORD IS GOOD.

**1<sup>st</sup> reading** Joshua 5:9a,10-12 **Psalm** 34 (33) **2<sup>nd</sup> reading** 2 Corinthians 5:17-21 **Gospel** Luke 15:1-3,11-32

## PARISH GROUPS



### The Little Flowers Baby & Toddler Group

Meet on **Wednesdays** during term time from 10am in Holy Cross Resource Centre. The group is for 0-4 years and their families. More information is on the website or you can email: [littleflowers.sswp@gmail.com](mailto:littleflowers.sswp@gmail.com)

### Ark of Fellowship - Group for learning disabilities or learning difficulties, their families and friends

**Thursdays** at 6.30pm in Holy Cross Resource Centre. Interested in volunteering or know some young adults

who would like to join the group?

Contact: [arkoffellowship.sswp@gmail.com](mailto:arkoffellowship.sswp@gmail.com)

### Fellowship Group - Wednesdays in St Swithun Wells Church at 7.30pm.

We continue our 5 week Lenten Course "Calling a Wounded Earth Home". Week 3 (26th March) is entitled 'Wisdom'.

### Growing In Faith Together Group (GIFT) - every

**Tuesdays** at 10.15am in the H/Cross Resource Centre.

## MESSAGES



### Lenten Lunches in aid of CAFOD every Friday in Lent at St Edward's, from 12 Noon until 1.30pm.

All donations will go to CAFOD'S funds helping all who are in need due to famine, climate change, wars and disasters. Your support will be greatly appreciated.

**St. Joseph's Lenten Lunch** in aid of CAFOD will take place in **Romsey United Reformed Church hall on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> March, 12 Noon to 1.30pm.**

All are welcome.

### One of the Romsey Lent Ecumenical Study Groups

meets in St Joseph's meeting room, 26A Abbey Water, each Tuesday during Lent at 6.30pm. All are welcome.

### OLOA - Lenten Prayer Group

**Every Friday during Lent** in Our Lady Queen of the Apostles there is a talk about the gospel of Sunday with tea/coffee. You will be in good company! Starting at 10am until Stations of the Cross at 11.30am.

### Upcoming Second Collections

**Clergy Assistance Fund - 29th & 30th March**

### Stations of the Cross During Lent

**St Andrew: Tuesdays at 9.30am (before Mass);**  
**St Swithun Wells: Tuesdays at 10am with tea & coffee available afterwards;**

**Holy Cross: Thursdays at 9am (before Mass);**

**St Joseph: Fridays at 9.30am (before Mass);**

**St Edward: Fridays at 9.30am (before Mass);**

**OLOA: Fridays at 11.30am (before Mass).**

**Penitential Services** - A number of priests will be available during these times:

**Thursday 3rd April, 7.30pm at OLOA**

**Friday 4th April, 7.30pm at St Andrew**

**Saturday 5th April, 10am at Holy Cross**

### Lent & Easter Sheet 2025

Available in all of our churches from this weekend, please pick up a copy.

### Weekday Masses & Eucharistic Adoration

One of the pillars of Lent is prayer. A simple way to do this is to attend Mass on weekdays or to participate in one of our Eucharistic Adorations. On Tuesdays in St Edward for example, there is Mass at 6pm with Eucharistic Adoration afterwards. On Wednesdays there is Mass in Holy Cross at 9.30am followed by Eucharistic Adoration. At St Joseph there is Mass every Thursday at 6pm and Eucharistic Adoration one hour before from 5pm-6pm. At OLOA there is Eucharistic Adoration (after Mass) at 12.30pm every Thursday.

### Charity Table Top Sale at OLOA - Saturday 22nd

**March, 9am-12pm.** All welcome. Home made gifts, china and glassware, games, books and puzzles, second hand clothes and bric-a-brac available, all funds going to support travel to Lourdes this May, refreshments available on site. Look forward to seeing you!

### St Patrick's Day Musical Evening

**Saturday 22nd March at OLOA.** All are welcome.

Tickets £7 each. Start at 7.15pm. For more information please contact *Marie Kemp* on 07760 809640

### Grail Seekers & Student Youth Easter Camp (11-

**17yrs) 7th-10th April 2025** at St Cassian's Centre, Wallington's Road, Kintbury, RG17 9SR

Cost £180 eldest or only child, £120 for each additional child (sibling). In order to join the camp please go to our website and complete the form, paying the whole amount by *Sunday 30th March 2025* by bank transfer. Part bursaries may be available on application.

Spaces are limited and will be granted on a first come first served basis.

### British Summer Time - Clock Change

Please remember that the clocks go forward by one hour next weekend (29th/30th March).

**Priest Availability** - Fr Raffaele is not available to meet with parishioners in his surgery this week.

## MESSAGES CONTINUED

### School Participation at Mass

On 26th & 27th March some of the children from St Swithun Wells Primary School will participate at the Wednesday 10am Mass in St Edward's & the Thursday 9.30am Mass in Holy Cross. Afterwards they will sing some songs during the tea & coffee. Let us welcome them with joy!

### Parish Get2Gether - Sunday 6th April, 1-4pm

#### Pavilion on the Park, 1 Kingfisher Road, SO50 9LH

An event for all of the parish, especially families.

We begin at 1pm, sharing a meal together followed by some activities and a discussion.

No cost, however we kindly ask you to give a donation to cover the hire of the Pavilion. Please bring some food, beverages or cakes to share with others. Please can you bring your own cups/plates/cutlery. To book your place please go to our parish website and scroll to see the "Next Main Parish Events" section.

Next *Get2Gether*: 11th May

### Upcoming Funerals

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Denis McCormack and his family. Denis' Funeral Mass takes place on **Monday 31st March at 11am in St Edward's.**

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Alfredo Xavier and his family. Alfredo's Funeral Mass takes place on **Friday 11th April at 10am in St Joseph's.**

### Romsey Relay Marathon - Broadlands Estate 18th May 2025.

We would like to enter a team to run the relay marathon again this year to raise funds to help support our church youth groups. If you would like to run, please get in touch with me:

[edwardbible@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:edwardbible@yahoo.co.uk)

Details of the event can be found at

<https://www.romseymarathon.co.uk>

No training is required and you don't need to be an elite runner. It is just a bit of fun and to get our church together to take part in a local community event.

Looking forward to hearing from you. *Edward*

**HELP needed for Coffee Stop** - Can you help at Coffee Stop on a Thursday morning in Holy Cross Resource Centre? It would be on a rota basis once in every 5/6 weeks from 9am to 11.45am. Coffee Stop has been going in the parish for over 30 years and we would like it to continue. If you would like to help on your own or as a couple or with a friend, we would be very grateful. Please contact Pat Baggott for details on 02380 694060 or by email [baggott.pm@gmail.com](mailto:baggott.pm@gmail.com). We look forward to hearing from you.

### Cultural Friday "The Enigma of Sexuality" Talk

The video and script of the talk by Fr Alberto Frigerio is available to view on the parish website.

### Hampshire Parishes Lourdes Pilgrimage 8th - 17th May.

We urgently need a few more helpers to join our group to Lourdes - we have a full complement of less able/sick pilgrims, but without more helpers we will not be able to travel. The trip is with the charity Across, who provide specialist transport for those with life-limiting conditions and disabilities, who cannot travel by contemporary means. There is a cost for travelling but we have raised funds to subsidise helpers. For more details please contact Marianne at:

[mwanstall@btinternet.com](mailto:mwanstall@btinternet.com).

### Have you visited the Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth's Jubilee Year website?

<https://portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/jubilee-year-2025/>

There is a special page on the Diocesan website for the Jubilee Year which contains a lot of resources for Lent, including Dare to Hope, the Jubilee Lenten retreat day, Bishop Philip's Video Message for the Jubilee Year, details about the Jubilee Shrine churches across the Diocese and lots more. There are also e-books of Via Crucis, Bishop Philip's meditations for the Stations of the Cross, and his prayer book.

**St George Catholic College** is having its annual Romero Day Charity Fundraiser on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> March. We are looking for any donations of Easter Eggs for an in school raffle. If you could donate we would be very grateful. Please contact Ann Marie Lee Cann on 023 80322603 or [alee-cann@stgcc.co.uk](mailto:alee-cann@stgcc.co.uk). Many thanks.

**Sadly the Assisted Dying Bill** passed its 2nd Reading in Parliament. But it can still be defeated! Only 28 MP's need to change their minds and the Bill will fall at the 3rd Reading. You can help make this happen, by reading/sharing the publications available in the welcome areas, to canvas your neighbours, or deepen your knowledge, or write to your MP, and pray that this Bill does not become Law.

**Oxford Convergence** - You are warmly invited to Oxford Convergence 2025: True Companionship - Solitude and Belonging at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, from **29th-30th March**. This free cultural event explores the epidemic of loneliness in today's world, addressing its impact on climate change, economic inequality, and mental health. Focusing on the power of meaningful connection and reflection, Convergence 2025 offers a **space** for new conversations about loneliness, belonging, and solidarity. Join us for 2 days of discussions with **leading experts** like Professors Rosalind Cornforth, Sir Brian Hoskins, and John Barton. In addition, the event offers **compelling exhibitions**, including one on the life of Dame Cicely Saunders (founder of the Hospice movement), a science exhibition, and a concert honouring transformative composers such as Liszt and Pärt. For more information please go to: <https://convergenceuk.org/>

### At a Glance - List of Upcoming Parish Events

22nd Mar:	Charity Table Top Sale at OLQA
22nd Mar:	St Patrick's Day Musical Evening OLQA
28th Mar:	CAFOD Lenten Lunch at St Edward
28th Mar:	St Joseph's CAFOD Lenten Lunch
3rd Apr:	Penitential Service at OLQA
4th Apr:	CAFOD Lenten Lunch at St Edward
4th Apr:	Penitential Service at St Andrew
5th Apr:	Penitential Service at Holy Cross
6th Apr:	Parish Get2Gether

### CONFESSION (SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION)

Tuesday:	9.30am-10.00am (before Mass)	St Andrew
Tuesday:	6.30pm-7.30pm (after Mass)	St Edward
Saturday:	10.00am-10.30am (after Mass)	Holy Cross
	5.30pm-6.00pm	OLQA
	5.30pm-6.00pm	St Joseph
Sunday:	8.30am-9.00am (before Mass)	St Edward
	8.30am-9.00am (before Mass)	St Andrew

## MASS TIMES FOR OUR CHURCH COMMUNITIES

DATE	TIME	CHURCH	MASS INTENTION
Saturday 22nd March	9.30am 5.00pm 6.00pm 6.00pm 6.30pm	Holy Cross St Swithun Wells OLQA St Joseph St Edward	People of the Parish Gill Skea & Mike Hooper RIP Sarah Howie RIP Anniversary Cecilia McEwen RIP
Sunday 23rd March  <i>Third Sunday of Lent</i>	8.30am 9.00am 9.00am 9.30am 11.00am 11.00am 5.30pm	Holy Cross St Edward St Andrew OLQA Holy Cross (also livestreamed) St Joseph Holy Cross	<i>Polska Msza Święta</i> Brendan & Patricia McBrien RIP Gladys Curmi RIP Anniversary Thanksgiving for Prayers Answered Special Intention for Dian Gunta Navickiene (Health & God's Protection)
Mon 24th March	9.30am	Holy Cross	Meghan Charlton Clark (Wellbeing)
Tues 25th March <i>The Annunciation of the Lord</i>	10.00am 6.00pm	St Andrew St Edward	
Wed 26th March	9.30am 10.00am	Holy Cross St Edward	Grace Moore RIP FM John Donnelly RIP 7th Anniversary
Thurs 27th March	9.30am 12 Noon 6.00pm	Holy Cross OLQA St Joseph	Ursula & Allan Barltrop RIP Anniversary Leopoldo Aggalot RIP
Friday 28th March	10.00am 10.00am 12 Noon	St Joseph St Edward OLQA	
Sat 29th March	9.30am  5.00pm 6.00pm 6.00pm 6.30pm	Holy Cross  St Swithun Wells OLQA St Joseph St Edward	Beatrice & George White; David, Laura & Eduardo Fernandes FM Alan Stuart Jones RIP 6th Anniversary  Alfred & Kathleen Allen RIP Donald Boggenpoel RIP
Mothering Sunday 30th March  <i>Fourth Sunday of Lent</i>	8.30am 9.00am 9.00am 9.30am 11.00am 11.00am 5.30pm	Holy Cross St Edward St Andrew OLQA Holy Cross (also livestreamed) St Joseph Holy Cross	<i>Polska Msza Święta</i> Denis McCormack RIP Deceased Members of the Law & Ma Families  Keith Small RIP Robert Benedict Harris RIP Anniversary People of the Parish

## CLERGY & PARISH OFFICE

Fr Raffaele Cossa (Parish Priest)  
Tel: 023 8061 2430; E: [rcossa@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:rcossa@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

Fr Luca Speziale (Assistant Priest)  
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Fr Mario Toma (Assistant Priest)  
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Fr Matteo Pagani (Assistant Priest)  
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Deacon Paul Owen  
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Deacon Paul Wilson  
Tel: 023 8061 6618; E: [pwilson@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:pwilson@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

**Parish Office** Holy Cross Church, 53 Leigh Road, Eastleigh, SO50 9DF Tel: 02380 273882  
Opening Times: Mon-Thurs 9.30am-5.30pm;  
Fri 9.30am-2.30pm (see newsletter for changes).

**Holy Cross Resource Centre & Finance Admin:** Fiona Mooney  
Email: [accounts@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk](mailto:accounts@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk)

**Parish Secretary:** Sarah Goodfellow  
Email: [office@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk](mailto:office@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk)

**Website Contact:** [website.sswp@gmail.com](mailto:website.sswp@gmail.com)

**Safeguarding:** Please see Safeguarding posters in each of our churches for details of the Parish Safeguarding Reps. Diocesan Safeguarding: Ruth Attfield [rattfield@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:rattfield@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)