



## *Our Vision is a Person, Our Vision is Jesus Christ* 15th DECEMBER 2024: THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

### Rejoice...Ok, But Why?

What we can experience the most in Church this weekend is joy, in fact this is the weekend of joy, so among the candles of the Advent wreath we do not light a purple candle - a symbol of penance, renunciation and preparation - but a pink candle, a symbol of joy and serenity.

Thinking back to when I could particularly rejoice recently, the first thing that comes to mind is the trip we took with the groups of Grail Seekers and Student Youth to the Isle of Wight. We went to visit the Benedictine nuns of St Cecilia's Monastery.

The encounter was extraordinary. First of all, what struck us was the average age of the women who welcomed us. One usually sees people of a certain age more frequently in the church, so, thinking of a cloistered convent, one imagines to find only elderly women, as they still cultivate such faith in Jesus that they accept a life of prayer enclosed within the four walls of a convent. Instead, we were welcomed by very young women, full of joy, of life, of light in their eyes: we were impressed! From that moment on, when I think of joy, the first thing that comes to mind is the faces of those women.

One of the boys, during a brief assembly at the end of the visit to the convent, said that he was very impressed by how these women, despite not having mobile phones or all the comforts one normally has, are so happy. It is an observation that should make us reflect: in what does true joy consist? Can it come from having so many things? The nuns personally possess nothing. Can it come from being without problems? I think that in a place where 35 women are enclosed, however holy they may be, living together is certainly not easy, and problems are not lacking.

Leaving the question unanswered for a moment, I would like to tell you about another moment of joy. Last Sunday in the hall of Bishop's Waltham church, some parishioners organised a Christmas party for the local children. Seeing these carefree children playing, jumping, having fun was another moment of joy and confirmation of Jesus' words: those who are like children will enter the Kingdom of Heaven, which means that the Kingdom of Heaven is a Kingdom of joy and gladness.

So, going back to the original question, where does joy come from? I would like to quote a piece from the book written by Sister Mary David, one of the nuns of St Cecilia who died recently, entitled: *The Joy of GOD* (which I recommend everyone to read, it is very good!). At one point, talking about joy she says: "There is joy of surrendering to God's will, of being and doing at every moment what he desires us to be and do. This liberation from slavery to self-will is a real source of supernatural joy". In other words, joy is the joyful surrender to the will of an Other who loves us, and that is exactly what the children at the Christmas party did: they were joyful and enjoying themselves because they were with their parents who loved them.

Continuing on the theme of joy, Sister Mary David writes: "The joy of being called, and of being called together". So joy comes from being called in a communion. But what is the greatest call we all received? The call to be a Christian, and so to belong to God's people through baptism.

Here it is: to be a Christian, to be a beloved person whom God has chosen, this alone is the true source of joy, of a joy that no social, economic, physical or moral condition can ever destroy.

Let us live this joy by showing it to the world, just as those sisters on the Isle of Wight and those children at the party showed, thus giving us a glimpse of God's smile.

*Fr Mario*

### GEM OF THE WEEK



This week's GEM is **Bishop Philip's Pastoral Letter, "Hope"** - you can find this on our homepage. 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 18th December 2024**, 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 15th December 2024:** Year C - Year 1 - Psalter Week: 3

**PSALM RESPONSE:** SHOUT ALOUD AND SING PRAISE, FOR GREAT IN YOUR MIDST IS THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL.

**1<sup>st</sup> reading** Zephaniah 3:14-18a **Psalm** Is 12 **2<sup>nd</sup> reading** Philippians 4:4-7 **Gospel** Luke 3:10-18

**Sunday 22nd December 2024:** Year C - Year 1 - Psalter Week: 4

**PSALM RESPONSE:** BRING US BACK, O GOD; LET YOUR FACE SHINE FORTH, AND WE SHALL BE SAVED.

**1<sup>st</sup> reading** Micah 5:2-5a **Psalm** 80 (79) **2<sup>nd</sup> reading** Hebrews 10:5-10 **Gospel** Luke 1:39-45

## PARISH GROUPS



See our website for details of parish groups: CL, Fellowship, Stars of Abraham, Grail Seekers, Student Youth, Ark...

## MESSAGES



### Christmas Collection

Our Christmas Collection celebrates and gives thanks to our parish priests and all the dedication, guidance and care they give across our parish. This collection will be equally divided between Frs Raffaele, Luca, Mario, Matteo & Pietro. For your convenience there are several ways to make an offering:

- Loose cash or cheques in the collection baskets at Christmas Masses. Gift aid these donations using a yellow envelope;
- All donations for Christmas collections handed in outside Christmas masses must be clearly designated **Christmas offerings** and placed in yellow envelopes if you wish to gift aid the donations;
- Cheques made out to **CDP St Swithun Wells with Christmas** on the back;
- Bank transfer into the main parish account sort code **30-93-04**; a/c **01786599** using the reference **Christmas**;
- Click on the green 'donate' button on the Homepage of our website and then click '**Clergy Christmas Collection 2024**'. This will take you to a Give as You live page:  
<https://donate.giveasyoulive.com/fundraising/st-swithun-wells-catholic-parish-christmas-collection-2024>

**Upcoming Second Collections - Crib Offerings:** This year our Christmas Crib offerings will go to the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre (KHS). The key partner for the KHS in the Holy Land is the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem who fund-raise to maintain schools, formation, charitable and social activities. Monies can also be sent directly to the Diocesan Finance Office marked 'Knights of the Holy Sepulchre'. Please do not use the yellow gift aid envelopes for this collection.

### Upcoming Funerals

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Michael O'Callaghan and for his family. Michael's Funeral Mass will take place on **Thursday 19th December at 10am in St Joseph's**.

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Susan Santavito and for her family. Susan's Funeral Mass will take place on **Thursday 19th December at 11am in Holy Cross**.

### Advent Penitential Services

These will be held across our parish, with the opportunity for individual confession:  
**Friday 20th December, 7.30pm** – St Andrew  
**Saturday 21st December, 11am** – Holy Cross  
*A number of priests will be available on each occasion.*

### Parish Christmas Party

**Sunday 15th December, 1pm-4pm** at St Swithun Wells Primary School **Admission by ticket only**  
We look forward to seeing all of your festive attire!

**OLOA Annual Carol Service - Sunday 15th December at 6pm** followed by mulled wine and mince pies. Any offer of mince pies and raffle gifts would be gratefully appreciated. All are welcome!

**CL Christmas Carols** - Our Christmas Carols will be back on **Saturday 21st December 2024 at 2pm in Eastleigh (Swan Centre)**. For those who would like to help with the singing, there will be a **rehearsal on Tuesday 17th December at 8pm in Holy Cross**.

**OLOA Christmas Clean - Saturday 21st December 10am to 12 noon**, refreshments provided. Plenty of jobs to do, time to chat over a cuppa and we make the church look beautiful for Christmas.

**Romsey United Reformed Church** have kindly invited us to join them in their Carols by Candlelight Service of readings and carols at **6.30pm on Saturday 21st December** in their church.

**Carol Service** - Faith, festivities, food and fun!  
**All are welcome** to our **Family Friendly Carol Service** on **Sunday 22nd December at 3.00pm**, in St Swithun Wells Church, Fair Oak.

**Christmas Carols at Waitrose** - Join us between **6pm and 7pm on Monday 23rd December inside Waitrose**, Oakmount Road, Chandler's Ford to sing Christmas carols for shoppers. The event is organised by Churches Together in Chandlers Ford and is always good fun.

### St Swithun Wells, Fair Oak Fundraising for CAFOD

This year, we have two initiatives:  
Firstly, our Christmas Card Collection - last year we raised £300 for a Medical Outreach Team. This year we'd like to do it again!  
Secondly, we have a hamper to raffle with Fair Trade goods. Tickets on sale after Mass at Fair Oak, the draw will be at our Carol Service on 22nd December.  
*Thank you, Trisha Holmes*

**Thanks** to all who supported the Christmas Fayre at St Edward's. **£453.45** was raised in response to CAFOD's Advent appeal helping the people of Ukraine to survive the cold winter.

## MESSAGES CONTINUED



**Additional Evening Mass on Christmas Day** - please note the 5.30pm Mass at Holy Cross will also be celebrated on Christmas Day. The Christmas Mass sheet on our website has been updated to reflect this addition, along with the large copy print at each church.

**Two Saints & Poitiers** - Our annual collection of gifts for Two Saints & Poitiers will be taking place at **St Edward's this weekend (14th & 15th December)**. For Two Saints gifts of hats, gloves, scarves, socks and toiletries for both men and women; for Poitiers non perishable food e.g. cereals, pasta, tins also biscuits, sweets, chocolates, cakes and other Christmas goods would all be gratefully received. Please bring your gifts (UNWRAPPED!) in a "gift" type bag with a label attached naming the charity on Saturday evening/ Sunday morning. For more details contact Clare Lasker on 02380 252138.

**Eucharistic Ministers Retreat - Saturday 11th January at 2.30pm - 4pm in St Edward's for all Eucharistic Ministers of the parish.**

**Seniors (over 60's) Afternoon Tea - Sunday 2nd February at 2.30pm in St Swithun Wells Church Fair Oak.** Join us once again for delicious food, free raffle and entertainment. This event is for the whole parish. We do not make a specific charge for the Tea but ask for donations to help cover the costs. Places are limited so need to be booked in advance. For those who have no transport please mention this when booking as we hope to have use of a mini-bus. To book a place please contact Pat Baggott on 07801 454400 or by email on: [baggott.pm@gmail.com](mailto:baggott.pm@gmail.com)

**Parish Office Closures & Parish Newsletter over the Christmas period** - Please note, Fiona's last day in the office before Christmas is Monday 23rd December. The Office will be closed from Tuesday 24th through to and including Wed 1st Jan & then also on Friday 3rd January. For any urgent enquiries over the festive period please contact our priests on 02380 612430. Parish Newsletter - the next newsletter to be published after the 22nd December (three week) edition will be 12th January 2025.

**Parish Pilgrimage (Fri 23rd - Mon 26th May 2025)** The pilgrimage to Lisieux, France will be led by Fr Raffaele & Fr Mario. We will visit the place where St Therese lived and the surrounding area. See posters on church noticeboards; the itinerary, booking form and more information are on the parish website.

**Trip to Italy for young people (21st - 26th August 2025)** there will be a trip to Italy for young people aged 18 to 25. The reason for the trip is to attend the Rimini Meeting, a cultural event organised by the Catholic Movement of Communion and Liberation. It is

a week of conferences, exhibitions, etc; on different topics. All run by volunteers. We will also be visiting different places and staying in Cesenatico. **The final cost will be £600** which includes: flight, hotel and minibus hire. **Meals are not included.**

I would ask you to **let me know by Sunday 12th January 2025** if you will be coming and to pay a **deposit of £300**, for further information please contact Fr Matteo: [mpagani@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:mpagani@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

**Holy Cross Right of Way** - Annually we have to bar access through our car park for at least 24 hours to prevent it becoming a public right of way. The main Leigh road gate will be closed after Mass on **Thursday 26th December and will re-open at 10am on Friday 27th December**. The barrier and pedestrian gate will remain operational.

**Resources for Evangelisation** - we have a new section on our parish website (available on the homepage). On this page you will find some Resources for Evangelisation of families, youth groups and adults, to deepen your understanding of our catholic faith and live it out in your daily lives.  
<https://www.stswithunwellsparish.org.uk/resources>

**Jubilee 2025 - The Year of Jubilee 'Pilgrims of Hope'**, is almost upon us! It is a special year of forgiveness and reconciliation, in which people are invited to return to a right relationship with God, with one another, and with all of creation. Please see the link to the official 'Jubilee 2025' website on the homepage of our parish website CAFOD also have lots of resources and opportunities for people to enter into the Jubilee which can be found on the CAFOD website at:  
<https://cafod.org.uk/pray/jubilee-2025>

**Holy Cross Shop** - the new Missals have finally arrived and are available to purchase after Sunday Mass.

### **Sacramental Preparation for Adults (RCIA)**

If you, or someone you know, would like to be baptised, confirmed or received into the Catholic Church (or know more about the Catholic faith) please email Dcn Paul Owen: [powen@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:powen@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk) or alternatively please speak to a priest.

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

15th Dec:	Parish Christmas Party
15th Dec:	OLQA Carol Service
20th Dec:	Penitential Service at St Andrew's
21st Dec:	Penitential Service at Holy Cross
21st Dec:	CL Christmas Carols
22nd Dec:	Carol Service at St Swithun Wells Church
11th Jan:	Eucharistic Ministers Retreat

### **ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT**

Tues:	St Edward - after Mass (6.30pm-7.30pm)
Wednesday:	Holy Cross - after Mass (10am-11am)
Thursday:	OLQA - after Mass (12.30pm-1pm)
Thursday:	St Joseph - before Mass (5pm-6pm)

### **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 14th Dec <i>Morning Mass: St John of the Cross</i>	9.30am 5.00pm 6.00pm 6.00pm 6.30pm	Holy Cross St Swithun Wells OLQA St Joseph St Edward	Ron Reynolds FM People of the Parish Cecilia Delmonte & Family (Special Intention) Bridie Firhurst & Family Robin Mooney (Wellbeing)
Sunday 15th December  <i>Third Sunday of Advent</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> Holy Souls in Purgatory RIP Daniel Smith RIP Anniversary Holy Souls in Purgatory RIP Margaret Gay Bradford-Mortimer RIP Sean Kelly RIP Anniversary Mr Pappachan RIP
Monday 16th December	9.30am	Holy Cross	Maurizio Sabatini RIP; Michael Quigley (Wellbeing)
Tuesday 17th December	10.00am 6.00pm	St Andrew St Edward	Teresa O'Sullivan RIP
Wednesday 18th December	9.30am 9.30am	Holy Cross St Edward	Paddy McMahon RIP FM Patrick & Mary Burke FM
Thursday 19th December	9.30am <u>10.00am</u> <u>11.00am</u> 12 Noon 6.00pm	Holy Cross <u>St Joseph</u> <u>Holy Cross</u> OLQA St Joseph	Flora Kelly RIP FM <u>Funeral Mass: Michael O'Callaghan RIP</u> <u>Funeral Mass: Susan Santavito RIP</u> Sr Philomena (Wellbeing)
Friday 20th December	10.00am 10.00am 12 Noon	St Joseph St Edward OLQA	Sr Paschal (Wellbeing) Dudley Roberts RIP FM
Saturday 21st December	9.30am 5.00pm 6.00pm 6.00pm 6.30pm	Holy Cross St Swithun Wells OLQA St Joseph St Edward	Margaret Egan RIP Ronnie Castelino RIP People of the Parish Capistrana Emperio RIP Michael Vokes RIP
Sunday 22nd December  <i>Fourth Sunday of Advent</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> Holy Souls in Purgatory RIP Deceased Members of the Viola Family RIP Holy Souls in Purgatory RIP Antonio Cicu RIP FM Herbert Howie Senior RIP Anniversary Charles Egan RIP

## 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)  
Tel: 023 8061 2430; E: [lspeziale@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:lspeziale@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

Fr Mario Toma (Assistant Priest)  
Tel: 023 8061 2430; E: [mtoma@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:mtoma@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

Fr Matteo Pagani (Assistant Priest)  
Tel: 023 8061 2430; E: [mpagani@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:mpagani@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

Fr Pietro Paiusco (Assistant Priest)  
Tel: 023 8061 2430; E: [ppaiusco@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:ppaiusco@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

Deacon Bob Birtles  
Tel: 023 8069 2416; E: [bbirtles@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:bbirtles@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

Deacon John di Meo  
Tel: 01794 515688; E: [jdimeo@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:jdimeo@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

Deacon Paul Owen  
Tel: 023 8025 4806; E: [powen@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:powen@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

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)