



Our Vision is a Person, Our Vision is Jesus Christ 8th February 2026: FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

THE CATHOLIC FACT

Last week I visited the mission of the Fraternity of St Charles in Vienna. On Saturday afternoon, the priests there invited me to a conversation with Cardinal Schönborn, Archbishop of Vienna for almost thirty years, from 1996 to 2025.

Schönborn has been — and still is — a prominent figure in the Catholic Church. He was a Dominican professor of theology and wrote an important book on the life of Jesus; he helped Cardinal Ratzinger write the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and worked closely with three popes: John Paul II, Benedict XVI, and Francis.

Now retired, the first question we asked him was: *"How do you feel at the beginning of this new stage of your life? How are you living retirement?"* His answer was both simple and inspiring: *"I have never been retired before... so I'm just learning. The most important thing I'm learning is that conversion is always ahead. There are many books about retirement and aging well, but you don't learn these things by reading books. You need to live them."*

The conversation then turned to the situation in Europe today. The leaders of the missions of the Fraternity of St Charles in Europe were also present. They shared stories of how fragmented the world seems: wars, religion often used as a weapon between nations, mass migration, and difficulties with integration.

He listened carefully to our stories and examples, and then, in a calm but firm voice, he said: *"Europe needs the Catholic fact."* He explained that the Catholic Church is a place where people from different cultures and backgrounds can meet, because the centre is not politics or finding agreements about current affairs. The centre is an event accessible to everyone: God became flesh and shared human life in all its aspects.

No matter where you come from, every human being carries in their heart the desire to see God. Catholicism says that there is a place where you can encounter what you, your friends, and every human being were made for: a companionship that helps you "dance with God," taking part in His work in the world, where everyone can find their own place.

The Catholic Church also proposes a vision of the human person that is rarely found elsewhere. The word *Catholic* comes from Greek and means, roughly, "open to the whole." The Church claims to be a place where every human being is seen in their totality — as a unity of mind, soul, and body; a work of art in which feelings, emotions, reason, desires, and the hunger for relationships are all interconnected and taken seriously.

I thought about the many times I have celebrated Mass in our parish and looked out at the congregation — so diverse, yet united. I realized that I was witnessing the Catholic fact with my own eyes. And I returned to England with a renewed desire to see this fact happening once again.

Fr Luca

GEM OF THE WEEK

MESSAGE OF THE HOLY FATHER FOR THE 100TH WORLD MISSION DAY 2026
If anyone has suggestions for GEMs please contact website.sswp@gmail.com



For the next Newsletter, items should be received into the Parish Office by **10am on Tuesday 10th February 2026**, please email your messages/notices to: 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 8th February 2026 YEAR A - YEAR 2 - PSALTER WEEK 1

PSALM RESPONSE: A LIGHT RISES IN THE DARKNESS FOR THE UPRIGHT.

1st Reading Isaiah 58:7-10 Psalm 112 (111) 2nd Reading 1st Corinthians 2:1-5 Gospel Matthew 5:13-16

Sunday 15th February 2026 YEAR A - YEAR 2 - PSALTER WEEK 2

PSALM RESPONSE: BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO WALK IN THE LAW OF THE LORD!

1st Reading Sirach 15:15-20 Psalm 119 (118) 2nd Reading 1st Corinthians 2:6-10 Gospel Matthew 5:17-37

PARISH GROUPS



Youth Groups (including First Holy Communion & Confirmation)

Stars of Abraham (school years 3, 4, 5 & 6) Holy Cross Saturdays 10.30am to 12 noon; St Edward Tuesdays 4pm to 5.30pm; St Andrews Fridays 4.30pm to 6pm.

Grail Seekers (school years 7, 8, 9) Sundays 6.30pm to 8.30pm in Holy Cross Resource Centre.

Student Youth (school year 10 until sixth form)

Fridays 6.30pm to 8.30pm Holy Cross Resource Centre

Ark of Fellowship - for people with learning disabilities or learning difficulties, their families and friends. Thursdays at 6pm - 8pm in Holy Cross Resource Centre. Interested in volunteering or know some adults who would like to join the group?

Contact: arkoffellowship.sswp@gmail.com

Communion & Liberation Groups

Our Schools of Community groups have their weekly meetings in Holy Cross every Wednesday at 8pm (contact Fr Pietro) and at St Edward's every Thursday at 8pm (contact Fr Raffaele). For more information please click the link on the homepage of our website. All are welcome!

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

Growing In Faith Together Group (GIFT) - every Tuesday at 10.15am in the H/Cross Resource Centre. We will continue to look at the Nicene Creed.

Voice of Praise - Catholic Charismatic Prayer Group Join us every Thursday evening, 8.15pm - 9.15pm, at the Holy Cross Resource Centre for an hour of lively prayer, music, Scripture, and fellowship. Our charism is evangelisation: sharing the joy of the Gospel and the power of the Holy Spirit. Whether you are new or experienced in charismatic prayer, all are warmly welcome! For info please email:

voiceofpraise.sswp@gmail.com

Awake My Soul - A group for young adults (aged 18-25) in the parish. We meet every other Wednesday from 7pm to 9.30pm in the presbytery of Holy Cross (53 Leigh Road, Eastleigh - the house next to the church). We start with dinner together, followed by a discussion on how our faith relates to our daily lives. Next meeting: Wednesday 11th February. If you would like to participate, please email Fr Matteo: mpagani@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

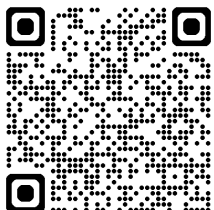
School of Christianity in Bishop's Waltham - A course about the basis of the faith using the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Next meeting will be Friday 13th & 27th February at 6pm in the hall of Our Lady Queen of Apostles Church.

MESSAGES



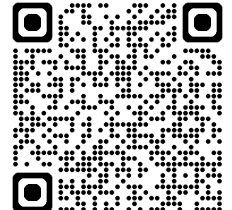
PAMIS, ChurchSuite & Parish Census - We're moving our parishioner database from PAMIS to ChurchSuite. ChurchSuite is a market leader and has good data protection measures. Please make sure that you register yourself and your children, using the online form that you can find on our website. Please note there is one form for adults and a separate one for children.

You can also use the QR codes below that will take you to the online form directly. Simply open your camera on your mobile and hold the lens above the appropriate QR. Thank you to those who have already completed this. For queries, please contact Christina at accounts@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk



Adult Parishioner Registration

Child Parishioner Registration



MESSAGES CONTINUED



Upcoming Funeral - Please pray for the repose of the soul of Sheila Keefe and for her family. Funeral Mass takes place on **Friday 13th February at 11.30am in St Andrews.**

Grail Seekers Promise - Please pray for all the teenagers of the Grail Seekers who are going to the Isle of Wight this weekend. They will have a special celebration in Quarr Abbey during which they will promise to follow Jesus by treating each other as brothers and sisters, saying the Prayer of the Knights daily and by being missionaries.

Come & See Half Term Club (7-14yrs)

Monday 16th - Friday 20th February, 8.30am-3.30pm St Edward's Cloister. Cost: £10 per child per day. £5 for additional siblings. Spaces are limited.

For any enquiries please contact comeandsee@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk For more information and to book your child's place please go to the parish website. **Please only book if you are sure your child is going to attend, thank you.**

Evangelisation Strategy Team - Following the advice of Bishop Phillip, we have started an Evangelisation Strategy Team (EST) in our parish. The EST includes some members of the clergy and lay people of the parish, who are called to promote evangelisation and develop our mission in the parish. The first meeting was in October 2025 and the team meets four times a year. Please pray for the members and their important role.
Fr Raffaele.

Voices from the Parish - We are looking for parish volunteers to share a few words and photos about the wonderful work they do in the parish, to be shared on our social media and website, with a different volunteer being featured each week. If you would like to share your experiences and encourage others to get involved, please send no more than 100 words describing your role/a story and at least one photo to: events@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk

Street Pastors - Volunteers needed for Eastleigh and Fair Oak. Could you spare one Friday night per month to listen, care and help in our community. Our training programme equips you for everything you need to join one of our patrols, and aims to set the tone for continued learning while you are out on the streets. If you are interested in finding out more about our work, or are interested in becoming a Street Pastor, please contact Eric Hyom on 07736967921 or email erichyom@hotmail.com

Parish Pilgrimage to Lisbon & Fatima

Just a reminder to everyone who is going on the pilgrimage that the balance for the trip needs to be paid by **28th February**. All details for how to do this can be found in the email you received from All Saints Travel.

Church Flower Arranging in St Swithun Wells

Parish - This is a coffee morning invitation being held at **St Edward's Church on Saturday 28th February, 10am to 11.30am.** All are welcome, particularly those who wish to consider joining our flower arranging teams Parish wide, regardless of age or ability. We appreciate that we all have other commitments over the week but we can assure you that on joining one of our teams, you will foster friendship, deepen your faith and have fun. If you are interested in coming along to find out more, or just to watch several flower demonstrations, please contact Jean Viola on mobile 07919128776 or email to jeanviola@yahoo.co.uk

New parish blog - We now have a blog on our website. We are also on Facebook and Instagram and you can follow us at [@stswithunwellsparish](https://www.facebook.com/stswithunwellsparish) for all the latest news and events in the parish.

Suggested reading - for the next couple of months we suggest the following book: *Catholicism: A Journey To The Heart of The Faith* by Bishop Robert Barron.

SCHOOL NOTICES

Casual Minibus Driver Vacancy - St Swithun Wells are seeking to appoint a minibus driver to start as soon as possible. The successful candidate will work as required, Monday to Friday. There will be the opportunity to help with school trips. More details and the application procedure can be found on our website <https://www.st-swithunwells.org.uk/Casual-Minibus-Driver/> or you can phone the school office on; 02380 266210.

TIMES A PRIEST WILL BE AVAILABLE TO MEET

Tuesdays: Fr Raffaele, 3.30pm-5.30pm, Holy Cross Resource Centre, Eastleigh;
Wednesdays: Fr Luca by appointment, 3.30pm-5.30pm, Holy Cross Resource Centre, Eastleigh;
Fridays: Fr Mario 10am-12 Noon, OLQA, Bishop's Waltham;
Fridays: Fr Pietro, 11am-12.45pm, 26A Abbey Water, Romsey;
Fridays: Fr Matteo, 11am-12.30pm, Holy Cross Resource Centre, Eastleigh.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION **(CONFESSION)**

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 (before Mass) OLQA
5.30pm-6.00pm (before Mass) 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
Sat 7th February	9.30am 5.00pm 6.00pm 6.00pm 6.30pm	Holy Cross St Swithun Wells OLQA St Joseph St Edward	Albert & Violet Harrington FM Special Intention Liana Birtwistle RIP Angela Frances Adams FM
Sun 8th February <i>Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time</i>	8.30am 9.00am 9.00am 9.30am 11.00am 11.00am 5.30pm	Holy Cross St Edward St Andrew OLQA Holy Cross (& livestreamed) St Joseph Holy Cross	<i>Polska Msza Święta</i> Baker & Hanrahan Families RIP Anniversary Jeanette Butcher RIP Anniversary People of the Parish Aliza Kasha RIP Firhurst Family (Wellbeing) Agatha Blishen (Birthday Intention)
Mon 9th February	9.30am	Holy Cross	
Tues 10th February <i>St Scholastica</i>	10.00am 6.00pm	St Andrew St Edward	Alfredo Xavier RIP Anniversary
Weds 11th February	9.30am 10.00am	Holy Cross St Edward	Bernadette Keenan RIP
Thurs 12th February	9.30am 12 Noon 6.00pm	Holy Cross OLQA St Joseph	Cristella Scappaticci RIP Special Intention Sr Anne Colette (Wellbeing)
Fri 13th February	10.00am 10.00am <u>11.30am</u> 12 Noon	St Joseph St Edward <u>St Andrew</u> OLQA	Sr Eileen Adams (Wellbeing) Kathleen Ditte & Family RIP FM <u>Funeral Mass Sheila Keefe RIP</u>
Sat 14th February <i>St Cyril & St Methodius</i>	9.30am 5.00pm 6.00pm 6.00pm 6.30pm	Holy Cross St Swithun Wells OLQA St Joseph St Edward	Betty Norman RIP In Thanksgiving Felino & Angie Cagampang & Family (Thanksgiving)
Sun 15th February <i>Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time</i>	8.30am 9.00am 9.00am 9.30am 11.00am 11.00am 5.30pm	Holy Cross St Edward St Andrew OLQA Holy Cross (& livestreamed) St Joseph Holy Cross	<i>Polska Msza Święta</i> Michael Meaney (Wellbeing) Winnie Fung RIP Anniversary People of the Parish Samantha Harris (Special Intention)

CLERGY & PARISH OFFICE

Fr Raffaele Cossa (Parish Priest)
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Fr Luca Speziale (Assistant Priest)
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Fr Matteo Pagani (Assistant Priest)
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Deacon Emmanuel Chituh
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Parish Office Holy Cross Church, 53 Leigh Road, Eastleigh,
SO50 9DF Tel: 02380 273882
Mon, Tues, Thurs & Fri 9.30am - 5.30pm; Wed 9.30am - 2.30pm

Parish Administrator: Sabrina Gardner
Email: office@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk

Finance Administrator: Christina Geleji
Email: accounts@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk

Events & Communications Co-ordinator: Faye Harris
Email: events@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk

Website Contact: 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