



Our Vision is a Person, Our Vision is Jesus Christ 6th APRIL 2025: FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

CAN WE CANCEL EASTER?

A few days ago, I was in Italy to celebrate my niece Vania's wedding to Davide. It was a great celebration and in the afternoon I was reading the news on my phone and saw that a local school in Eastleigh was on the news because, apparently, they were going to cancel Easter. I didn't immediately believe the news, of course, so I did some more research. I discovered that the school had sent out a letter informing parents of the decision not to hold the Easter Bonnet Parade or Easter Service this year. The school said: "We understand that this change may be disappointing for some, especially those who have cherished these traditions over the years. However, we believe that this decision is in line with our values of inclusivity and respect for diversity".

I don't know all the details of the decision and how parents have reacted. Maybe it is a good decision in that particular school. But it strikes me that very often in many environments, not just schools, the decision to remove or drop some Christian teachings or values is made in the name of respect for diversity and inclusivity.

I think it is useful to have some clarity about what true inclusivity is. I once listened to a talk by Bishop Erik Varden of Trondheim, Norway, where he said that in order to welcome someone, we need to know what we are welcoming them into. Hospitality is not just about openness, but about having a home, an identity.

Following this idea, I think the true way to welcome someone is to let them know our identity and our history, without imposing anything, just offering who we are and where we come from. In the case of England, like many other countries, we have our roots in Christianity and Christian values. We should all cherish and aim to better understand those values. It is not a question of imposing a particular faith, but of explaining where we come from and what we have learnt from Christianity.

An example may help to understand: if I want to welcome someone into my home, it would be sad to remove the photos of my family, the religious symbols, the books that I like, because they might offend my guest. On the contrary, the condition for an interesting conversation with my guest is to value what my house contains, which is linked to my personal life and identity.

Easter is definitely an important part of the year and in the Passion of Christ we can see an example of compassion, forgiveness, faithfulness to the truth, patience and so on. All these values are so important and it would be a pity not to teach them in the name of respect for diversity and inclusivity.

My wish for this last period before Easter is that everyone can discover in the story of Christ the teachings and values that have shaped who we are and where we want to go.

Fr Raffaele

GEM OF THE WEEK



This week's GEM is "Let's Disarm The Earth" by Pope Francis.
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 Wednesday 9th April 2025**, 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 6th April 2025: Year C - Year 1 - Psalter Week: 1 (In St Edward's, on Sunday 6th April, readings from Year A are to be used because of the Scrutinies.)

PSALM RESPONSE: WHAT GREAT DEEDS THE LORD WORKED FOR US! INDEED, WE WERE GLAD.

1st reading Isaiah 43:16-21 **Psalm** 126 (125) **2nd reading** Philippians 3:8-14 **Gospel** John 8:1-11

Sunday 13th April 2025: Year C - Year 1 - Psalter Week: 2

PSALM RESPONSE: MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?

1st reading Isaiah 50:4-7 **Psalm** 22 (21) **2nd reading** Philippians 2:6-11 **Gospel** Luke 22:14-23:56

PARISH GROUPS



Learn to Pray with the Weekly Scripture Readings
Wednesdays at 11am in St Joseph's Parish Centre,
26A Abbey Water, Romsey;

Thursdays at 10am in St Edward the Confessor
Church, Chandler's Ford.

Please come along if you would like to grow in your life
of prayer by praying with the following Sunday's Mass
readings. All are welcome.

Fellowship Group - Wednesdays in St Swithun Wells
Church at 7.30pm. We conclude our 5 week
Lenten Course "Calling a Wounded Earth Home".
Week 5 (9th April) is entitled 'Hope'.

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. Your support will be
greatly appreciated.

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.

Penitential Services - A number of priests will be
available during these times:
Friday 4th April, 7.30pm at St Andrew
Saturday 5th April, 10am at Holy Cross

Stations of the Cross During Lent
St Andrew: Tuesdays at 9.30am (before Mass) except
15th April due to the Chrism Mass at the Cathedral;
St Swithun Wells: Tuesdays at 10am with tea &
coffee available afterwards;
Holy Cross: Thursdays at 9am (before Mass);
St Joseph: On Friday 11th April, Stations of the
Cross will be at 9am (instead of 9.30am to allow time
for preparations of the Funeral Mass starting at 10am).
St Edward: Fridays at 9.30am (before Mass);
OLOA: Fridays at 11.30am (before Mass).

Upcoming Second Collections
Easter Flowers on 12th & 13th April
A collection will be taken for the beautiful flower
arrangements that will be in all of our churches at
Easter. Please do not use the yellow gift aid envelopes
for this collection.

Good Friday (18th April) Collection: Holy Places
Please do not use the yellow gift aid envelopes for this
collection.

The Easter Sunday Collection traditionally
supports our parish priests, in recognition for all their
dedication, guidance and care they give across our
parish. For your convenience there are several ways of
making these offerings:

- Loose cash or cheques in the collection basket (please
make cheques out to CDP St Swithun Wells with
Easter offering on the back);
- If you are a tax payer and wish to gift aid your offer-
ing please use the yellow envelopes provided in the
reception area of each church. Please ensure all
relevant information is included so we can reclaim the
gift aid on your behalf;
- Bank Transfer to the main parish account CDP St
Swithun wells (Sort code: 30-93-04, A/c: 01786599
using ref: Easter);
- There will also be a 'Clergy Easter Offering' link on
our website which will be made available next week.

Due to a Diocesan Policy change our clergy cannot
receive a proportion of planned giving in the parish as
part of their Easter & Christmas offerings therefore if
you are a planned giver and wish to make a
contribution to the Priests Easter Offerings please use
one of the methods listed above.

Palm Sunday (13th April) - Holy Cross, 11am Mass
Please remember that the procession will start outside
The Point in Eastleigh at 11am.

Chrism Mass - Tuesday 15th April, 11am in St John's
Cathedral, Portsmouth. Bishop Philip would like to
invite you to join him for this celebration (for this reason
there will be no Mass at St Andrew's on this day).

The Good Friday, Christians Together Walk of
Witness, will start at St Peter's Church in Bishop's
Waltham at 10am. Members from OLOA and local
churches will walk through the town, following a Cross,
pausing at places for readings, and finishing with a
prayer at the United Reform Church. All are welcome.

The Parish Office will be closed on Friday 11th April.

MESSAGES CONTINUED



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 about 'The Education of Children'. 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

OLQA - Church cleaning Saturday 19th April, 10am to 12 Noon, refreshment provided. Extra help will make the church look beautiful for Easter. All are welcome.

Divine Mercy Sunday - 27th April 2025 at Holy Cross Church. Starting at 2.45pm, with procession of the Divine Mercy Image, 3pm - prayers and Chaplet, Veneration of Divine Mercy Image and Blessing with a 1st Class Relic of St Faustina, Meditations and Litany and ending with Exposition of The Blessed Sacrament. Confessions will be available. Refreshments in the Resource Centre afterwards and sale of Divine Mercy devotional items. All are very welcome. Enquiries to Roz Monaghan 0775 263 9593 or Fr Raffaele.

Upcoming Funerals

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Joyce Whitlock. Joyce's Funeral Mass takes place on **Thursday 10th April at 9.30am in Holy Cross.**

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

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.

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. Please complete an 'Assist Us To Live, Not To Die' leaflet available in our church welcome areas and post it to your MP.

Message of Thanks - Thanks to all who ran, donated to or attended St Joseph's Lenten Lunch on Friday 28th March. £360 was raised for CAFOD.

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 Deacon Paul Owen: powen@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk or alternatively please speak to a priest.

CAFOD Myanmar Earthquake Appeal - Following the devastating earthquake in Myanmar, CAFOD is responding through the Catholic Church there to support families affected by the disaster. Your donations will provide essentials like water, food, solar lights, and mosquito nets. Please give to CAFOD's Myanmar Earthquake Appeal, you can donate online at cafod.org.uk/myanmar or by calling 0303 303 3030. You can also text EARTHQUAKE to 70450 to donate £10.

Invite from Methodist Church in Colden Common

Do you live in Colden Common? If so, you are warmly invited to meet other Christians in the village, over lunch in the **Community Centre, on the Saturday after Easter, 26th April.** The idea is to encourage each other in our local witness, share what all the many churches around the area are doing, and maybe identify ways that we can serve our village together.

There'll be lots of different soups and sweets, and some games and puzzles, treasure hunt etc for the children (under 95yrs only). More details in the recent village Newsletter - any questions or ideas, do email simondakeyne@btinternet.com, or pop in to 11 Hill Lane!

At a Glance - List of Upcoming Parish Events

5th Apr:	Penitential Service at Holy Cross
6th Apr:	Parish Get2Gether
11th Apr:	Lenten Prayer Group at OLQA
15th Apr:	Chrism Mass at St John's Cathedral
17th Apr:	Maundy Thursday
18th Apr:	Good Friday Services
19th Apr:	Holy Saturday
20th Apr:	Easter Sunday
27th Apr:	Divine Mercy Sunday Service

ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Tuesday:	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

TIMES A PRIEST WILL BE AVAILABLE TO MEET

Frs Raffaele, Luca, Matteo, Mario and Pietro will not be available to meet during their usual times this week. If you need to speak to one of our priests please catch them after Mass.

MASS TIMES FOR OUR CHURCH COMMUNITIES

DATE	TIME	CHURCH	MASS INTENTION
Saturday 5th April	9.30am	Holy Cross	Emilio Patrice Hayek (Wellbeing) Penitential Service Kathleen Glackin RIP Leo & Norah Brown RIP
	10.00am	Holy Cross	
	5.00pm	St Swithun Wells	
	6.00pm	OLQA	
	6.00pm	St Joseph	
Sunday 6th April <i>Fifth Sunday of Lent</i>	8.30am	Holy Cross	<i>Polska Msza Święta</i> Umberto Pugi RIP 7th Anniversary Eustacio Guia Snr & Flotilda Guia RIP Anniversary People of the Parish Ann Brockway RIP FM Hesla Rayment RIP Anniversary Edith & Elizabeth (Birthday Intentions)
	9.00am	St Edward	
	9.00am	St Andrew	
	9.30am	OLQA	
	11.00am	Holy Cross (& livestreamed)	
Monday 7th April	9.30am	Holy Cross	Seamus Aylward RIP
Tuesday 8th April	10.00am	St Andrew	
	6.00pm	St Edward	
Wednesday 9th April	9.30am	Holy Cross	Holy Souls RIP Denis McCormack RIP
	10.00am	St Edward	
Thursday 10th April	9.30am	Holy Cross	Funeral Mass: Joyce Whitlock RIP Sr Ann Colette (Wellbeing)
	12 Noon	OLQA	
	6.00pm	St Joseph	
Friday 11th April	10.00am	St Joseph	Funeral Mass: Dr Alfredo Xavier RIP Deborah & Mark Goodman RIP
	10.00am	St Edward	
	12 Noon	OLQA	
Saturday 12th April	9.30am	Holy Cross	Lydia & Joe Fonseca RIP Tadeusz Bubien RIP Anniversary The Nuns of St Cecilia's Abbey, Ryde John Knapman & Family (In Thanksgiving)
	5.00pm	St Swithun Wells	
	6.00pm	OLQA	
	6.00pm	St Joseph	
	6.30pm	St Edward	
Sunday 13th April <i>Palm Sunday</i>	8.30am	Holy Cross	<i>Polska Msza Święta</i> Enid Scappaticci RIP 10th Anniversary Ernest Glanville RIP Anniversary Janet Cooke RIP Anniversary People of Parish
	9.00am	St Edward	
	9.00am	St Andrew	
	9.30am	OLQA	
	11.00am	Holy Cross (& livestreamed)	
	5.30pm	Holy Cross	

CLERGY & PARISH OFFICE

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

Fr Luca Speziale (Assistant Priest)
Tel: 023 8061 2430; E: lspeziale@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

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

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

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

Deacon Bob Birtles
Tel: 023 8069 2416; E: bbirtles@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Deacon John di Meo
Tel: 01794 515688; E: jdimeo@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Deacon Paul Owen
Tel: 023 8025 4806; E: powen@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Deacon Paul Wilson
Tel: 023 8061 6618; E: 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

Parish Secretary: Sarah Goodfellow
Email: office@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