



*Our Vision is a Person, Our Vision is Jesus Christ*

**6TH DECEMBER 2020: SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

## John the Baptist in the Desert

During Advent two figures help our preparation towards Christmas. One is the Virgin Mary just before Christmas and the other is John the Baptist at the beginning of Advent.

This Sunday we read in the Gospel how John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. This happened in the desert close to the place where the river Jordan enters the Dead Sea. During his preaching he said, "Someone is following me, someone who is more powerful than I am." He was obviously speaking of Jesus.

The fact that we start Advent in the desert resonates with us. The desert is a place where nothing is easy and everything is reduced to the essential. The desert is the symbol of our weakness and the hardship of life. At the moment, I think, we all feel that we are in a sort of desert. Even if we have food and water, many of the important things of our life are more complicated. We have just come out of lockdown and the future is still not clear. Some of us suffer from loneliness, others from anxiety and stress. We suffer a sort of desertification of our lives and relationships.

It is precisely for this reason that today's Gospel speaks to us in a more powerful way. In the desert of our present lives when things are tough, we need someone like John the Baptist. He was able to gather many distressed people and help them to turn around and look in the direction of the Lord. He was the one who was able to announce the coming of an extraordinary event. He was the finger that pointed at an awesome Presence, Jesus Christ. Nowadays we need all of this, we need someone to help us in our desert to raise our eyes and find hope. We need a prophet like John the Baptist.

Fortunately, we don't need to travel to Israel to find a prophet. They are around us. God gives us many friends who are able to do what John the Baptist did, who are able to help us to look deeper into our lives, to see that the Lord is coming, that there is more in this life than our struggles and anxieties. Many friends can do this for us and we should do the same for others. We can do that for example by speaking about Christmas but not in a commercial way, for instance by making our Nativity Scene and telling a prayer in front of it with our family, by coming to Mass and confession, by offering our love and compassion to those who live with us.

During Marriage Preparation I am commenting on the first chapters of Genesis with the couples that are going to get married this year. The story of Adam and Eve helps the couples to understand what is love. There is a text we have recently read which says, "Of all the things that arouse wonder, love is the most wondrous. Eve's presence is not so much like a harbour for a storm-tossed ship as it is like the parting of the storm clouds to reveal a wider, more mysterious horizon toward which the ship continues its journey." This text tells us what we should do for each other in Advent. We should point towards the Horizon of our existence. That Horizon who came down from Heaven on Christmas Day.

*Father Raffaele*

## **GEM OF THE WEEK**



This week's GEM is a video by Bishop Philip entitled, "O Emmanuel" - you can find this on our homepage. If anyone has suggestions for GEMs please contact [website.sswp@gmail.com](mailto:website.sswp@gmail.com)

Newsletter items should be received into the Parish Office by **Wednesday 9:30am**

## LITURGICAL INDICATIONS



Sunday 6th December 2020: Year B - Year 1 - Psalter Week: 2

PSALM RESPONSE: LET US SEE, O LORD, YOUR MERCY, AND GIVE US YOUR SAVING HELP.

1<sup>st</sup> reading: Isaiah 40:1-5; 9-11 Psalm: 84 2<sup>nd</sup> reading: 2nd Letter of St Peter 3:8-14 Gospel: Mark 1:1-8

READINGS FOR SUNDAY 13TH DECEMBER (THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT):

1<sup>st</sup> reading: Isaiah 61:1-2a, 10-11 Psalm: Lk1 2<sup>nd</sup> reading: 1st Letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians 5:16-24 Gospel: John 1:6-8, 19-28

## PARISH GROUPS



### Stars of Abraham (school years 3, 4, 5 & 6)

Tues, 4.00pm-5.30pm in St Edward's Cloister;

Tues, 4.00pm-5.30pm in St Andrew;

Sat 10.30am-Noon in Holy Cross Resource Centre.

To join Stars of Abraham please click the link on our website.

Grail Seekers (school years 7, 8, 9) - our next and last meeting before the Christmas break will be on **Saturday 12th December, 2-4pm in Holy Cross Resource Centre**. To join the group and for more information please click the Grail Seekers Icon on our homepage.

Student Youth (school year 10 until sixth form) meet weekly on a **Friday evening at 6.30pm in Holy Cross Resource Centre**. If you would like to attend please book your place on our website by clicking on the Student Youth Icon on our homepage.

### Communion & Liberation Group

(with Fr Luca) is meeting **every Wednesday**, for more information please click the link on the homepage of our website.

### Communion & Liberation Group

(with Fr Raffaele) is meeting **every Thursday at 8pm in St Edward's cloister**.

Fellowship by Zoom - Advent Bible Study on the theme of Hope continues on **Wednesday 9th December at 7.30pm** with Week 3 'Hope in the Gospel Promises'. If you would like to join the Zoom meeting please contact Bob and Marion Birtles for the link on: [bbirtles@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:bbirtles@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

### Sacramental Preparation for Adults (RCIA)

If you would like to be baptised, confirmed or received into the Catholic Church please speak to a priest or email Deacon Paul Owen at [powen@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:powen@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

### OASIS - Parish Ladies' Group

**Tuesday 8th December at 8pm (Zoom meeting)**

We'd love you to join us online to catch up and to reflect on the season of Advent, whether you are a new or an old friend. If you are not on our mailing list and would like to receive the link to join this Zoom meeting, please email Jessie:

[jessie.woolgar@gmail.com](mailto:jessie.woolgar@gmail.com)

All ladies welcome.

### Parish Get2Together

**Saturday 19th December, 1-4pm**

Pavillion on the Park, 1 Kingfisher Road, SO50 9LH  
An event for all the parish. We begin at 1pm, sharing a meal together, in tables of six and then we'll have some entertainment until 4pm (games and activities for all the families). Each table has a maximum of six people belonging to the same household or support bubble. Cost: we ask you to give a contribution of £10 per table to be paid on the day to cover expenses. Please bring your own food, beverage, cups/plates/cutlery (it is like a picnic), and remember to wear a mask (except when you are at your table). To book a table please go to our parish website and click the link you will need to give the 6 names filling the table. There are a maximum of 15 tables.

Thank you - Allan and Margaret Kennedy would like to thank Fr Luca and our parishioners for all their prayers, cards, messages and kindness on the death of their son Paul.

## MESSAGES



### Carols by Zoom!

**Sunday 13th December, 4.30pm**

As congregational singing is not allowed at the moment we have had an idea! We shall have our "Advent to Christmas Carol Service" on Zoom. As far as the Christmas Carols go, there will be piano/organ music, everybody will be 'muted' so you can sing along to the carols at home, on your own, or in your family or "bubble" or just listen to both the music and readings if you prefer! We shall send the Zoom link nearer the time - email Marion if you would like to join us, [marionbirtles@gmail.com](mailto:marionbirtles@gmail.com)

Message of Thanks - As a parish we would like to offer our heartfelt thanks to the Southampton Catenians and the Catenian members who attend St Joseph for purchasing the fogging machines at St Andrew and St Joseph.

## MESSAGES CONTINUED



**Advent & Christmas 2020** Please pick up your copy of the Penitential Services & Christmas Mass timetable, it's available in all of our churches from this weekend.

### **Booking System for Christmas Masses**

Due to the current situation we have put in place a booking system for Christmas Eve Masses, Midnight Masses and Christmas Day Masses for all of our churches. If you do not have access to the internet please ask friends/family to assist you in reserving a seat.

For more information and to book please go to:

<https://www.stswithunwellsparish.org.uk/christmasbooking>

For OLQA only, please book your place through the usual church booking system by emailing: [olqamassbook@gmail.com](mailto:olqamassbook@gmail.com)

**Advent Penitential Services** will be held across our parish, with the opportunity for individual confession:

**Thursday 17th December, 7.30pm – OLQA**

**Friday 18th December, 7.30pm – St Andrew**

**Saturday 19th December, 11am – Holy Cross**

*A number of priests will be available on each occasion.*

**Catholic Papers & Reading Material** - Due to the need to keep all areas infection free, we have had to stop the deliveries of the Universe, The Herald and various other publications. Sadly the situation remains the same for the foreseeable future. Anyone interested in obtaining copies can contact the publishing houses direct and ask for a home delivery or access the documents online. For example, to arrange a print subscription to the Catholic Universe Newspaper direct to your door will cost you £80 for 12 months (postage is free). If you are interested you can call them on 0161 820 5722 and pay by credit card or to order online please visit [www.thecatholicuniverse.com/shop](http://www.thecatholicuniverse.com/shop)

**CAFOD World Gifts** - This Christmas why not buy gifts that will change lives and bring happiness! Please look online at <https://worldgifts.cafod.org.uk/>

## SCHOOL NOTICES



### **St Swithun Wells Catholic Primary School**

If your child is starting school in September 2021, applications are open until 15th January 2021.

A video tour of the school is available on our website ([www.st-swithunwells.org.uk](http://www.st-swithunwells.org.uk)), please contact the school office for more information 02380 266210.

## MASS (STREAMING & BOOKING SYSTEM) & CONFESSION

### **Live Streamed Mass**

Mass at Holy Cross on Thursday, 9.30am and Sunday, 11am is streamed. To join please go to our parish website [www.stswithunwellsparish.org.uk](http://www.stswithunwellsparish.org.uk)

### **To reserve a seat at Mass in St Joseph's & OLQA**

**St Joseph's, Romsey:**

- **Thursday 6.00pm** (no booking required)
- **Friday 10am** (no booking required)
- **Saturday Vigil Mass 6.00pm** the church will close after Mass). To reserve a seat for the Mass please contact Teresa Rayment from Wednesday through to Friday (Tel: 01794 513528 / [teresarayment@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:teresarayment@tiscali.co.uk)).
- **Sunday 11.00am** (the church will close after Mass). To reserve a seat for the Mass please contact Joanna Russell from Wednesday through to Friday (Tel: 07917 802814 / [joanna@silvasmiths.co.uk](mailto:joanna@silvasmiths.co.uk)).

**Our Lady Queen of Apostles, Bishop's Waltham:**

- **Thursday 12pm (Midday) & Sunday 9.30am** (the church will close after Mass). To reserve a seat please email: [olqamassbook@gmail.com](mailto:olqamassbook@gmail.com)

**Private Prayer** - The following churches will remain open after Mass until 11.30am for private prayer (see back page for Mass times):

**Tuesday: St Andrew's**

**Wednesday: St Edward's**

**Thursday: Holy Cross**

### **CONFESSION (SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION)**

|                   |                 |             |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| <b>Tuesdays:</b>  | 6.30pm-7.30pm   | St Edward's |
| <b>Saturdays:</b> | 10.00am-10.30am | Holy Cross  |
|                   | 5.30pm-6.00pm   | St Joseph's |
| <b>Sundays:</b>   | 8.30am-9.00am   | St Andrew's |

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

**Tuesdays:** St Edward's - after Mass (6.30-7.30pm)  
**Thursday:** St Joseph's - before Mass (5.00-6.00pm)

### **TIMES A PRIEST WILL BE AVAILABLE TO MEET**

**Wednesdays:** Fr Luca, 4.30pm-6.30pm, Parish Office, Holy Cross, Eastleigh.  
**Saturdays:** Fr Marco, 9.30am-12.30pm, Parish Office (26 Abbey Water) Romsey

## MASS TIMES FOR OUR CHURCH COMMUNITIES

| DATE  | TIME  | CHURCH   | MASS INTENTION   |
|---|---|--|--|
| Sat 5th Dec   | 9.30am<br>5.00pm*<br>6.00pm*<br>6.30pm*                               | Holy Cross<br>St Swithun Wells<br>St Joseph<br>St Edward   | Phil Talbot RIP (Birthday)<br>Mason Moore RIP<br>Herbert Howie RIP (Anniversary)   |
| Sun 6th Dec<br><i>Second Sunday of Advent</i>                               | 8.30am<br>9.00am<br>9.00am<br>9.30am<br>10.30am<br>11.00am<br>11.00am | Holy Cross<br>St Edward<br>St Andrew<br>OLQA<br>St Edward<br>Holy Cross (Also Streamed)<br>St Joseph | <i>Polska Msza Święta</i><br>Mrs Edward Christian FM<br>Patricia Cairney RIP<br><br>Mahima Anthraper (Special Intention)<br>Colleen Patricia Recardo RIP<br>John & Beppie Marsh (Well-being) |
| Mon 7th Dec<br><i>St Ambrose</i>  | 9.30am  | Holy Cross   | Mary Nixon RIP   |
| Tues 8th Dec<br><i>The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary</i> | 10.00am<br>6.00pm   | St Andrew<br>St Edward   | Cardinal George Pell (Thanksgiving)  |
| Wed 9th Dec   | 9.30am<br>10.00am   | Holy Cross<br>St Edward  | Marion Lloyd (Special Intention)<br>Mrs Edward Christian FM  |
| Thurs 10th Dec<br><i>St Swithun Wells</i>                                   | 9.30am<br>12.00pm<br>6.00pm   | Holy Cross (Also Streamed)<br>OLQA<br>St Joseph  | Giuseppe & Paola Bibbo RIP   |
| Fri 11th Dec  | 10.00am<br>10.00am  | St Joseph (Church not AH)<br>St Edward   | Lorenzo Cossa RIP<br>John Joe Fitzgerald RIP   |
| Sat 12th Dec  | 9.30am<br>5.00pm*<br>6.00pm*<br>6.30pm*                               | Holy Cross<br>St Swithun Wells<br>St Joseph<br>St Edward   | Luis Castro FM<br><br>For those having a difficult Christmas<br>Richard Bradley RIP (1st Anniversary)  |
| Sun 13th Dec<br><i>Third Sunday of Advent</i>                               | 8.30am<br>9.00am<br>9.00am<br>9.30am<br>10.30am<br>11.00am<br>11.00am | Holy Cross<br>St Edward<br>St Andrew<br>OLQA<br>St Edward<br>Holy Cross (Also Streamed)<br>St Joseph | <i>Polska Msza Święta</i><br><br>Sr Mary Cunningham (90th Birthday)<br><br>George, Gertrude & Mary Lawton RIP<br>Ron Reynolds FM<br>Sean Kelly RIP (Anniversary)                             |

### CLERGY

**Father Raffaele Cossa (Parish Priest)**  
Tel: 023 8061 2430; E: rcosa@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

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

**Fr Marco Vignolo (Assistant Priest)**  
Tel: 023 8061 2430; E: mvignolo@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

**Fr Bruce Barnes (Assistant Priest)**  
Tel: 01489 890947 (OLQA Office)

**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 80254806; E: powen@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

**Deacon Paul Wilson**  
Tel: 02380 616618; E: pwilson@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

### PARISH OFFICE

Holy Cross Church, 53 Leigh Road, Eastleigh SO50 9DF  
Tel: 02380 273882

Office Hours:  
Monday-Wednesday: 9.30am-5.30pm (closed for an hour over lunchtime on Monday & Tuesday)  
Thursday-Friday: 9.30am-2.30pm

**Holy Cross Resource Centre & Finance**  
**Admin: Linda Roberts** (works full day Mon-Wed, half day Thursday but working from home)  
lroberts@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

**Parish Secretary: Sarah Goodfellow** (works Wed-Fri from 9.30am-2.30pm)  
stswparish@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

**Website Contact: website.sswp@gmail.com**

# ADVENT & CHRISTMAS 2020

## Advent Penitential Services

These will be held across our parish, with the opportunity for individual confession:  
Thursday 17th December 7.30pm – Our Lady Queen of Apostles, Bishop's Waltham  
Friday 18th December 7.30pm – St Andrew, North Baddesley  
Saturday 19th December 11am – Holy Cross, Eastleigh  
*A number of priests will be available on each occasion.*

## Times Of Mass For Christmas

The times for Christmas Eve, Christmas Day & Boxing Day are listed below.

Masses on 24th & 25th December, excluding Polish Masses, have a booking system in place - please go to our website [www.stswithunwellsparish.org.uk](http://www.stswithunwellsparish.org.uk) for more information.

If you do not have access to the internet please ask friends/family to assist you in reserving a seat.

### Holy Cross Church, Leigh Road, Eastleigh

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| The Nativity of the Lord | Thursday 24th December, Mass at 5pm<br>Midnight Mass at 12am                                 |
| Christmas Day            | Friday 25th December, Polska Msza Swieta at 8.30am<br>Friday 25th December, Mass at 11am     |
| Boxing Day               | Saturday 26th December, Polska Msza Swieta at 8.30am<br>Saturday 26th December, Mass at 11am |

### St Swithun Wells Church, Allington Lane, Fair Oak

|                          |                                     |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| The Nativity of the Lord | Thursday 24th December, Mass at 6pm |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|

### St Edward the Confessor Church, 191/193 Winchester Road, Chandlers Ford

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| The Nativity of the Lord | Thursday 24th December, Mass at 6.30pm<br>Thursday 24th December, Mass at 9pm |
| Christmas Day            | Friday 25th December, Mass at 9am<br>Friday 25th December, Mass at 10.30am    |

### St Andrew Church, Fleming Avenue, North Baddesley

|                          |                                     |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| The Nativity of the Lord | Thursday 24th December, Mass at 7pm |
| Christmas Day            | Friday 25th December, Mass at 9am   |

### St Joseph Church, Romsey

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| The Nativity of the Lord | Thursday 24th December, Mass at 5pm<br>Thursday 24th December, Midnight Mass at 11pm |
| Christmas Day            | Friday 25th December, Mass at 11am   |

### Our Lady Queen of Apostles, Martin Street, Bishop's Waltham

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| The Nativity of the Lord | Thursday 24th December, Mass at 6.30pm |
| Christmas Day            | Friday 25th December, Mass at 9.30am   |
| Boxing Day               | Saturday 26th December, Mass at 9.30am |

