

# NEWSLETTER Catholic Parish of St Swithun Wells

[www.stswithunwellsparish.org.uk](http://www.stswithunwellsparish.org.uk)  
Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth Registered Charity No. 1199568



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

18th January 2026: SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

## WHAT A BLAST!

On New Year's Eve, we waited for midnight by having dinner and a party with several families in the hall of Saint Edward's Church, and I was in charge of the fireworks. I bought some supplies for the occasion at a shop in Southampton, and among other things, there was a fairly large box with a series of rockets that went off on their own once the fuse was lit. That was the centrepiece of the fireworks, so I lit that box at the end of the evening. The box was quite heavy, so I didn't worry about stability. I simply placed it on the ground at a safe distance from the audience and lit the fuse.

The start was very nice, the rockets went off and made beautiful stars in the sky, but at a certain point, while I still had my nose in the air and could hear the explosions, I no longer saw any stars in the sky. On the contrary, someone started screaming. I looked down and saw that the box had turned over and started firing rockets at the people. At that point, I ran towards the box, kicked it so that the rockets would not go in the direction of the audience, and after a few seconds, the box had finished firing.

Thank God it was just a scare and no one was hurt. However, this incident made me think. How easy it is to risk hurting someone without meaning to (this time there were no consequences, but it could have been a serious accident).

It is the beginning of the year and, faced with the risk we took, I find myself thinking that life is not in our hands. We really must learn to rely more on God, to trust in Him.

If it depended only on us, on our skills, on our ability to do things, how much harm would be done, willingly or unwillingly. Pride often leads us to do things we later regret. So this little New Year's Eve incident is an opportunity to put Jesus back at the centre of our life this year too: it is He who saves us from our failures.

In any case, I am not a fatalist. Jesus allows us to make mistakes so that we can grow and improve our way of life. For this reason next time, I will attach the box to a lead plate and anchor it to the floor to avoid another similar incident.

After all, the saying that is useful to live by in this new year is this: live as if everything depended on you, but knowing that everything depends on God. Therefore, do your best and pray asking God's help and protection. Happy New Year!

*Fr Mario*

## GEM OF THE WEEK

Apostolic letter *In Unitate fidei* 'The heart of Christian faith' by Pope Leo  
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  
20th January 2026, 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 18th January 2026 YEAR A - YEAR 2 - PSALTER WEEK 2

PSALM RESPONSE: BEHOLD, I HAVE COME, LORD, TO DO YOUR WILL.

1st Reading Isaiah 49:3,5-6 Psalm 40 (39) 2nd Reading Corinthians 1:1-3 Gospel John 1:29-34

Sunday 25th January 2026 YEAR A - YEAR 2 - PSALTER WEEK 3

PSALM RESPONSE: THE LORD IS MY LIGHT AND MY SALVATION.

1st Reading Isaiah 9:1b-4 Psalm 27 (26) 2nd Reading Corinthians 1:10-13,17 Gospel Matthew 4:12-23

## PARISH GROUPS



### 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!

**School of Christianity in Bishop's Waltham** - A course about the basis of the faith using the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Next meetings will be **Fridays 16th January and 30th January at 6pm in the hall of Our Lady Queen of Apostles Church.**

### 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)

### 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](mailto: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 28th January**. If you would like to participate, please email Fr Matteo:

[mpagani@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:mpagani@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

## MESSAGES



**Thank you** - to everyone for your Christmas greetings, prayers, cards and thoughts expressed in so many different ways. We are also very grateful for your generosity shown through the Christmas offerings which we really do appreciate. Thank you to all the many people who helped ensure our Christmas liturgies were well prepared and joyfully celebrated. *Frs Raffaele, Luca, Mario, Matteo and Pietro.*

**Eucharistic Ministers Retreat** - Saturday 17th January at 2.30pm - 4pm in **St Edward's** for all Eucharistic Ministers of the parish.

**Readers Retreats** - All readers and all those wishing to become readers are invited to the Readers' Retreats on **Saturday 31st January**. Retreats are located in the following churches:

- **OLQA 10.30am-12noon.** For readers at OLQA.
- **St Andrew 10.30am-12noon.** For readers at St Andrew and St Joseph.
- **Holy Cross 2.30-4pm.** For readers at Holy Cross, St Edward's and St Swithun Wells.

**Welcome to Sabrina** Gardner, our new parish secretary who started this week. Sabrina worships at **St Edward's** with her family and has three lovely children.

**Good Companions** - Our next gathering is at **12noon on Friday 23 January in St Edward's Cloister**. Everyone is welcome to join us for friendly company and delicious food. The school choir will entertain us with their excellent singing. Please ring Tony Wilson on 023 80266617 if you wish to come along.

**Parish Get2Gether** - **Sunday 1st February 1-4pm Pavilion in the Park.** 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.

**Second collection** - Next weekend will be for the Cathedral.

## MESSAGES CONTINUED

**Christian Unity Eastleigh** - As part of the week of prayer for Christian Unity, Churches Together in Eastleigh are joining together to read the bible. **From Monday 19th to Friday 23rd** we will be reading through the entire Bible from **8am - 9pm each day in Eastleigh Baptist church**. **On Saturday 24th January** we will be gathering in Eastleigh Town Centre to read the Gospels from **10am to 2pm**. This is a fantastic opportunity to demonstrate the unity we all have in knowing Jesus as Lord and Saviour as revealed through the holy scriptures. We would love people from every church to take part. You can sign up for as many slots as you like. Each slot is one hour and up to 4 people at a time can book in so no one has to read for the full hour. Please visit the St Swithun Wells parish website to sign up.

**Christian Unity Chandlers Ford** - 'Church visits' will take place on **Sunday 18th January**. The aim of this tradition is to experience different types of worship and to appreciate a little of what is happening in other churches, as well as meeting other local Christians. St Edwards will be visited by St Francis Church. St Edwards parishioners can visit St Boniface's service at **4pm**.

**Christian Unity Romsey** - There will be a Christian Unity service on **Sunday 25th January at 6.30pm in the Abbey**. Everyone welcome.

### 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 Fr Luca [comeandsee@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk](mailto: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**

**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](mailto:events@stswithunwellsparish.org.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.instagram.com/stswithunwellsparish) for all the latest news and events in the parish.

**Volunteers Needed for Coffee Stop at Holy Cross** - We have lost eight volunteers last year and are seeking new people. Are you able to help us on a Thursday morning after Mass at Holy Cross Resource Centre? If you can, please contact Karen on 07809 596831 or [jakeman1966@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:jakeman1966@hotmail.co.uk).

**Evangelisation Strategy Team** - 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**.

**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. To begin with accurate records, we'll hold a parish census this month. More details will follow. For queries, please contact Christina at [accounts@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk](mailto:accounts@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk)

**Online Gift Card Fraud** - Gift card fraud is an increasingly common way of tricking victims into purchasing gift cards and sharing their details, leading to financial loss. Please be aware that there have been scam messages circulating which appear to come from priests or diocesan staff, asking people to buy gift cards or provide financial help urgently. **The diocese and its clergy will never ask for money, gift cards, vouchers, or personal details by email, text message or social media.** If you receive a message of this kind, do not respond and do not send any money. Please report it to the parish office, so that we can alert others. Thank you for your vigilance and for helping to protect our parish communities.

**Holy Cross Choir** - Our parish choir at Holy Cross is welcoming new voices for the 11am Sunday Mass! If you enjoy singing and serving our parish through music, we would love to have you join us and help enrich our worship. If interested, please speak to Deacon Emmanuel or Fr Raffaele

**Shop at Holy Cross Church** - There are still a few 2026 calendars and diaries available to purchase at half price. The shop is open every Sunday after morning Mass.

### SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION (CONFESSON)

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

### ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

<b>Tues:</b>	6.30pm - 7.30pm (after Mass)	St Edward
<b>Wed:</b>	10am -11am (after Mass)	Holy Cross
<b>Thurs:</b>	12.30pm - 1pm (after Mass)	OLQA
<b>Thurs:</b>	5pm - 6pm (before Mass)	St Joseph

## MASS TIMES FOR OUR CHURCH COMMUNITIES

DATE	TIME	CHURCH	MASS INTENTION
Sat 17th January <i>St Anthony of Egypt</i>	9.30am 5.00pm 6.00pm 6.00pm 6.30pm	Holy Cross St Swithun Wells OLQA St Joseph St Edward	Special Intention for Maureen Burnett  Ann Ryan (Wellbeing) People of the Parish
Sun 18th January <i>Second 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> Fred Bernard Barnes & Maria Theresa Farias de Barnes RIP Ramon & Nelita Hechanova RIP Anniversaries  Tomasz Michalski (Birthday Intention) Norma McCarthy RIP Anniversary Our Priests (Special Intention)
Mon 19th January	9.30am	Holy Cross	Hazel Freda Jurd FM
Tues 20th January	10.00am 6.00pm	St Andrew St Edward	Arthur & Constance Allan RIP
Weds 21st January <i>St Agnes</i>	9.30am 10.00am	Holy Cross St Edward	Mirella Lias Fakhory (Wellbeing)
Thurs 22nd January	9.30am 12 Noon 6.00pm	Holy Cross OLQA St Joseph	Ronald Walter Russ RIP FM  Sr Philomena (Wellbeing)
Fri 23rd January	10.00am 10.00am 12 Noon	St Joseph St Edward OLQA	Sr Paschal (Wellbeing) Keith Small RIP FM
Sat 24th January <i>St Frances de Sales</i>	9.30am 5.00pm 6.00pm 6.00pm 6.30pm	Holy Cross St Swithun Wells OLQA St Joseph St Edward	Muriel Matthias & Family (Wellbeing)
Sun 25th January <i>Third 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>  Stella & Peter Bowerman RIP Anniversary  Sr Ancilla (Wellbeing) 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)

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)

Deacon Emmanuel Chituh

Tel: 07915 379686; E: [echituh@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:echituh@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

**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](mailto:office@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk)

Finance Administrator: Christina Geleji

Email: [accounts@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk](mailto:accounts@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk)

Events & Communications Co-ordinator: Faye Harris

Email: [events@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk](mailto:events@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)