

NEWSLETTER



22nd March 2026: FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth Registered Charity N. 1199568

CALLED TO BE FATHERS

This Sunday, our seven brothers and sisters who are preparing to be baptised on Easter Eve will have their third Scrutiny. During this beautiful rite, they will also be given the Lord's Prayer. This simple gesture invites those preparing for baptism to enter into a deeper relationship with God the Father, who will become their adoptive Father through baptism. This is because God is a Father who loves us.

This got me thinking about the 'fathers' I have had in my life. First and foremost, my biological father. The more time that passes, the more grateful I am for everything he has done for me. As I grow older, I realise more and more that many things I used to take for granted about him aren't actually guaranteed. The more difficult family situations I encounter where the father does not behave as a father should, the more grateful I am for this immense and undeserved gift. Alongside my biological father, there have also been two other people who have been like fathers to me. The first is Fr Antonio Anastasio, also known as Anas, the priest who made me realise that the Lord was calling me to become a priest of the Fraternity of St Charles, which is now my home. Anas went to Heaven five years ago due to the pandemic. Since then, he has been looking after me even more than he was able to whilst he was on earth. Another father figure is Fr Paolo Sottopietra, the General Superior of the Fraternity of St Charles. We developed a strong bond during my seminary years, when he played a key role in my formation. I owe much of who I am today, both as a man and as a priest, to him.

Reflecting on all the fathers the Lord has given me, I asked myself what these three people have in common. The answer is simple: they have all pointed me towards the true Father. None of them ever tied me to them, but all of them helped me to deepen my relationship with God the Father. They helped me to recognise God as a Father who loves me above all else.

This is a task to which we are all called. In some way, we are all called to be 'fathers', because we are all called to guide those entrusted to us to the true Father. However, there is a prerequisite for us to fulfil this task. To be fathers, we first need to recognise ourselves as children. Only by recognising ourselves as children of God the Father can we, in turn, become fathers ourselves. This is because only by experiencing the love of God the Father in our own lives can we point others towards Him. This is what my father, Fr Anas and Fr Paolo taught me.

Fr Matteo



GEM OF THE WEEK

read on our website: Pope Leo "Message for Lent 2026"

For the next Newsletter, items should be received into the Parish Office by 10am on Tuesday 24th March 2026, please email your messages/notices to: office@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk

If you wish to make a donation to our parish please go to: stswithunwellsparish.org.uk/financesdonations

LITURGICAL INDICATIONS



Sunday 22nd March 2026 YEAR A - YEAR 2 - PSALTER WEEK 1

PSALM RESPONSE: WITH THE LORD THERE IS MERCY, IN HIM IS PLENTIFUL REDEMPTION.

1st Reading Ezekiel 37:12-14 **Psalm** 130(129) **2nd Reading** Romans 8:8-11 **Gospel** John 11:1-45

Sunday 29th March 2026 YEAR A - YEAR 2 - 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** Matthew 26:14-27:66

PARISH GROUPS



Voice of Praise - Catholic Charismatic Prayer Group

Join us every **Thursday evening, 7.45pm, at the Holy Cross Church** 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.

On Thursday 26th March at Holy Cross, we will hold a Charismatic Adoration, which will also take place in the church at 7.45pm. **Please note there will be no meeting on 2nd or 9th April, and will resume on 16th April.** Whether you are new or experienced in charismatic prayer, all are warmly welcome! For info please email: voiceofpraise.sswp@gmail.com

MESSAGES



The last Mass at St Swithun Wells Church was celebrated on **Saturday 14th March**. Parishioners from across the parish joined us giving thanks for the many graces received there: baptisms, marriages, funerals, and countless quiet moments of prayer. Mass was then followed by a farewell gathering, where we shared memories amongst the community. It was a beautiful event to honour a beloved church. Please pray for the parishioners of St Swithun Wells Church and welcome them into the community of the other Churches of our Parish.

OLQA Change of Mass Time - From **Saturday 21st March**, Mass at OLQA will be moved from **6pm to 5pm** (with confession at 4.30pm). This may also help those of St Swithun Wells Church community to find a new home in OLQA if they wish so.

Lenten Lunch in aid of CAFOD will take place **every Friday in Lent at St Edward**, from **12noon until 1.30pm**. All donations will go to CAFOD's funds helping all who are in need due to famine, climate change, wars and disasters. Your support will be greatly appreciated.

Second Collection Easter Flowers - If you would like to contribute towards the flowers & decorations that will be displayed in our Churches, there will be a second collection on the weekend of **21st & 22nd March**

Penitential Services - A number of priests will be available during these times:

Friday 20th March, 7.30pm at St Andrew

Saturday 21st March, 10am at Holy Cross

Stations of the Cross during Lent

St Andrew: Tuesdays at 9.30am (before Mass);

Holy Cross: Thursdays at 9am (before Mass);

St Joseph: Fridays at 9.30am (before Mass);

St Edward: Fridays at 9.30am (before Mass);

OLQA: Fridays at 11.15am (before Mass).

Family Morning at St Andrew

On **Sunday 22nd March**, Fr Pietro is inviting families with children aged 0-18 who normally attend St Joseph's or St Andrew's Sunday Masses, or the St Andrew's Stars of Abraham, to spend the morning together. It will be the perfect opportunity to spend time together and enjoy our community.

Here is the simple programme:

9.00am Mass at St Andrew's

10.00-10.30am Tea and coffee with the whole community.

10.30-11.30am Games together at the nearby playground (weather permitting).

11.30-12.45pm Meeting with parents.

12.45-13.30pm Bring-and-share lunch

Please register your attendance by completing the form using the QR Code.



30 Hours Adoration at St Joseph

To prepare for Holy Week, we have decided to hold a 30 Hours Adoration event at St Joseph's Church in Romsey, following a suggestion from one of our young parishioners.

The Holy Sacrament will be exposed on **Friday 27th March at 10.30am**, after Mass and there will be reposition on **Saturday 28th March at 5.00pm**. To make this possible, two people are required to pray before the Holy Sacrament at all times. You can sign up to cover an hour-long slot by filling in the sheet in St Joseph's Church or emailing Jesteena Tennyson at 12tennysonj@gmail.com to give your availability. We encourage young people to cover the night hours. If there are not enough volunteers, the 30 Hours Adoration will be cancelled. Please indicate your availability by **Sunday 22nd March**.

MESSAGES CONTINUED



Palm Sunday (29th March) - Holy Cross, 11am Mass

Please remember that the procession with palms will start outside The Point in Eastleigh at 11am.

OLQA Social event - An evening of music with the band Shantyhead, **Saturday 11th April at 7.15pm.** Tickets are £12 to include charcuterie board and a drink. There will be a raffle with a donated quilt which will be auctioned in aid of MVC group for dementia. All are welcome.

Divine Mercy Sunday Celebration and Service will take place this year on **Sunday 12th April at Holy Cross Church at 2.45pm.** We will start with the procession of the Image, followed by 3 O'Clock prayers, Chaplet, Readings from St Faustina's Diary, Veneration of the Divine Mercy Image and 1st Class Relic of St Faustina and Litany, ending with Benediction and Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. Confessions will be available to those who wish to obtain the Divine Mercy Sunday Plenary Indulgence. Refreshments and the sale of Divine Mercy devotional items will be available in the Resource Centre afterwards. Enquiries to Roz Monaghan on 0775 263 9593 or please speak to Fr Raffaele.

Cultural Friday - Save the date for the next Cultural Friday, which will take place on **15th May at 7 pm at St Edwards.** The topic is "Is it possible to be Christian and work in a hospital?". We will invite some guests to share their personal experiences. This meeting is particularly relevant for anyone working in the NHS, including doctors, nurses and staff.

Pilgrimage to Lourdes - A group of parishioners from Our Lady Queen of Apostles are self-organising a pilgrimage to Lourdes and would welcome other parishioners who may like to join us. Dates are **Friday June 26th to Friday July 3rd.** Travel will be flights from Gatwick to Toulouse, with accessible coach transfers from the Winchester area to Gatwick, and from Toulouse to Lourdes. The cost for the week is c. £860 per person, including all travel and 7 nights full board in a 4 star hotel (costs will increase as flight costs increase over time). Each person must arrange their own travel insurance. We welcome interest from both able-bodied and less able pilgrims (we are travelling with a small nursing team and can provide care and support, subject to individuals being able to access a flight). For more information and to join our group, please contact Marianne at mwanstall@btinternet.com.

Easter Sheet 2026

Available in all of our churches from this weekend, please pick up a copy. Please note a slight change to the usual schedule - Good Friday Stations of the Cross will be held around the precinct and Leigh Road Recreation Ground, starting at **Holy Cross 10.30am, finishing at Holy Cross Church by 12noon.**

British Summer Time - Clock Change

Please remember that the clocks go forward by one hour next weekend (28th/29th March).

St Joseph Church Friday Lent Lunch raised £250 for CAFOD. Many thanks to all who helped at, donated to and attended the event.

Easter adult baptism - The Scrutinies - Please pray for Alex, Callum, Kai, Rhiann, Ross, Sasha and Vita who will be baptised at Easter. At Mass this Sunday and the following Sunday, the Scrutinies will be taking place for them. These are important rites of self-examination and repentance to strengthen them for the Easter sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist

Gift Aid & Gift Aid Declaration Updates - If you are a taxpayer, Gift Aid lets the parish claim back the tax you paid on donations to us. This is 25% extra for the parish and costs you nothing! To sign up for Gift Aid contact your Gift Aid Co-ordinator. Their details are on the parish website 'Donate' page: <https://www.stswithunwellsparish.org.uk/financesdonations> Current Gift Aid donors should ensure their Gift Aid Declaration (GAD) uses the new "Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth" version, otherwise Gift Aid claims will be rejected. You can update your GAD online via the 'Donate' page on our Parish website.

Volunteer Vacancies - We are looking for volunteers to help with the following positions: **Safeguarding Coordinator** at Holy Cross, **Property Manager(s)** for one of our churches, **Chair of Property Managers Committee**, also **Gift Aid Co-ordinator for OLQA.** If you are interested in any of the above, please speak to Fr Raffaele or contact the parish office: office@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk
These are essential roles for our churches to function. Please help us!

Parish Registration - Please make sure that you register yourself and your children to our Parish using the online form that you can find on our website. 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. 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



SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION (CONFESSION)

Tuesdays: 9.30am-10.00am (before Mass) St Andrew
Tuesdays: 6.30pm-7.30pm (after Mass) St Edward
Saturdays: 10.00am-10.30am (after Mass) Holy Cross
5.30pm-6.00pm (before Mass) OLQA
5.30pm-6.00pm (before Mass) St Joseph
Sundays: 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 21st March	9.30am 5.00pm 6.00pm 6.30pm	Holy Cross OLQA St Joseph St Edward	Gil Hinguillo RIP Frederick Lobo RIP (15 th Anniversary)
Sun 22nd March Fifth Sunday of Lent	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> Paul Bowman RIP Gladys Curmi RIP anniversary People of the Parish Julius (50 th Birthday, Thanksgiving & Wellbeing) Eric Clarke RIP Anniversary Holy Souls in Purgatory
Mon 23rd March	9.30am	Holy Cross	Esther Siby (Special Intention)
Tue 24th March	10.00am 6.00pm	St Andrew St Edward	Michael McGrory (Wellbeing) The voiceless around the world.
Wed 25th March The Annunciation of the Lord	9.30am 10.00am	Holy Cross St Edward	Grace Moore RIP FM Layzell Family (Special Intention)
Thur 26th March	9.30am 12 Noon 6.00pm	Holy Cross OLQA St Joseph	Phyllis & Emmanuel Altman RIP Gabriel Young (Wellbeing)
Fri 27th March	10.00am 10.00am 10.00am 12 Noon	St Joseph St Edward Holy Cross OLQA	Don Boggenpoel RIP Funeral Service Lesley Garlick RIP
Sat 28th March	9.30am 5.00pm 6.00pm 6.30pm	Holy Cross OLQA St Joseph St Edward	Deena Donny (Health and Wellbeing) People of the Parish Mary Connolly & Family (Special Intention)
Sun 29th March Palm Sunday	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> Mary McCormack RIP Vince Curmi RIP anniversary Beatrice & George White; David, Laura, Eduardo Fernandes FM Joseph Paulo RIP Alan Jones RIP (7 th Anniversary)

CLERGY & PARISH OFFICE

Fr Raffaele Cossa (Parish Priest)

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Open on: Mon, Tue, Thu & Fri 9.30am – 5.30pm
Wed 9.30am-2.30pm

Parish Administrator: Sabrina Gardner

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Events & Communications Coordinator: Faye Harris

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Parish Safeguarding: please see Safeguarding posters in each of our churches for details of the Parish Safeguarding Reps.

Diocesan Safeguarding: rattfield@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk