



Our Vision is a Person, Our Vision is Jesus Christ 14th December 2025: THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

A TIME OF SILENCE TO ENJOY CHRISTMAS

'Men have no more time to understand anything. They buy things all ready-made at the shops. But there is no shop anywhere where one can buy friendship, and so men have no friends anymore'. These lines from *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry remind us of the importance of slowing down and creating space in our days to welcome what truly matters - without the hurry of sorting out life or solving problems. It is a space in which we receive nourishment for our soul.

When I meditate on the mystery of Christmas, one of the things that strikes me most is that Jesus chose to come in silence. This is not what we would expect from someone so important. Pop stars make noise when they begin their shows; fans sing anthems at the top of their voices to celebrate their team's entrance on the pitch; crowds cheer as a parade passes by. But Jesus came in silence, when all was calm, as the popular hymn reminds us - as if the whole earth were holding its breath. Why?

I think one reason was to show us the importance of preparation. That is why we have Advent, a time of four weeks when the Church invites us to rediscover the power of prayer, the practice through which we make space in our hearts for the coming of Christ. It is no coincidence that during this time we hear several times in the Church the words of the prophet Isaiah: "Prepare the way for the Lord."

It is precisely the experience of silence that becomes one of the best ways to prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ. It is not a silence of sleep or numbness. On the contrary, it is a silence of focus and attentiveness - a silence that awakens our most genuine and primordial needs. I remember a friend telling me a few years ago: "We lack silence and listening in our society because we claim that we already have, or will never have, what we truly need."

In the tradition of the Church, the practice of silence is not passivity but active listening. When, in silence, we listen and long for the life of God - when we make even a little space for this practice within our time, our tasks, our worries, joys, and sufferings - then our listening silence becomes the broad road by which the Lord enters.

How can we nurture an attitude of silence in the coming weeks? I would offer a few suggestions:

- **Find one moment during the day** to stop and read or listen to the Gospel of the day, as if those were words of Jesus addressed personally to you, in the concrete situations you are living.
- **During the day**, whether you are grateful or upset about something that has happened, whether you need help or feel uneasy, stop and say: "*Come, Lord Jesus, come*".
- **Finally**, making space for the Lord who is coming means welcoming him through those he sends us - especially the people we live with - by listening to what they want to tell us. It may seem like a simple suggestion, but if you take it seriously you will see that it is both demanding and fruitful.

Fr Luca

GEM OF THE WEEK

Letter of Bishop Philip on Priestly Vocation
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 17th December 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 14th December 2025 YEAR A - YEAR 2 - PSALTER WEEK 3

PSALM RESPONSE: COME, LORD, AND SAVE US.

1st Reading Isaiah 35:1-6a, 10 Psalm 146 (145) 2nd Reading James 5:7-10 Gospel Matthew 11:2-11

Sunday 21st December 2025 YEAR A - YEAR 2 - PSALTER WEEK 4

PSALM RESPONSE: LET THE LORD ENTER; HE IS THE KING OF GLORY.

1st Reading Isaiah 7:10-14 Psalm 24 (23) 2nd Reading Romans 1:1-7 Gospel Matthew 1:18-24

PARISH GROUPS



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. Next meeting Wednesday 17th December. If you would like to participate, please email Fr Matteo: mpagani@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

GIFT - NO MEETING on Tuesday 23rd December. Meetings recommence on 30th December.

Little Saints - St Andrews Church, North Baddesley every other Wednesday, 1pm-3pm. Next date: Wednesday 17th December.

Voice of Praise - Catholic Charismatic Prayer Group
On Thursday 18th December there will be Eucharistic Adoration at 8pm in Holy Cross instead of the usual meeting. For info please email: voiceofpraise.sswp@gmail.com

MESSAGES



Annual donations of gifts to Poitiers and Two Saints will take place on 13th and 14th December at St Edwards. Poitiers need donations of food including tins, packets and festive items. Two Saints need hats, scarves, gloves, socks and toiletries. All items to be put into labelled gift type bags and brought to St Edwards cloister as soon as possible. All donations will be brought up to the altar by children at the 9am Mass on Sunday 14th December. For more information please contact Clare Lasker 02380 252138.

Advent Penitential Services – Will be held at:

- St Andrew's on Friday 19th December at 7.30pm
 - Holy Cross on Saturday 20th December at 10am
 - OLQA on Tuesday 23rd December at 7.30pm.
- with the opportunity for individual confession.

Churches Together in North Baddesley - are holding Community Carol Services on Saturday 13th December at 10.30 am in the Baptist Church car park in Nutburn Road and Thursday 18th December at 3.20pm at Fleming Avenue precinct. Refreshments will be available after both services. All welcome to join in the singing. For more information please phone Ann Heslop on 07717362925.

Christmas Crib Collection 2025 - this year's donations will be given to Friends of the Holy Land as our brothers and sisters in Christ there are suffering greatly. Please **do not** use the yellow envelopes for this collection.

Christmas Eve Family Mass - we have an additional Family Mass at Holy Cross church at 6pm on 24th December.

Christmas Collection - Our Christmas Collection celebrates and gives thanks to our parish priests and all the dedication, guidance and care they give across our parish. This collection will be equally divided between Frs Raffaele, Luca, Mario, Matteo & Pietro. For your convenience there are several ways to make an offering:

- Loose cash or cheques in the collection baskets at Christmas Masses. Gift aid these donations using a yellow envelope;
- All donations for Christmas collections handed in outside Christmas masses must be clearly designated **Christmas offerings** and placed in yellow envelopes if you wish to gift aid the donations;
- Cheques made out to CDP St Swithun Wells with **Christmas** on the back;
- Bank transfer into the main parish account sort code 30-93-04; a/c 01786599 using the reference **Christmas**;
- Click on the 'donate' button on the Homepage of our website and then click 'Clergy Christmas Collection 2025'.

St Swithun Wells primary school Carol Service - it will be on Wednesday 17th December at 6pm in St Edwards. All parishioners invited.

CL Christmas Carols are back! - We will sing outdoors in front of the Swan Centre in Eastleigh at 2pm on Saturday 20th December. We will fundraise for AVSI which supports the Patriarchate of Jerusalem and helps people in Palestine. Rehearsals will be held in Holy Cross church:

- At 8pm on Wednesday 17th December; and
- At 1pm on Saturday 20th December.

MESSAGES CONTINUED



Romsey United Reformed Church Carol Service - you are invited to join them in their church for their annual Carols by Candlelight Service at 6.30pm on Saturday 20th December.

St Swithun Wells and OLOA Carol Services - everyone is very welcome to the annual Carol Services on Sunday 21st December at 3pm at St Swithun Wells and 6pm at OLOA. Come and have a good sing and enjoy mulled wine, mince pies and other festive refreshments! Please put the date in your diary.

The Vigil Mass of Christmas in Bishop's Waltham - An invitation is warmly extended to any young person who (with their families) would like to participate in leading this special Mass, the Vigil Mass of Christmas on Wednesday 24th December. Younger children may wish to dress up as one of the Nativity characters. Older children may wish to read a Bidding Prayer, etc. Please send names, contact numbers and ages of children to Fr Mario mtoma@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk or Elaine Hallam elainehallam@icloud.com

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

Eucharistic Ministers & Readers Retreats - Saturday 17th January at 2.30pm - 4pm in St Edward's for all Eucharistic Ministers of the parish. For readers, please save the date of Saturday 31st January - more details to follow.

Rimini Meeting - there will be a trip to Italy for young people aged 18 to 25 from 20th to 27th August 2026 to visit the Rimini Meeting, a cultural event organised by the Catholic Movement of Communion and Liberation. It is a week of conferences, exhibitions, etc; on different topics. All organised by volunteers. We will also be visiting Rome. The final cost will be £700 which includes: flight, accommodations, minibus hire and health insurance. Meals are not included. I would ask you to let us know by Sunday 11th January 2026 if you will be coming and to pay a deposit of £350. For further information please contact Fr Matteo mpagani@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Please pray for the response of the souls of Fr Shaun Budden and Fr John Buckley who served in our parish for many years and died recently.

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.

Presentation of 'At the Origin of the Christian Claim' by Fr Giussani - Thursday 15th January 2026 at 8pm in St Edward's Cloister. In this book, Luigi Giussani examines Christ's claim to identify himself with God, the ultimate answer to our search for the meaning of existence. *At the Origin of the Christian Claim* presents an intriguing argument supported with ample documentation from the gospels and other theological writings. A Zoom connection will be available for those who can't attend in person. You can request the link by emailing soc.sswp@gmail.com

Pilgrimage to Portugal (Lisbon and Fatima)

This will be from Thursday 30th April to Monday 4th May 2026. We will visit Lisbon, the birthplace of St Anthony, the site of the Apparitions of Our Lady in Fatima and Tomar. There will Mass every day and procession of candles in Fatima. The new price will be £995 per person based on shared accommodation. Breakfast and dinner included. Three-star hotel accommodation for two nights in Lisbon and two nights at Fatima. A coach will be booked to take pilgrims from Eastleigh to Gatwick with return, for an additional cost. For more information, visit our website, pick up a leaflet in the welcoming area or please email caroline.bubien@gmail.com We already have 30 people booked and we would like to reach 40. Please come along. The new deadline for booking is 15th January 2026.

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 in the new year. More details will follow. For queries, please contact Christina at accounts@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk

Volunteers Needed for Coffee Stop at Holy Cross - Coffee Stop has now finished for the year and will begin again on Thursday 15th January. We have lost eight volunteers this 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 jakeman1966@hotmail.co.uk or on 07809 596831.

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)	OLOA
	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 13th Dec <i>St Lucy</i>	9.30am 5.00pm 6.00pm 6.00pm 6.30pm	Holy Cross St Swithun Wells OLQA St Joseph St Edward	Ron Reynolds FM People of the Parish Alfred & Kathleen Allen RIP Tony Martin RIP (2nd Anniversary)
Sun 14th Dec <i>Third Sunday of Advent</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> Hazel Brown RIP (Anniversary) Denis Keefe RIP (Anniversary) Keith Small RIP Sean Kelly RIP (Anniversary) Gerard Carr RIP FM
Mon 15th Dec	9.30am	Holy Cross	Edvardas Numsedis RIP Gunta Navickiene (God's Protection)
Tues 16th Dec	10.00am 6.00pm	St Andrew St Edward	Tomase Michalski (9th Birthday and Thanksgiving)
Weds 17th Dec	9.30am 10.00am	Holy Cross St Edward	Flora Kelly RIP FM George, Gertrude & Mary Lawton RIP
Thurs 18th Dec	9.30am 12 Noon 6.00pm	Holy Cross OLQA St Joseph	Paddy McMahon RIP FM Sarah Veasey (Wellbeing)
Fri 19th Dec	10.00am 10.00am 12 Noon 7.30pm	St Joseph St Edward OLQA St Andrew	Gillian Meaney (Wellbeing) Patrick & Mary Burke FM Penitential Service
Sat 20th Dec	9.30am 10.00am 5.00pm 6.00pm 6.00pm 6.30pm	Holy Cross Holy Cross St Swithun Wells OLQA St Joseph St Edward	Penitential Service People of the Parish Dudley Roberts RIP FM Eileen Murphy & Family (Wellbeing) John Edward Milne RIP (10th Anniversary)
Sun 21st Dec <i>Fourth Sunday of Advent</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> Anna Biczko RIP Daniel Smith RIP (Anniversary) Marcelle Brunag RIP Rolf Tage Nordstrom RIP Mary & Theo Williams RIP Adelyn Alexa Binu (Birthday Intention)

CLERGY & PARISH OFFICE

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Parish Office Holy Cross Church, 53 Leigh Road, Eastleigh,
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Mon, Tues, Thurs & Fri 9.30am - 5.30pm; Wed 9.30am - 2.30pm

Parish Administrator: Vacancy
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Finance Administrator: Christina Geleji
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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