



Our Vision is a Person, Our Vision is Jesus Christ

20TH DECEMBER 2020: FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

A glimpse of light in the darkness

It is always a great joy to celebrate Christmas together. We take it for granted, but we should not, because Christmas remains an extraordinary day every year: God makes himself so close to the world that he becomes one of us. How much love is in this decision! God lowers himself, humiliates himself, comes to live on earth, becomes man like us.

This fact touches us deeply, it opens a glimpse of light in the darkness, 'The people that walked in darkness has seen a great light ... You have made their gladness greater, you have made their joy increase'. Yes, in the dark of so many days, in the darkness of fear, of the difficulties of life, of the selfishness that makes us close in on ourselves, a glimpse of light is inserted, it suddenly reaches us, 'For there is a child born for us, a son given to us.'

It is Jesus, Emmanuel, the God with us. We must not be sad, we must not let ourselves be cynical, we must not always look at ourselves, but raise our eyes, leave our fears, as the shepherds did, who went to Bethlehem and found Jesus.

Who are those who welcome Jesus? Mary, a young woman from Nazareth, a small and unknown country in Galilee, on the outskirts of the powerful Roman empire. Joseph, a carpenter we know almost nothing about. Shepherds, despised people who guarded their flock. They are humble, small, poor, unknown people. Jesus was not born in Jerusalem, or in Rome, or in one of the great cities of the time. His family came from Nazareth and Mary gave birth to him in Bethlehem, another small village, known mainly to shepherds.

Christmas clearly tells us that the force that changed the world comes from small and humble men and women, from a God who humbled himself for our love, not from the arrogance of people who were the masters and wanted to impose themselves on others.

The Lord asks us to be different. Everyone today can start a new life, have a new heart, can be reborn from Christmas to new feelings. 'Do not be afraid - said the angel to the shepherds - Listen, I bring you news of great joy, a joy to be shared by the whole people. Today in the town of David a saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.' 'Do not be afraid': nowadays we have many fears in our life, fear of the future, of the Coronavirus, of other diseases, of difficulties. Fear sometimes paralyzes us and makes us close in on ourselves. Do not be afraid, the angel of God tells us. Go to Bethlehem and you will find Jesus.

For Christmas you can find joy and peace. If we allow Jesus to act in our life, we will find that joy of the heart that we desire, we will love others, especially the lonely, the desperate, the poor. Let us make ourselves humble and small before Jesus in order to be great in love.

Father Marco

GEM OF THE WEEK



This week's GEM is a video by Fr Raffaele explaining the idea of a new parish centre - you can find this on our homepage. If anyone has suggestions for GEMs please contact website.sswp@gmail.com

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

LITURGICAL INDICATIONS



Sunday 20th December 2020: Year B - Year 1 - Psalter Week: 4

PSALM RESPONSE: I WILL SING FOR EVER OF YOUR LOVE, O LORD.

1st reading: 1st reading: 2nd Book of Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16 Psalm: 88 2nd reading: Letter of St Paul to the Romans 16:25-27 Gospel: Luke 1:26-38

READINGS FOR SUNDAY 27TH DECEMBER (THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH):

1st reading: Genesis 15:1-6; 21:1-3 Psalm: 104 2nd reading: Letter to the Hebrews 11:8, 11-12, 17-19
Gospel: Luke 2:22-40

PARISH GROUPS



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

We are now on our Christmas Break. We normally meet:

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

Tues, 4.15pm-5.45pm 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) - We are now on our Christmas break. 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)

We are now on our Christmas break, we normally 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 Group - now on our Christmas break. We will resume in the new year, date to be advised.

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

Changes to Mass

There will be no morning Mass on Thursday 24th December. Christmas Masses from Holy Cross will be live-streamed.

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.

For your convenience there are several ways of making these offerings:

- Loose cash or cheques in the collection basket;
- Cheques made out to **PRCDTR St Swithun Wells** with Christmas on the back;
- Bank transfer into the main parish account sort code **30-93-04**; a/c **01786599** using ref Christmas;
- If you are a tax payer and wish to gift aid your offering you can use the yellow envelopes provided in the reception area of each church. Ensure all relevant information is included so we can reclaim the gift aid on your behalf.

The Diocese has decreed that collections made on 27th December should be counted as Christmas Offerings.

MESSAGES



A New Parish Centre

In this week's newsletter you will find an insert giving details about an idea for a new Centre for our Parish. Spare copies of this insert are available in our churches. A video by Fr Raffaele explaining the idea of the new parish centre is also available on our website. Please have a look.

Parish Office

The Office will be closed from Christmas Day and will re-open on Monday 4th January.

We would like to wish all of our parishioners peace, joy and health over Christmas and throughout 2021!



MESSAGES CONTINUED



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

Parishioners please remember to:

- Arrive early (at least 15 minutes before Mass starts);
- Wear a mask and use the hand gel provided;
- Maintain social distancing at all times;
- If you want to sit together e.g. two family groups who are in a bubble, the stewards will try to do their best **but you MUST arrive together** as it will not be possible to reserve seats;
- Please remove your mask before receiving Communion;

- During Communion - if you or someone you are with does not wish to receive Communion it is important that they still leave their seat and join the Communion line for a blessing and follow the route back to their seat with everyone else;
- Finally please be guided by the Stewards.

St Swithun Wells Primary School Message

We have created a video in place of our annual carol service. It would be wonderful if you could join us and appreciate all the hard work put in by our children. Please follow this link to the video: <https://youtu.be/9-4gJyZ77cA>

St Peter and the Winchester Martyrs Parish Recruiting for a Parish Administration Manager

This is for a full time role (35hrs/week) based in the Pastoral Centre in Jewry Street, Winchester. The closing date for applications is Midday on 11th January 2021. For the full advert and job description please go to: <https://www.catholicwinchester.org.uk/>

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

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).
- **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).

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

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)

Tuesdays:	6.30pm-7.30pm	St Edward's
Saturdays:	10.00am-10.30am	Holy Cross
	5.30pm-6.00pm	St Joseph's
Sundays:	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

Tuesdays:	Fr Raffaele, 3.30pm-5.30pm, Parish Office, Holy Cross, Eastleigh.
Wednesdays:	Fr Luca, 4.30pm-6.30pm, Parish Office, Holy Cross, Eastleigh.
Fridays:	Fr Raffaele, 11.30am-12.30pm, Parish Office (26 Abbey Water), Romsey
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 19th Dec	9.30am 5.00pm* 6.00pm* 6.30pm*	Holy Cross St Swithun Wells St Joseph St Edward	Flora Kelly FM Terri Wardner (Sick) Diana Schimmer (RIP) In Thanksgiving for Wellbeing (Special Intention)
Sun 20th Dec <i>Fourth Sunday of Advent</i>	8.30am 9.00am 9.00am 9.30am 10.30am 11.00am 11.00am	Holy Cross St Edward St Andrew OLQA St Edward Holy Cross (Also Streamed) St Joseph	<i>Polska Msza Święta</i> Dudley Roberts FM Lorenzo Cossa RIP Josephine Fernandez RIP Special Intention
Mon 21st Dec	9.30am	Holy Cross	Antonio Cicu FM Andrew McGinley (Special Intention)
Tues 22nd Dec	10.00am 6.00pm	St Andrew St Edward	Tarrant Family (Special Intention)
Wed 23rd Dec	9.30am 10.00am	Holy Cross St Edward	Elizabeth Esther Levey FM Anna-Claire Anthraper (Thanksgiving)
Thurs 24th Dec <i>The Nativity of the Lord</i>	5.00pm 5.00pm 6.00pm 6.30pm 6.30pm 7.00pm 9.00pm 11.00pm Midnight	Holy Cross (Also Streamed) St Joseph St Swithun Wells St Edward OLQA St Andrew St Edward St Joseph Holy Cross (Also Streamed)	The Seddon Family's Intentions The Layzell Family's Intentions Mike McCarthy (Special Intention) Fr Louis Catterall SMM (Anniversary) Nayfe Tanos Nakuzzi RIP
Fri 25th Dec <i>The Nativity of the Lord</i>	8.30am 9.00am 9.00am 9.30am 10.30am 11.00am 11.00am	Holy Cross St Andrew St Edward OLQA St Edward Holy Cross (Also Streamed) St Joseph	<i>Polska Msza Święta</i> Margaret Martindale RIP Mrs Edward Christian FM Andy Breen (3rd Anniversary) Eamon & Kathleen Hughes RIP; Mark Varney RIP Fr Louis Catterall SMM (Anniversary)
Sat 26th Dec <i>St Stephen</i>	8.30am 9.30am 11.00am 5.00pm 6.00pm 6.30pm	Holy Cross OLQA Holy Cross St Swithun Wells St Joseph St Edward	<i>Polska Msza Święta</i> James Rice RIP Patrick & Alice Neary RIP Wilson Family (In Thanksgiving)
Sun 27th Dec <i>The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph</i>	8.30am 9.00am 9.00am 9.30am 10.30am 11.00am 11.00am	Holy Cross St Edward St Andrew OLQA St Edward Holy Cross (Also Streamed) St Joseph	<i>Polska Msza Święta</i> Margarita Cedric Charles Harris FM Robert Twigg RIP Anniversary