



Our Vision is a Person, Our Vision is Jesus Christ
17th DECEMBER 2023: THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Gaudete: Rejoice!

This, which we are beginning, is the third and in fact the last week of Advent, as the fourth week this year is reduced to Sunday only. This third Sunday is called 'gaudete', a Latin word meaning rejoice. This joy is also indicated by the pink candle, which is lit on this very Sunday.

I have been in England for almost a month now, overcoming all the bureaucratic hurdles to be able to stay and work here without restrictions, so for me this Sunday and this period in general is definitely a time of rejoicing. But unfortunately not all people are experiencing good times in their lives. In different parts of the world there is war, in other parts there is hunger. There are places where people's freedom, especially freedom of religion, is restricted or even denied. Or simply someone is experiencing a difficult illness that does not allow them to live well. In short, if I rejoice because things are going well for me here in England, there are many other people who actually have little reason to rejoice, even, I imagine, among the faithful in our own parish.

Nevertheless, the Church, which is wise, spurs us on to joy. The joy, in fact, that the Church wants us to experience this Sunday, is not a worldly joy, it is not a nice plate of food, it is not the joy of a nice outing or even the excitement of winning some sporting competition. The joy we are called to experience today, is a joy that comes from being aware of what we are about to celebrate. It is a joy that comes from becoming aware of the extraordinary grace we will receive in a few days time. It is the joy we experience by remembering the great works that God has done and is doing for mankind.

So whatever, I insist whatever, situation we find ourselves in, we should in the depths of our hearts rejoice at the news that Jesus is about to come, that God has become man to be with us and save us. St Paul in this Sunday's second reading tells us, 'Be happy at all times, pray constantly, and for all things give thanks to God'. These two things, prayer and joy, go closely together: the more we pray, the more our joy grows, because we become more aware of where to place the hope of our lives.

Therefore, as we prepare for the great event of Christmas, let us pray to Jesus to give us the joy that comes from His company, whatever the situation we are experiencing.

Fr Mario

GEM OF THE WEEK



This week's GEM is the "Christmas Videoposter by Communion and Liberation" - you can find this on our homepage. 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 20th December 2023**, please email your messages/notices to: office@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk

LITURGICAL INDICATIONS



Sunday 17th December 2023: Year B - Year 2 - Psalter Week: 3

PSALM RESPONSE: MY SOUL REJOICES IN MY GOD.

1st reading Isaiah 61:1-2a,10-11 Psalm Lk1 2nd reading 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24 Gospel John 1:6-8,19-28

Sunday 24th December 2023: Year B - Year 2 - Psalter Week: 4

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

1st reading Samuel 7:1-5,8b-12,14a,16 Psalm 88 2nd reading Romans 16:25-27 Gospel Luke 1:26-38

PARISH GROUPS



Growing In Faith Together Group

Tuesdays 10.15am to approx. 11.45am in the Holy Cross Resource Centre. On 19th December Dcn Paul Owen will be giving us a talk. All are welcome!

Fellowship Group - Wednesday 20th December, 7pm at St Swithun Wells Church, Fair Oak. We continue our Advent Bible study. This week is, "The Power of

Prayer". Everyone is welcome and if you wish to join us on Zoom please contact Peterbaggott@aol.com for the link.

Knitting Club - third Tuesday of the month, from 2pm-4pm in the Holy Cross Resource Centre. If you would like to join us for a knit and cup of tea please come along, all levels of knitting ability welcome!

MESSAGES



Advent Adoration at OLOA

Fridays: Mass will be at 10.30am, with Adoration from 11.15am-11.45am followed by soup and rolls in the Hall.

Bible Studies For the Gospels in Advent at OLOA

an ecumenical Advent course open to all on Wednesdays at 7.30pm in the Hall.

Advent Penitential Services

These will be held across our parish, with the opportunity for individual confession:

Saturday 16th December, 11am – Holy Cross
A number of priests will be available.

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 to make an offering:

- Loose cash or cheques in the collection basket;
- 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 green 'donate' button on the Homepage of our website and then click 'Clergy Christmas Collection 2023'. This will take you to a Give as You live page:
<https://donate.giveasyoulive.com/fundraising/st-swithun-wells-catholic-parish-christmas-collection-2023>
- 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. **Please write "Christmas Offering" on the envelope** - this can be placed in any collection between now and Christmas.

Important: As Sunday 24th December in the morning is also the Fourth Sunday of Advent the normal offertory for the parish will take place. Please, if you are intending to make a Christmas Offering and hand it in early (at one of the morning Masses) then make sure you put it in an envelope clearly marked 'Christmas Offering' otherwise it will be counted towards the collection for the parish and will not go to the priests.

Advent Carol Service at OLOA, Bishop's Waltham, on Sunday 17th December at 6pm. All are welcome. Please join us for a social afterwards in the hall!

Message from the Knights of St Columba

To welcome in Christmas, the Knights of St Columba will be having festive drinks and nibbles **after the 6.30pm Mass at St Edward's on Saturday 16th December.** All parishioners are welcome.

Street Carols for AVSI 2023 - Sat 23rd December Supporting Children in Palestine

During this time of Christmas we want to bring people in the streets of Eastleigh the joy that springs from receiving the good news that God is not indifferent to our lives, but He is with us. With "Street Carols for AVSI" we want to sing classic Carols in the main square of Eastleigh whilst raising money for AVSI, an international charity that this year is supporting people, especially children, in Palestine. We invite children, parents and everyone who would like to be part of this event, to join the choir.

Programme for Saturday 23rd December:

11am: Meet at Holy Cross Church to practise some Christmas Carols;

1pm: Go to Eastleigh main square and sing. The event will finish around 2pm.

Romsey United Reformed Church invite us to their annual Candlelight Carols Service, in their church on **Saturday 23rd December at 6.30pm.** It is always a beautiful, reflective service. Do come if you can.

MESSAGES CONTINUED



Christmas Crib Offerings 2023

In the Diocese, our annual Christmas Crib offerings are given alternately one year to the Friends of the Holy Land and one year to the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre. This year our Christmas Crib offerings will go to Friends of the Holy Land. Thank you in advance for your generosity!

St Swithun Wells, Fair Oak - Christmas Card CAFOD

Collection: We are encouraging everyone to send one Christmas Card to church friends, and place it on our special noticeboard in St Swithun Wells Church. You can donate what you would have spent on cards and postage to CAFOD World Gifts, by placing your contribution in the CAFOD collecting box by the notice board where the cards are. Thank you, Trisha (02380 693669).

New Year Afternoon Tea for all our Senior Parishioners across the Parish on **Sunday 14th January at 2.30pm at St Swithun Wells Church, Fair Oak.** If you consider yourself to be a Senior Citizen then come along and enjoy delicious food, raffle and entertainment. Places are limited to 60 people and need to be booked in advance. To book a place please contact Pat Baggott by phone, text or email, details below. We do not make a charge for this event but would ask for donations on the day to help cover expenses. We also need volunteers to make scones and cakes if you are able to help out in this way please contact Pat to discuss. Contact details: Pat Baggott 07801 454400 or email baggott.pm@gmail.com.

Upcoming Funeral

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Briony Burch, a former teacher at St Swithun Wells Primary School, who has died. Briony's Funeral Mass will take place at **St Theresa's, Totton on Thursday 4th January at 11.15am.**

Sacramental Preparation for Adults (RCIA)

If you would like to be baptised, confirmed or received into the Catholic Church (or know more about the Catholic faith) please email Deacon Paul Owen: powen@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk or alternatively please speak to a priest.

St Swithun Wells Prayer Link

Please contact me if you have any requests, queries or comments. *Marion*
marionbirtles@gmail.com

ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Tues: St Edward - after Mass (6.30pm-7.30pm)

Wednesday: Holy Cross - after Mass (10.00am-11.00am)

Thursday: St Joseph - before Mass (5.30pm-6.00pm)

CONFESSION (SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION)

Tuesday:	6.30pm-7.30pm (after Mass)	St Edward
Tuesday:	9.30am-10.00am (before Mass)	St Andrew
Saturday:	10.00am-10.30am (after Mass)	Holy Cross
	10am or by appointment	OLQA
	1.30pm-2.30pm & 5.30pm-6pm	St Joseph
Sunday:	8.30am-9.00am (before Mass)	St Edward
	8.30am-9.00am (before Mass)	St Andrew

Planned Giving 2023-2024

This is the last weekend that the collection boxes will be available in the churches to collect completed Direct Debit forms. Please remember you can also choose to donate by standing order via online banking but if you choose this method, please complete a gift aid declaration form. These are available in each Church.

Details of the ways you can donate are shown below.

1. To set up a new Direct Debit (DD), complete the form provided and return to boxes provided in each church, or a member of clergy, or your Gift Aid coordinator, or the parish office. Please do not post the forms directly to the diocese.
2. To give by Standing Order (SO). The forms for a new SO are available at each church and on the parish website. Complete the SO form and a gift aid declaration form if you are a UK taxpayer. Then contact your Gift Aid coordinator details below and on the parish website.
3. If you wish to increase your DD or SO donation, you do not need a new form, simply contact your Gift Aid coordinator again details below.

St Andrews & St Joseph's - *David Martin* (01794 511883) giftaid.sjsa@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk

St Edward's - *Mike Greenslade* (02380 262870) giftaid.sea@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk
Donna Scappaticci (02380 613845) giftaid.seb@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk

Holy Cross, St Swithun Wells, Our Lady Queen of the Apostles - *Pat Baggott* (02380 694060) giftaid.hcolqa@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk

Communication Group

We welcome people who are looking for support in improving their communication following Stroke, Parkinson's or Dementia. We meet at St Swithun Wells Church, Fair Oak. The next meeting will be on **Wednesday 20th December at 2pm.** Please contact Kathy East for more information Kathyeast361@gmail.com or mobile 07928050948

Parish Office Closures over the Christmas period

Please note, Fiona's last day in the office before Christmas is Wed 20th December. The Office will be closed on the following days: Mon 25th, Tues 26th, Wed 27th, Fri 29th, Sat 30th, Sun 31st December, Monday 1st & Tuesday 2nd Jan. Fiona will be in the office on Thursday 28th December and a volunteer will come in to check voicemails on Tuesday 2nd Jan. For any urgent enquiries over the festive period please contact the priests on 02380 612430. Parish Newsletter - the next newsletter to be published after the 24th December two week edition will be the 7th January 2024.

TIMES A PRIEST WILL BE AVAILABLE TO MEET

Tuesdays:	Fr Raffaele, 3.30pm-5.30pm, Holy Cross Resource Centre, Eastleigh
Wednesdays:	Fr Luca not on 20th Dec , 3.30pm-5.30pm, Holy Cross Resource Centre
Saturdays:	Fr Mario, 2.30pm-4.30pm, Romsey Parish Office (26 Abbey Water), Romsey

MASS TIMES FOR OUR CHURCH COMMUNITIES

DATE	TIME	CHURCH	MASS INTENTION
Saturday 16th December	9.30am 5.00pm 6.00pm 6.00pm 6.30pm	Holy Cross St Swithun Wells OLOA St Joseph St Edward	Maurizio Sabatini RIP Marion Lloyd (In thanksgiving) Edward McGrath & Family Richard Bradley RIP 4th Anniversary
Sunday 17th December <i>Third Sunday of Advent</i>	8.30am 9.00am 9.00am 9.30am 11.00am 11.00am	Holy Cross St Edward St Andrew OLOA Holy Cross (also livestreamed) St Joseph	<i>Polska Msza Święta</i> Patrick & Mary Burke FM Jesus Ocaya & Francisco Villaver RIP Mike Walsh RIP Sean Kelly RIP Anniversary
Monday 18th December	9.30am	Holy Cross	Paddy McMahan RIP FM Flora Kelly RIP FM
Tuesday 19th December	10.00am 6.00pm	St Andrew St Edward	Loretta (Special Intention)
Wed 20th December	9.30am 9.30am 10.00am	Holy Cross OLOA St Edward	Dudley Roberts RIP FM Clare Ashcroft RIP
Thurs 21st December	9.30am 12 Noon 6.00pm	Holy Cross OLOA St Joseph	Molly & George Quigley RIP Peggy Carmody (Wellbeing)
Friday 22nd December	10.00am 10.00am <u>10.30am</u>	St Joseph St Edward <u>OLOA</u>	For Taks & Norma in Thanksgiving Cardinal Thomas Winning RIP
Saturday 23rd December	9.30am 5.00pm 6.00pm 6.00pm 6.30pm	Holy Cross St Swithun Wells OLOA St Joseph St Edward	Antonio Cicu FM Ronnie Castelino RIP For Jean Prescott's family, living and deceased Sheila & Tony Walker RIP and their deceased family
Sunday 24th December <i>Fourth Sunday of Advent</i> <i>The Nativity of the Lord (Vigil)</i>	9.00am 9.00am 9.30am 11.00am 11.00am <u>6.00pm</u> <u>6.00pm (carols from 5.30pm)</u> <u>7.00pm</u> <u>7.00pm</u> <u>8.00pm</u> <u>11.00pm (carols from 10.30pm)</u> <u>12 Midnight (carols from 11.30pm)</u>	St Edward St Andrew OLOA Holy Cross (also livestreamed) St Joseph <u>St Swithun Wells</u> <u>St Edward</u> <u>St Andrew</u> <u>Holy Cross</u> <u>OLOA</u> <u>St Joseph</u> <u>Holy Cross</u>	Husband & family of Moira Knapman Simere Anakwenze (Birthday Intentions) Elizabeth Nash (Special Intention) People of the Parish Magdalen Sleeman RIP Marie Gray (Wellbeing) For Justice & Peace in the World <i>Polska Msza Święta</i> John Gare RIP Edvardas Numsedis RIP
Monday 25th December <i>The Nativity of the Lord</i>	<u>9.00am</u> <u>9.00am</u> <u>9.30am</u> <u>11.00am</u> <u>11.00am</u>	<u>St Edward</u> <u>St Andrew</u> <u>OLOA</u> <u>Holy Cross</u> (also livestreamed) <u>St Joseph</u>	Mrs Edward Christian FM Andy Breen RIP Peter Penrose & Family (Wellbeing)