



## ***Our Vision is a Person, Our Vision is Jesus Christ*** **7th December 2025: SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

### **THE SEASON OF THE 'YES'**

This Sunday we celebrate the Second Sunday of Advent, and the Liturgy introduces us to the figure of John the Baptist. He is the one chosen to prepare the way of the Lord and to help people turn their hearts back to God.

The Gospel of Matthew uses strong and striking expressions: *"Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand". "Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight". "Bear fruit in keeping with repentance"*. John reminds us of the need to say yes to God in order to be saved.

We can truly say that Advent is the season of the Yes. John the Baptist said Yes to God; the Virgin Mary said Yes to the Lord; Joseph also said Yes with generosity and trust. We too are invited to enter this great river of yeses, joining all those who have opened their hearts to God.

At this point, I would like to explore this theme of the Yes and highlight three essential experiences of yes that must be both said and received:

#### **1. The Yes we need to receive**

We can only say yes when we feel accepted and loved - when we sense that someone has already said yes to us. This is the experience of being valued and recognising that we were created out of love.

#### **2. The Yes we must say each morning to reality**

Each day we are invited to say a fresh yes to life, to reality, and to the people around us. Every morning we find ourselves surrounded by situations we did not choose. Just as Mary's Yes brought forth the Saviour of the world, so our Yes to reality - our peaceful acceptance of it - gives birth to a new day. To say yes is to welcome the circumstances the Lord places before us.

#### **3. The Yes to our desire to change the world**

This Yes allows us to engage with reality and seek to improve it. It is the Yes that motivates us to build relationships and collaborate with others in order to create a better world. The Lord calls each of us to say Yes to a particular mission that helps to build His Kingdom. He asks for our time, our energy, and our dedication. Our Yes becomes our vocation.

In conclusion, we must first experience the love of God in order to accept reality and to offer our talents in service of His Kingdom. The Virgin Mary is the perfect example of this dynamic: she lived fully immersed in God's love, and when the moment came she offered her peaceful and trusting Yes, knowing that accepting God's will would bear abundant fruit.

Last weekend, Fr Donato, a superior of the Fraternity of St Charles and a missionary in Taiwan for ten years, visited our parish. I would like to share a few lines from his talk, which help us reflect more deeply on the Yes that is given and received.

Speaking about his friend YiHong, Fr Donato said *"YiHong once told me: 'I had a difficult life and made many mistakes that left me sad and alone. But despite everything, Jesus chose me and saved me. By encountering the Church, I finally found a home - a family that is God's forgiveness for me'".*

He also quoted Xiaoping, a convert *"Before becoming Christian, I couldn't even sit at the table with my family without hating them. Now it's not like that anymore. In the Church I learned forgiveness. I was once a slave to resentment; now I am finally free"*. Fr Donato concluded his talk by saying *"Today is the first day of Advent. In Taiwan, in England, in Eastleigh and throughout the world, many people are still waiting for Christ. Let us help one another to live as true Christians - that is, as missionaries"*.

**Fr Raffaele**

### **GEM OF THE WEEK**

Talk by Fr Donato Contuzzi

If anyone has suggestions for GEMs please contact [website.sswp@gmail.com](mailto:website.sswp@gmail.com)



For the next Newsletter, items should be received into the Parish Office by **10am on Wednesday 10th December 2025**, 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 7th December 2025 YEAR A - YEAR 2 - PSALTER WEEK 2

PSALM RESPONSE: IN HIS DAYS SHALL JUSTICE FLOURISH, AND GREAT PEACE FOR EVER.

1st Reading Isaiah 11:1-10 Psalm 72 (71) 2nd Reading Romans 15: 4-9 Gospel Matthew 3:1-12

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

## PARISH GROUPS



### Communion & Liberation Groups

School of Community meets weekly at 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. Every 2nd and 4th Friday of each month at 6pm in the hall of Our Lady Queen of Apostles church. Next date: Friday 12th December.

Little Saints - St Andrews Church, North Baddesley every other Wednesday, 1pm-3pm. A community group for families who want to educate their children by looking to Jesus Christ as the source of all that is true, beautiful, just and good. We aim to come together, connect and build lasting friendships. Next date: Wednesday 17th December.

### 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! 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](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 17th December. If you would like to participate, please email Fr Matteo: [mpagani@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:mpagani@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

## MESSAGES



St Swithun Wells Primary School Nativity - Nativity for the Parish on Monday 8th December at 1.30pm in our school hall. The Parish is warmly invited to join us.

Annual Christmas Fayre at St Edward - on Saturday 6th and Sunday 7th December after Masses, in St Edward's Cloister. There will be a hamper, raffle and sales of seasonal cakes and gifts. All proceeds will go directly to CAFOD, to support the needy in all areas of the world. For more details phone Clare Lasker 02380 252138.

OLOA Children's Christmas Party - We will be holding a party in the hall, for the children on Sunday 7th December from 3pm to 4.30pm. There will be dancing, games and prizes and a visit from a very special visitor! If your children/grandchildren would like to attend please sign up as soon as possible.

Do you own a drone? - We are looking to create a video banner featuring our beautiful churches, to put on our parish website, and would love to collaborate with a parishioner for this project. If you own a drone and are interested in helping, please contact [events@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk](mailto:events@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk)

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.

Upcoming Funeral - Please pray for the repose of the soul of Maureen Woolley and for her family. Maureen's Funeral Mass takes place on Thursday 11th December at 11am in St Joseph's church to be followed by burial at Woodley Cemetery, Romsey.

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 last week.

Christmas Flowers - If you would like to contribute towards the flowers & decorations that will be displayed in all of our churches there will be a second collection on the weekend of 6th and 7th December.



**Parish Christmas Party - Sunday 14th December, 1pm-4pm at St Swithun Wells Primary School**

**Menu:** Main - Chicken with vegetables, a vegetarian option will be available and a Dessert. Please bring your own drinks.

**Price:** £10 per person, children 10 and under free. If you are able to pay more, please do so.

**Tickets** can be bought for cash in our churches (in the welcoming areas) this weekend. In Holy Cross, St Edward's and OLQA you can pay by contactless if you would prefer. A limited number of tickets are available. The deadline for purchasing tickets is **Sunday 7th December. Admission by ticket only.** Christmas jumpers and fancy dress actively encouraged!

**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.

**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 Tuesday 9th December;
- At 8pm on Wednesday 17th December; and
- At 1pm on Saturday 20th December.

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

**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.

**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)

**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 or please email [caroline.bubien@gmail.com](mailto: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.**

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

**Vacancy for St Swithun Wells Parish Administrator**

**Part-time 15 hours per week to be split over three days** - working pattern to be agreed at interview.

**Salary £9,523.80.** Are you an experienced Administrator looking for a role where you can make a real difference? St Swithun Wells Parish is seeking a Parish Secretary to be working in the Parish office, Holy Cross Church, Eastleigh and reporting to the Parish Priest. A full job description can be found on our parish website. Please send a CV and covering letter outlining your relevant experience and reasons for applying for the role to HR at:

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

Please state Parish Administrator SSW in the headline of your email. **Closing date for applications: Sunday 7th December 2025.**

## MASS TIMES FOR OUR CHURCH COMMUNITIES

DATE	TIME	CHURCH	MASS INTENTION
Sat 6th Dec	9.30am 5.00pm 6.00pm 6.00pm 6.30pm	Holy Cross St Swithun Wells OLQA St Joseph St Edward	Gregory Carey RIP Fr John (Special Intention)  Patrick & Elizabeth Fearon RIP Hazel Brown RIP (Anniversary)
Sun 7th Dec <i>Second 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> Mrs Edward Christian FM Norma & Eustess Guia (Wedding Anniversary) People of the Parish Michael John Newth RIP Special Intention Neil Lewis (Wellbeing)
Mon 8th Dec <i>The Immaculate Conception of Mary</i>	9.30am	Holy Cross	Smyth Family FM Ellen Lane RIP FM Special Intention
Tues 9th Dec	10.00am 6.00pm	St Andrew St Edward	Mrs Edward Christian FM
Weds 10th Dec <i>St Swithun Wells</i>	9.30am 10.00am	Holy Cross St Edward	Angela Mary Thompson RIP (Wedding Anniversary) Patricia Farrell RIP
Thurs 11th Dec	9.30am 12 Noon 6.00pm	Holy Cross OLQA St Joseph	Luis Castro RIP FM  Eileen Dowling (Wellbeing)
Fri 12th Dec	10.00am 10.00am 12 Noon	St Joseph St Edward OLQA	Special Intention Paul Bowman RIP
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 and 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>  Denis Keefe RIP (Anniversary)  Keith Small RIP Sean Kelly RIP Anniversary Gerard Carr RIP FM

### 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)  
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Fr Mario Toma (Assistant Priest)  
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Fr Matteo Pagani (Assistant Priest)  
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**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: Vacancy**  
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)