

# NEWSLETTER



**8<sup>th</sup> March 2026: THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT**

Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth Registered Charity N. 1199568

## HERE COMES THE HEALER

We all carry wounds. Some come from our own choices – moments when we embraced darkness instead of light. Others come from the choices of those around us, leaving scars on our hearts. The reasons are many: betrayal, lies, lack of goodness, understanding, or trust, hatred, distress, social pressure...

Today, society seems to deal with wounds in two ways: by overexposing them or by hiding them.

Many contemporary songs feel like confessions addressed to an unknown, deeply desired healer. Yet so much emphasis is often placed on the wounds themselves that there is little room left for hope. What remains is simply the celebration of "me and my wounds."

At the same time, we see efforts to hide suffering. Consider how society treats the elderly, as if we must eliminate suffering and imperfection altogether and create a person who sees himself as God – the master of his own life.

A wound is, in a sense, a hole – an absence. But it is also an opening, a temporary space waiting to be filled. Overexposing wounds and hiding them are two sides of the same coin: both reflect a world that sees human brokenness merely as lack, without recognizing it as an opening toward encounter with the Healer.

In the Catholic Church, we are now in the forty days of Lent, a time of preparation for contemplating the great event of Easter. The story of the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus Christ reminds us that our wounds are both acknowledged and healed. Jesus did not avoid them; He carried them in His own body, knowing they could be transformed. He showed us that the answer to the absence of goodness is His presence.

After His Resurrection, Jesus appears in His very body – still bearing wounds, yet fully healed. From these wounds, instead of blood, light pours forth.

Jesus saw His wounds neither as something to celebrate nor to hide, but as openings for the light of life to enter. By contemplating His Passion and Resurrection, we learn to view our own wounds not simply as voids, but as invitations to turn toward the One who heals us through His friendship.

May this season of Lent be an opportunity to follow Jesus more closely, so that the light of His healing power may illuminate our lives and the lives of those we love.

**Fr Luca**



### GEM OF THE WEEK

read on our website: [Pope Leo "Message for Lent 2026"](http://Pope Leo 'Message for Lent 2026')

For the next Newsletter, items should be received into the Parish Office by 10am on Tuesday 10th March 2026, 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: [stswithunwellsparish.org.uk/financesdonations](http://stswithunwellsparish.org.uk/financesdonations)**

## LITURGICAL INDICATIONS



**Sunday 8th March 2026** YEAR A - YEAR 2 - PSALTER WEEK 3

**PSALM RESPONSE:** O THAT TODAY YOU WOULD LISTEN TO HIS VOICE! 'HARDEN NOT YOUR HEARTS'.

**1st Reading** Exodus 17:3-7 **Psalm** 95(94) **2nd Reading** Romans 5:1-2, 5-8 **Gospel** John 4:5-42

**Sunday 15th March 2026** YEAR A - YEAR 2 - PSALTER WEEK 4

**PSALM RESPONSE:** THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD; THERE IS NOTHING I SHALL WANT.

**1st Reading** 1st Sam 16:1b,6-7,10-13a **Psalm** 23(22) **2nd Reading** Ephes 5:8-14 **Gospel** John 9:1-41

## PARISH GROUPS



**Awake My Soul** - A group for young adults (aged 18-25) in the parish. We meet every other **Wednesday from 7 pm 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 11th march**. If you would like to participate, please email [mpagani@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:mpagani@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

### **School of Christianity in Bishop's Waltham**

A course about the basis of the faith using the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Next meeting will be **Friday 13th & 27th March at 6pm in the hall of Our Lady Queen of Apostles Church.**

### **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 the first Thursday of each month**, we will hold a Charismatic Adoration, which will also take place in the church at 7.45pm. Whether you are new or experienced in charismatic prayer, all are warmly welcome! For info please email: [voiceofpraise.sswp@gmail.com](mailto:voiceofpraise.sswp@gmail.com)

## MESSAGES



**Lent Parish Retreat** - We will hold a Parish Retreat for Lent on **Saturday 7th March, 2.30pm-4.30pm at St Edward**. Open to everyone. There will be a talk about Lent, some time for private prayer in the church and a time for questions and sharing of thoughts.

### **Last Mass at St Swithun Wells Church**

**The last Mass at St Swithun Wells Church** will be celebrated on **Saturday 14th March at 5pm**. We warmly invite parishioners from across the parish to join us on that day as we give thanks for the many graces received there: baptisms, marriages, funerals, and countless quiet moments of prayer. We will have a farewell gathering after Mass. Please stay and join us to chat, share memories and exchange contact details etc. so that we do not lose contact with our community.

**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.

**Upcoming Funeral** - Please pray for the repose of the soul of Paul Gardner and for his family. Funeral Mass takes place on **Tuesday 17th at 11.30am March at St Josephs**.

### **Weekdays Masses & Eucharistic Adoration**

One of the pillars of Lent is prayer. A simple way to do this is to attend Mass on weekdays or to participate in one of our Eucharistic Adorations. On Tuesdays in St Edward for example, there is Mass at 6pm with Eucharistic Adoration afterwards. On Wednesdays there is Mass in Holy Cross at 9.30am followed by Eucharistic Adoration. At St Joseph there is Mass every Thursday at 6pm and Eucharistic Adoration one hour before from 5pm-6pm. At OLQA there is Eucharistic Adoration (after Mass) at 12.30pm every Thursday.

### **Cultural Friday - 13th March at 7pm at St Edwards.**

We will listen to some pieces of classical music linked to Lent (Mozart and Gabriel Fauré) and we will also be introduced to some paintings that help us to deepen our Lenten journey (Caravaggio and Fra Angelico). Cheese and wine from 7pm. The presentation starts at 7.30pm. Suggested donation £3.

**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.

### **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 two Sundays, 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.

## MESSAGES CONTINUED



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

**Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March, 4.00pm at OLQA**

**Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March, 7.30pm at St Andrew**

**Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> 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).

**Good Companions** - Our next gathering will be held jointly with the CAFOD Lenten lunch at **12noon on Friday 20th March in the Cloister at St Edward**. All are welcome to join us. Please call/message Tony Wilson on 07933 963991 if you have any queries. Looking forward to seeing you.

**OLQA Social event** - An evening of music with the band Shantyhead, **Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> 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.

**Safeguarding Coordinator Needed - Holy Cross Church** - Holy Cross Church is seeking a volunteer to serve as Safeguarding Coordinator. This is an important role in helping to ensure that our church remains a safe and welcoming place for children, young people, and vulnerable adults. The coordinator acts as a point of contact within the church and works alongside the diocesan safeguarding team. The volunteer must be a regular member of the congregation at Holy Cross Church. If you are interested speak to Fr Raffaele or contact the parish office: [office@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk](mailto:office@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk)

**Volunteer Property Manager(s) Needed**  
Our parish is seeking volunteers who may be interested in serving as a Property Manager for one of our churches. This important role involves helping to oversee the care and maintenance of church buildings and grounds, liaising with contractors where necessary, and ensuring that our properties are kept safe and well maintained. If you feel you may be able to help, we would be very pleased to speak with you about which church and what the role would involve. If you are interested please speak to Fr Raffaele or contact the parish office: [office@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk](mailto:office@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk)

**Chair of Property Managers Committee Needed**  
Our parish is seeking a volunteer to serve as Chair of the Property Managers Committee. This important role involves coordinating and supporting the work of the Property Managers of the different churches, helping to ensure good communication, shared planning, and the careful stewardship of our parish properties. Support and guidance will be provided. If you are interested, please speak to Fr Raffaele or contact the parish office: [office@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk](mailto:office@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk)

**Visit of St Carlo Acutis Relic** - We invite you to this rare opportunity to venerate up close to the First Class relics of recently canonized St Carlo Acutis, as part of its worldwide tour, exclusively at **St John's Cathedral, Portsmouth, Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March and Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March**. Welcome Mass on **Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March at 6pm** celebrated by Bishop Philip. On Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March we will especially welcome schools veneration.

**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.

**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](mailto:accounts@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk)



**Adult Parishioner Registration**



**Child Parishioner Registration**

### **TIME A PRIEST WILL BE AVAILABLE TO MEET**

**Tuesdays:** Fr Raffaele, 3.30pm-5.30pm  
Holy Cross Resource Centre, Eastleigh

**Wednesdays:** Fr Luca, 3.30pm-5.30pm  
*by appointment*  
Holy Cross Resource Centre, Eastleigh

**Fridays:** Fr Mario 10am-12noon  
OLQA, Bishop's Waltham

**Fridays:** Fr Pietro, 11am-12.45pm  
26A Abbey Water, Romsey

**Fridays:** Fr Matteo 11am-12.45pm  
Holy Cross Resource Centre, Eastleigh

### **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
<b>Sat 7<sup>th</sup> March</b>	9.30am 5.00pm 6.00pm 6.00pm 6.30pm	Holy Cross St Swithun Wells OLQA St Joseph St Edward	Antonio Cicu RIP FM Mary Monahan RIP Kornelia & Marcin Koronkiewicz 18 <sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary Mary Mcdermot (Wellbeing) Stephanie van Willigenburg (Health and Wellbeing)
<b>Sun 8<sup>th</sup> March</b> Third 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> Tom, Rose & Paul Murray RIP For a friend in need of healing  Colette Reynolds FM People of the Parish
<b>Mon 9<sup>th</sup> March</b>	9.30am	Holy Cross	Angeline Siby (Special Intention)
<b>Tue 10<sup>th</sup> March</b>	10.00am 6.00pm	St Andrew St Edward	Mr Thomas Doherty RIP
<b>Wed 11<sup>th</sup> March</b>	9.30am 10.00am	Holy Cross St Edward	Fr John Buckley RIP
<b>Thur 12<sup>th</sup> March</b>	9.30am 12 Noon 6.00pm	Holy Cross OLQA St Joseph	Holy Souls in Purgatory  Jae Uck Kim (Special Intention)
<b>Fri 13<sup>th</sup> March</b>	10.00am 10.00am 12 Noon	St Joseph St Edward OLQA	
<b>Sat 14<sup>th</sup> March</b>	9.30am 5.00pm 6.00pm 6.00pm 6.30pm	Holy Cross St Swithun Wells OLQA St Joseph St Edward	Departed souls of Deena's family RIP Deceased member of SSW Church community  Ashika Austin RIP Patrick Burke RIP FM
<b>Sun 15<sup>th</sup> March</b> Fourth 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> Patricia Bradley RIP FM People of the Parish Maggie Prendergast (Special Intention & Wellbeing)  John Carmody RIP Anniversary

## CLERGY & PARISH OFFICE

**Fr Raffaele Cossa (Parish Priest)**

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**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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**Deacon Emmanuel Chituh**

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**Parish Office** Holy Cross Church, 53 Leigh Road, Eastleigh  
SO50 9DF Tel: 02380 273882

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

**Parish Administrator: Sabrina Gardner**

[office@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk](mailto:office@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk)

**Finance Administrator: Christina Geleji**

[accounts@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk](mailto:accounts@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk)

**Events & Communications Coordinator: Faye Harris**

[events@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk](mailto:events@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk)

**Website Contact:** [website.sswp@gmail.com](mailto:website.sswp@gmail.com)

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

**Diocesan Safeguarding:** [rattfield@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:rattfield@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)