



Our Vision is a Person, Our Vision is Jesus Christ 30th November 2025: FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

OUR ADVENT PREPARATION FOR CHRISTMAS

This Sunday begins the season of Advent, the period of four weeks in which we look forward to and prepare for the great feast of Christmas. During this season, we focus on the anticipation of what is to come: the visitation of Our Lord to humanity, both in terms of the birth of Jesus and on the coming of the Messiah at the end of time.

Advent begins a new liturgical year but its significance and importance can be lost in the secular world's rush to push the commercial aspects of Christmas long before the actual event and long in advance of the start of the Advent season itself. I'm sure I'm not alone in being fed up with the assault of Christmas adverts on the television and by the relentless encouragement to spend money on luxury items and food. And never a mention of the true meaning of Christmas!

The beginning of a new liturgical year offers us the opportunity for a fresh start as we prepare for the coming of our Lord and Saviour. The readings for this First Sunday of Advent focus on the coming of the Messiah at the end of time and our preparations for that event. They tell us that the Messiah will bring peace with him and that we should remain focused on preparing the way for him.

For those people on our RCIA programme, their journey towards full communion with the Catholic Church is very much a fresh start for them. And it is a great privilege and deeply rewarding to listen to their testimonials of their journeys into Christian faith. How they have come to knowledge and faith in Jesus Christ and a proper understanding of Christmas. Of how their understanding and experience of the Mass and of developing a prayer relationship with the Lord has changed their lives.

We all need to find ways of entering into the spirit of the Advent season. Meditating on the themes associated with the candles of the Advent wreath might be one way of helping us to prepare. The first candle represents **hope**, the hope that the prophets brought as they foretold the coming of the Messiah and God's promises. The second candle symbolises the **peace** that Christ brings to our hearts, our homes and the world. The third candle signifies the **joy** of Christmas as the birth of Jesus draws near and the fourth candle represents the perfect **love** of God, revealed through Jesus and the call for us to share that love with others. Meditating on these themes can help us in our prayer during Advent. Being generous in our response to the call for charitable action either through the charities the parish supports or in other ways is also important.

We should all enjoy the opportunity Christmas offers for having a good time and spending family time together. But it is important we do not lose sight of proper preparation and the real reason why we celebrate Christmas. We should be careful not to give in to the relentless pressure to secularise Christmas and ignore Advent. Prayer and the giving of ourselves is important as is taking the opportunity to be reconciled with the Lord through the Sacrament of Reconciliation either during the times set aside in each of our churches or at one of the Reconciliation Services arranged for later in Advent.

Deacon Paul Owen

GEM OF THE WEEK

'Plenary Reflection' by Cardinal Vincent Nichols
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 3rd 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 30th November 2025 YEAR A - YEAR 2 - PSALTER WEEK 1

PSALM RESPONSE: LET US GO REJOICING TO THE HOUSE OF THE LORD.

1st Reading Isaiah 2:1-5 Psalm 122 (121) 2nd Reading Romans 13:11-14 Gospel Matthew 24:37-44

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

PARISH GROUPS



Communion & Liberation Groups

School of Community meets weekly at Holy Cross every Wednesday at 8pm (contact Fr Pietro) and 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 3rd 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

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 3rd December. If you would like to participate, please email Fr Matteo:

mpagani@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

MESSAGES



Parish Advent Retreat - on Saturday 29th November 2.30pm to 4.30pm at St Edwards. Open to everyone. There will be a talk about Advent by Fr Raffaele, some time for private prayer in the church and a time for questions and sharing thoughts.

Christmas Fair - come and enjoy the festive season at OLQA from 10am to 2pm on Saturday 29th November. Free entry to the fair! All proceeds supporting a group from the local area going on pilgrimage to Lourdes with the charity Across in June 2026.

40th Anniversary of The Fraternity of St Charles - to celebrate the 40th anniversary of The Fraternity of our priests you are invited to Holy Cross for a talk by one of the Superiors, Fr Donato Contuzzi (Former missionary for 10 years in Taiwan), on Sunday 30th November. There will be tea & coffee at 3.30pm in the Resource Centre, the talk at 4pm and Mass at 5.30pm.

Second Collection Missions of the Fraternity of St Charles Borromeo - on 29th and 30th November there will be a second collection to help our missionary work in seventeen countries especially the poorest ones, in Siberia & Kenya.

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.

CAFOD - Annual Christmas Fayre, 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.

OLQA 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

MESSAGES CONTINUED



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.

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**.

St Swithun Wells Catholic Primary School - is organising a Christmas Raffle to raise funds for our PTFA, and we would be very grateful if you could donate a prize. Your support would be truly appreciated. Alongside the raffle, we are hosting a **Christmas Fayre at the school from 3.30pm to 6.30pm on Friday 5th December**, where our children will have the chance to sell festive crafts they've created in school. If you are a local business and happy to donate we will arrange collection at your convenience. Any donations would be warmly received. Please contact adminoffice@stswithunwells.hants.sch.uk

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 and next. 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.

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.

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

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

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 Heathrow with return, for an additional cost. For more information, visit our website or take a leaflet from the Welcome 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.**

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

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

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 29th Nov	9.30am 5.00pm 6.00pm 6.00pm 6.30pm	Holy Cross St Swithun Wells OLQA St Joseph St Edward	Antonio Cicu RIP FM Souls of Purgatory Dr Clare Fearon RIP Jessie Regan (Anniversary)
Sun 30th Nov <i>First 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 People of the Parish Elizabeth Beatrice Hardinge RIP Kenneth Sweet FM Kathleen Ward (Wellbeing) Adelaide Jones (Wellbeing)
Mon 1st Dec	9.30am	Holy Cross	In memoriam FM Gualtero Family FM
Tues 2nd Dec	10.00am 6.00pm	St Andrew St Edward	Teresa Gaskell RIP 1st Anniversary Souls in Purgatory
Weds 3rd Dec <i>St Francis Xavier</i>	9.30am 10.00am	Holy Cross St Edward	Matt Paterson RIP In Thanksgiving
Thurs 4th Dec	9.30am 12 Noon 6.00pm	Holy Cross OLQA St Joseph	Joan Carey RIP
Fri 5th Dec	10.00am 10.00am 12 Noon	St Joseph St Edward OLQA	Pauline Twigg (Wellbeing) Emmanuel & Phyllis Altman RIP
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)

CLERGY & PARISH OFFICE

Fr Raffaele Cossa (Parish Priest)
Tel: 023 8061 2430; E: rcossa@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Fr Luca Speziale (Assistant Priest)
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Fr Pietro Paiusco (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
Mon, Tues, Thurs & Fri 9.30am - 5.30pm; Wed 9.30am - 2.30pm

Parish Administrator: vacancy
Email: office@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk

Finance Administrator: Christina Geleji
Email: accounts@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk

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