



Our Vision is a Person, Our Vision is Jesus Christ

24th SEPTEMBER 2023: TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

PITY MAY BE EXPRESSED IN THE MOST UNLIKELY OF PLACES

A few months ago I watched, again, the film *The Lady in the Van*. It is based on a book of the same name by Alan Bennett. The story concerns an elderly eccentric woman who appears on the front driveway of a house living in a dilapidated van. The woman has many problems and anti-social habits but the owner of the house grows to like her and tries to help. Well, I cannot boast of the same situation but I can relate the story of *The Man in My Outside Toilet*.

When I was Parish Priest of Newport, Isle of Wight, the fine Georgian Presbytery stood in its own grounds next to an also fine, but plain, Georgian Church of St Thomas of Canterbury. There was a shared garden between the two buildings, and, for the added comfort of the congregation, there were two outside toilets.

One Sunday afternoon I came home to find smoke coming from underneath one of the toilet doors. Out of propriety I knocked on the door and was surprised to hear someone reply rather cheerily, 'Come in!' I opened the door and there on the floor was a "gentleman of the road," in a sleeping bag reading a paper and smoking a cigarette. He was obviously settled for the night. Beside him there were three or four cans of beer. These cans of beer must have been the last of a few more which he had consumed on the way. Before I could say anything he said, 'I've nowhere to go, and this seemed a nice dry place for the night. I will be gone in the morning.' Out of shock rather than compassion I agreed. For the next few months he came regularly about once a week and stayed in the toilet. He was in various stages of drunkenness but there were times when I could talk to him and tried to encourage him to stay somewhere more permanent and to come off the beer. To all this he agreed until one day he said that in the shop opposite the Presbytery he had seen a one-man tent for sale at the bargain price of £15. He asked if I could give him the money. I said that I would give the money to him in the morning. The morning came and I gave the man the money. I watched him as he went out from the garden gate to the shops opposite; I watched him as he walked past the shop with the tent in the window and I watched him as he went into the corner shop and came out with two packs of lager. I was furious. He could see me looking down the street and he cried out in a semi-tearful voice - 'I can't help it - I can't help it.'

A few days later I was able to simmer down and think about what had happened. I felt ashamed that I had not asked about his past life or whether there was a reason for him to be on the streets. I was even more ashamed that I had not shown adequate pity. I had been shown an example of what it is to be angry and hurt by a fellow human being's circumstances. I forgave him and smiled to myself that I had been taught a great lesson.

The 1st Reading last Sunday and Isaiah this weekend talks powerfully about this very subject. How often do we commit the same sins and cry to God - 'I can't help it?' How can I demand mercy from God if I, 'nurse anger against another?' Too many lives have been ruined and peoples destroyed through a lack of pity. The wise writer of the Book Ecclesiasticus writes:

Remember the commandments, and do not bear your neighbour ill-will: remember the covenant of the Most High, and overlook the offence.

I still smile when I think of how God taught me something so essential about pity and forgiveness from the most unlikely of people in the most unlikely of places. Watch out, for no situation is free from the possibility of encountering the presence of God and learning from the experience.

Fr Bruce

GEM OF THE WEEK



This week's GEM is Bishop Philip's Pastoral Letter, "You Will Be My Witnesses"

- 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 **9.30am on Wednesday 27th September 2023**, please email your messages/notices to: office@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk

LITURGICAL INDICATIONS



Sunday 24th September 2023: Year A - Year 1 - Psalter Week: 1

PSALM RESPONSE: THE LORD IS CLOSE TO ALL WHO CALL HIM.

1st reading Isaiah 55:6-9 **Psalm 144** **2nd reading** Philippians 1:20c-24,27a **Gospel** Matthew 20:1-16a

Sunday 1st October 2023: Year A - Year 1 - Psalter Week: 2

PSALM RESPONSE: REMEMBER YOUR MERCY, LORD.

1st reading Ezekiel 18:25-28 **Psalm 24** **2nd reading** Philippians 2:1-11 **Gospel** Matthew 21:28-32

PARISH GROUPS



Youth Groups (including First Holy Communion & Confirmation)

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

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

Wed, 4.15pm-5.45pm in St Andrew;

Sat, 10.30am-Noon in Holy Cross Resource Centre.

Grail Seekers (school years 7, 8, 9) &

Student Youth (school year 10 until sixth form)

We usually meet on Friday evenings in the Holy Cross Resource Centre. Please check the parish website for the calendar of meetings, times and venues.

Our Youth Groups are also the path we propose to those who want to be prepared to receive First Holy Communion and Confirmation. Registrations for the year 2023/2024 are still open on our website: www.stswithunwellsparish.org.uk/parishlife (scroll down to Youth Groups).

The first meeting of Grail Seekers and Student Youth will be on Friday 29th September, 6.30pm-8.30pm in Holy Cross Resource Centre with a meeting for the parents afterwards.

For more information about these groups please go to our website.

Growing In Faith Together Group

Tuesdays 10.15am to approx. 11.45am in the Holy Cross Resource Centre. All are welcome!

Fellowship Group - St. Swithun Wells Church, Fair Oak, **Wednesdays 7pm-9pm**. On **27th September** we will be having a talk on Welsh Holy Places. Everyone is welcome to join us in person or on Zoom. If you wish to join on Zoom, please contact Peter Baggot on Peterbaggott@aol.com for the link.

Communion & Liberation Groups

School of Community meet weekly:

Holy Cross, Wednesdays at 8pm (restarts 4th Oct) ;

St Edward's, Thursdays at 8pm (restarts 28th Sept).

For more information please click the link on the homepage of our website. All are welcome!

Romsey Prayer Group - Every Wednesday morning at 11am in the St Joseph's Parish Centre, 26A Abbey Water. All will be made very welcome.

Afternoon Club - St. Joseph's Parish Centre, 26A Abbey Water, first Tuesday in the month at 2pm.

Come and join us for tea, games and good fun.

The Little Flowers Baby & Toddler Groups

Holy Cross Group meet on **Wednesdays from 10am** in the Resource Centre, Eastleigh;

St Joseph's Group meet on **Thursdays from 10.30am -12 Noon** in the Hall (26 Abbey Water, Romsey).

The groups are for 0-4 years and their families. More information is on the website or you can email: littleflowers.sswp@gmail.com

Ark of Fellowship - Group for learning disabilities or learning difficulties, their families and friends

Restarts on **Thursday 28th September at 6.30pm** in the Holy Cross Resource Centre. Interested in volunteering or know some young adults who would like to join the group? If yes, please contact: arkoffellowship.sswp@gmail.com

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!

Upcoming Funerals

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Doreen Baker and for her family. Doreen's Funeral Mass will be held on **Tuesday 26th September at 1.30pm** in **St Edward's Church**. Trish & Tony would welcome parishioners who wish to attend the funeral.

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Catherine La Rooy Head and for her family. Catherine's Funeral Mass will be held on **Friday 29th September at 11am** in **St Edward's Church**.

Upcoming Second Collections

Sunday 8th October for CAFOD Harvest Appeal

Please do not use our yellow gift aid envelopes for this collection, CAFOD have provided their own

MESSAGES



envelopes. These will be made available on the 30th Sept/1st Oct in preparation for the Family Fast Day on 6th October.

Sacramental Preparation for Adults (RCIA)

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

RCIA starts on **Wed 27th September at 8pm** in **St Edward the Confessor Church, Chandler's Ford**. We also offer RCIA in Cantonese, at the same time and venue.

MESSAGES CONTINUED



Parish Get2Gether

Sunday 1st October, 1-4pm

Pavillion on the Park, 1 Kingfisher Road, SO50 9LH

An event for all of the parish, especially families.

We begin at 1pm, sharing a meal together followed by some activities and a discussion. No cost, however we kindly ask you to give a donation to cover the hire of the Pavillion. Please bring some food, beverages or cakes to share with others. We would be grateful if you could please write down the main ingredients and allergens on a piece of paper so people can make an informed decision as to whether the food is suitable for them. Please can you bring your own cups/plates/cutlery. To book your place please go to our parish website and click the link.

Macmillan Coffee Morning

Margaret French is holding her annual Macmillan Coffee Morning in the hall at St Andrew's on **Friday 29th September from 10.30am-12.30pm**. Please come along for a chat and coffee and cake, and support this very worthy cause. Queries to Margaret: 01794 278151 or 07534 214937 or email: mpf46@icloud.com

Masses with St Swithun Wells Primary School

On **Sunday 1st October at 9am** in St Edward the Confessor and on **Sunday 8th October at 11am** in Holy Cross Church, we will welcome the children of St Swithun Wells Catholic Primary School who are going to lead the readings, bidding prayers and offertory. A warm welcome to them and their families!

CAFOD Family Fast Day Appeal - Friday 6th October Message from CAFOD:

Dr Nasha's mobile medical clinic gets life-saving help to where it's needed most, fast – so when her team arrived in Meera's village in Pakistan after it had been

destroyed by flooding, Meera rushed to the clinic to get her children the treatment they needed. Donate to CAFOD today so that more families can get the expert help they need. Use the CAFOD envelope in church or give online at cafod.org.uk

Alternatively please scan the QR code with your phone to be taken to CAFOD's website where you can make your donation. Envelopes will be made available in our churches next weekend at the end of Mass, please take one.



There will be a **Fast Day Lunch held at St Edward's on Friday 6th October from 12 Noon-1.30pm**, no cost however donations gratefully received; money raised will go to the CAFOD Fast Day Appeal.

Eastleigh Street Pastors

A new Street Pastors newsletter is available at: <https://streetpastors.org/locations/eastleigh/about-us/newsletters/>

Edition 27 contains information about our work and the dates available for the October/November Training (applications for this by 24th September 2023). We really do need some new people to step forward to bolster this work. Is God calling you? For more details or an informal chat, please contact Eric Hyom on 07736 967921, or email at erichyom@hotmail.com

SCHOOL NOTICES

St George Catholic College - Following a **graded inspection by OFSTED** on **Tues 27th & Wed 28th June 2023**, **St George Catholic College has been judged OUTSTANDING in all areas**. Thank you so much for your support. We would be delighted to show you round our Outstanding school on the evening of **Thursday 5th October 2023, 5pm-8pm**. External validations are fantastic to receive but I would really encourage you to visit St George Catholic College to decide for yourselves.
James Habberley, Headteacher

St Anne's Catholic School - Parents with daughters in Years 4, 5 and 6 can visit us on **Wednesday 27th September 2023 for our Open Morning (9am-11am) and/or our Open Evening (6pm-8pm)**. Parents can book free tickets via Eventbrite (see posters on church noticeboards). We ask that parents arrive at 9am and 10am for open morning tours.

St Swithun Wells Catholic Primary School
We're delighted to invite parents & their children to come together & visit us when considering a place for their child. See the school in action during the following mornings from **9.30am-10.30am: Tues 3rd, Wed 4th & Thurs 5th October 2023**
Tues 7th & Wed 8th November 2023

We also have a **Parents' Information Evening on: Thursday 19th October at 6.30pm**
For further information visit the school website: <https://www.st-swithunwells.org.uk/admissions/>

TIMES 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, Holy Cross Resource Centre, Eastleigh
Fridays:	Fr Luca, 10.30am-11.30am, Romsey Parish Office (26 Abbey Water), Romsey
Saturdays:	Fr Marco, not available on 23rd & 30th Sept, 9.30am-12.30pm, Romsey Parish Office (26 Abbey Water), Romsey

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
	5.30pm-6.00pm (before Mass)	St Joseph
Sunday:	8.30am-9.00am (before Mass)	St Edward
	8.30am-9.00am (before Mass)	St Andrew

ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

	Tues: St Edward (6.30pm-7.30pm)
	Wednesday: Holy Cross - 10.00am-11.00am
	Thursday: St Joseph - before Mass (5.30pm-6.00pm)

MASS TIMES FOR OUR CHURCH COMMUNITIES

DATE	TIME	CHURCH	MASS INTENTION
Sat 23rd Sept <i>Morning Mass: St Pio of Pietrelcina</i>	9.30am 5.00pm 6.00pm 6.00pm 6.30pm	Holy Cross St Swithun Wells OLQA St Joseph St Edward	People of the Parish Pat Freemantle FM John Marsh RIP Ann Wood RIP Anniversary
Sunday 24th Sept <i>Twenty-Fifth Sunday In Ordinary Time</i>	8.30am 9.00am 9.00am 9.30am 11.00am 11.00am	Holy Cross St Edward St Andrew OLQA Holy Cross (also livestreamed) St Joseph	<i>Polska Msza Święta</i> Folco Scappaticci RIP Newton Carrasco RIP Anniversary Raymond Awad RIP John Marsh RIP
Monday 25th Sept	9.30am	Holy Cross	Regina Turl (Special Intention)
Tuesday 26th Sept <i>Ss Cosmas & Damian</i>	10.00am <u>1.30pm</u> 6.00pm	St Andrew <u>St Edward</u> St Edward	John Marsh RIP <u>Funeral Mass: Doreen Baker RIP</u> Eileen O'Grady RIP
Wed 27th Sept <i>St Vincent de Paul</i>	9.30am 9.30am 10.00am	Holy Cross OLQA St Edward	Ellen Lane RIP FM
Thurs 28th Sept	9.30am 12 Noon 6.00pm	Holy Cross OLQA St Joseph	Craig Steadman RIP Martin Pond RIP
Friday 29th Sept <i>The Holy Archangels Michael, Gabriel & Raphael</i>	9.30am 10.00am 10.00am <u>11.00am</u>	OLQA St Joseph St Edward <u>St Edward</u>	Philomena Michaela Fernandez RIP Mrs Edward Christian FM <u>Funeral Mass: Catherine La Rooy Head RIP</u>
Sat 30th Sept <i>Morning Mass: St Jerome</i>	9.30am 5.00pm 6.00pm 6.00pm 6.30pm	Holy Cross St Swithun Wells OLQA St Joseph St Edward	People of the Parish Nicholas Bellord RIP
Sunday 1st Oct <i>Twenty-Sixth Sunday In Ordinary Time</i>	8.30am 9.00am 9.00am 9.30am 11.00am 11.00am	Holy Cross St Edward St Andrew OLQA Holy Cross (also livestreamed) St Joseph	<i>Polska Msza Święta</i> Living & Deceased Members of the Murphy & Lucas Families FM Florence Bohan FM John Marsh RIP

CLERGY & PARISH OFFICE

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

Fr Luca Speziale (Assistant Priest)
Tel: 023 8061 2430; E: lspeziale@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Fr Marco Vignolo (Assistant Priest)
Tel: 023 8061 2430; E: mvignolo@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Fr Bruce Barnes (Assistant Priest)
Tel: 01489 890947 (OLQA Office)

Deacon Bob Birtles
Tel: 023 8069 2416; E: bbirtles@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Deacon John di Meo
Tel: 01794 515688; E: jdimeo@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Deacon Paul Owen
Tel: 023 8025 4806; E: powen@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Deacon Paul Wilson
Tel: 023 8061 6618; E: pwilson@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Parish Office Holy Cross Church, 53 Leigh Road, Eastleigh,
SO50 9DF Tel: 02380 273882
Opening Times: Mon-Thurs 9.30am-5.30pm;
Fri 9.30am-2.30pm (see newsletter for changes).

Holy Cross Resource Centre & Finance Admin: Fiona Mooney
Email: accounts@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk

Parish Secretary: Sarah Goodfellow
Email: office@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