



Our Vision is a Person, Our Vision is Jesus Christ 10th DECEMBER 2023: SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Who Is Coming?

Last Sunday marked the commencement of a four-week journey leading up to Christmas, a period the Church refers to as Advent. The term "Advent" signifies "coming," prompting us to focus on the arrival of Christ. As Fr. Raffaele explained in the previous front page, St. Bernard identified three distinct "comings" of Christ: His historical arrival two thousand years ago, His return in glory at an unknown future time and His continual presence in our daily lives. A Sermon of St Bernard can help us understanding what this third coming, in our present, is about:

If people are unhappy it is because they have abandoned the pursuit of things true and salutary and given themselves up to the search for those that are fleeting and perishable. They resemble the shipwrecked who are in danger of being overwhelmed by the waters, and who may be seen catching eagerly at whatever they first grasp, how frail soever it might be. Thus they perish miserably while following after transitory things and neglecting those which are solid.

I like the analogy of the shipwrecked person. In our lives, laden with commitments, with a strong sense of loneliness and lack of meaning in what we do and live, we may feel physically, emotionally, mentally, or spiritually overwhelmed. We might seek a way out by joining online courses or reading a book, but often they provide just momentary relief. The enduring solution lies in clinging onto something solid, like St Bernard says, akin to the genuine presence of a friend. In my experience only a true friendship can rescue you.

The words of St Bernard can help us again:

[During this time of Advent] meditate on the coming of our Lord. Consider who He is that comes, whence He comes, to whom He comes, for what end He comes, when He comes, and in what manner He comes.

Advent invites us not merely to passively "wait" for the Lord but to actively familiarize ourselves with Him. It makes sense to wait only if you know who you are waiting for.

Becoming familiar with the One who is coming, entails engaging with His story through activities like **reading the daily Gospel**, finding personal connections within the broader Story of Salvation, and identifying with various Gospel characters. It also involves considering "for what end He comes" and **actively participating in His mission**, such as performing acts of charity toward those close to us. Lastly, becoming familiar with Jesus means recognizing "in what manner He comes." Just as He arrived 2000 years ago in the flesh, He continues to manifest Himself today through the people around us. Becoming familiar with Him involves **embracing the possibility of His presence, which is manifested through familiar human faces**: a friend, spouse, children, or colleague, allowing for delightful surprises in those connections.

Fr Luca

GEM OF THE WEEK



This week's GEM is Bishop Philip's Pastoral Letter "Christian Sunday" - 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 13th December 2023**, please email your messages/notices to: office@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk

LITURGICAL INDICATIONS



Sunday 10th December 2023: Year B - Year 2 - Psalter Week: 2

PSALM RESPONSE: LET US SEE, O LORD, YOUR MERCY, AND GIVE US YOUR SAVING HELP.

1st reading Isaiah 40:1-5,9-11 **Psalm** 84 **2nd reading** 2 Peter 3:8-14 **Gospel** Mark 1:1-8

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

PARISH GROUPS



Growing In Faith Together Group

Tuesdays 10.15am to approx. 11.45am in the Holy Cross Resource Centre. On 12th December Dcn John di Meo will be giving us a talk on "Christian Poetry". All are welcome!

Fellowship Group - Wednesday 13th 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



Second Collection This Weekend (9th/10th Dec)

Christmas Flowers - If you would like to contribute towards the beautiful flowers & decorations that will be displayed in all of our churches there is a collection this weekend. Please do not use the yellow gift aid envelopes for this collection.

Solemnity of St Swithun Wells

11th December - On this day we celebrate the Solemnity of our Patron, St Swithun Wells. We will celebrate this during our morning Mass at Holy Cross, please try and attend and pray for our parish.

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:

Thursday 14th December, 7.30pm – OLOA

Friday 15th December, 7.30pm – St Andrew

Saturday 16th December, 11am – Holy Cross

A number of priests will be available on each occasion

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.

Parish Christmas Party - 10th Dec, 1pm-4pm at St Swithun Wells Primary School, **Admission by ticket only!** Please remember to bring your own drinks. Christmas jumpers and fancy dress actively encouraged!

Advent to Christmas Carol Service this weekend! St. Swithun Wells Church, Sunday 10th December at **5.30pm**, followed by mulled wine and mince pies. All are welcome!

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!

CAFOD Annual Christmas Fayre - St Edward's on Saturday 9th & Sunday 10th December after Mass. Christmas produce and gifts on sale, also Hamper Raffle. Donations of cakes and Christmas goods gratefully received! For more details contact Clare Lasker on 02380 252138.

MESSAGES CONTINUED

Two Saints & Poitiers

Annual donations of gifts to Two Saints and Poitiers will be collected at St Edward's on 9th & 10th December. For Two Saints gifts of hats, gloves, scarves and toiletries for both men and women; for Poitiers biscuits, sweets, chocolates, cakes and other Christmas goods would all be gratefully received. Please do not wrap your gifts but put them into a "gift" type bag with a label attached naming the charity. The gifts will be brought up by the children during the Offertory at Mass. For more details contact Clare Lasker on 02380 252138.

Coffee Stop Christmas Special

Thursday 14th December 10.00am-11.30am in Holy Cross Resource Centre. Coffee/Tea and Mince Pie £1.50. Cafetiere coffee available at the same price. There will be the popular Raffle during the morning with proceeds going to a Charity. If you can bring a Prize for the raffle we would be very grateful. Come and have a lovely pre-Christmas 'Get Together' with friends.

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

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.

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).

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

Access from Marie Louise House car park to St Joseph's Church on Friday 15th December

Due to road repairs anyone who attends Mass that day who usually parks in MLH car park will need to consider alternative parking for the day. As usual there will be no parking on the Abbey House/Wisdom House drive.

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.

Planned Giving 2023-2024

In this newsletter you will find Fr Raffaele's appeal made last weekend with a Direct Debit form on the back. Please try to support our parish. 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

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)

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

Saturdays: Fr Mario, 1.30pm-4.30pm, Romsey Parish Office (26 Abbey Water), Romsey

MASS TIMES FOR OUR CHURCH COMMUNITIES

DATE	TIME	CHURCH	MASS INTENTION
Saturday 9th December	9.30am 5.00pm 6.00pm 6.00pm 6.30pm	Holy Cross St Swithun Wells OLQA St Joseph St Edward	Ellen Lane RIP FM Patricia Austin RIP Sr Eileen Farrell (Wellbeing) Intentions for Phil & Angie
Sunday 10th December <i>Second Sunday of Advent</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> Mrs Edward Christian FM People of the Parish Diza Nordstrom RIP Elvira Golez RIP
Monday 11th Dec <i>St Swithun Wells</i>	9.30am	Holy Cross	Gerard Carr RIP FM Luis Castro RIP FM Calliope, Agnes & Wilhemina RIP
Tuesday 12th December	10.00am 6.00pm	St Andrew St Edward	George, Gertrude & Mary Lawton RIP Anniversary
Wed 13th Dec <i>St Lucy</i>	9.30am 9.30am 10.00am	Holy Cross OLQA St Edward	Ron Reynolds FM Mrs Edward Christian FM
Thurs 14th Dec <i>St John of the Cross</i>	9.30am 12 Noon 6.00pm	Holy Cross OLQA St Joseph	Helen Altman RIP 2nd Anniversary
Friday 15th December	10.00am 10.00am <u>10.30am</u>	St Joseph St Edward <u>OLQA</u>	Dennis Joyce RIP People of the Parish
Saturday 16th December	9.30am 5.00pm 6.00pm 6.00pm 6.30pm	Holy Cross St Swithun Wells OLQA 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 OLQA 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

CLERGY & PARISH OFFICE

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

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

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

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Deacon Paul Owen
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Deacon Matteo Pagani
Tel: 023 8061 2430; E: mpagani@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 rattfield@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk