



Our Vision is a Person, Our Vision is Jesus Christ 14th September 2025: THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

CHRISTIANITY: A SIMPLE PRIVATE DEVOTION?

When I was 16, a secondary school student in my hometown of Pavia, I met a group of people who would change the way I looked at life. Since Pavia is a small town where everyone knows each other, I quickly realised they were Christians. One Saturday afternoon, they invited me to lunch at a beautiful *cascina* - a countryside farmstead just outside the city. We had pizza, obviously, cooked by some of them in an old wood oven. It was delicious. The scene felt familiar, like many lunches I'd shared with classmates, but something new happened that day. To explain, I need to mention an important detail: the group was led by Claudio, a schoolteacher - calm, wise, and entertaining - who animated the conversations with unusual depth.

As we were enjoying the food, Claudio stood up and asked: *"Guys, what's your opinion about what's happening in the schools of Pavia?"* At the time, student strikes were common. They were protesting government reforms aimed at cutting costs for Catholic schools; still today, in Italy, families must pay a significant amount to send children to such schools. Claudio's question sparked an honest, passionate debate. Everyone shared their views. Most of us supported the reforms, but the real question was: what should we do? Organise a counter-protest? Ignore the strikes and just go to school? Or take another path?

With Claudio's guidance, we concluded that attending school was the better choice. As Christians, we believed change usually happens from within, not through revolution - the parables of the mustard seed and the leaven came to mind. At the same time, we decided to elect one of us as a student representative to ensure our voices were heard and to promote dialogue. What struck me most wasn't simply the outcome or the decisions made, but the fact that, as Christians, we asked what our faith had to say about the concrete issues of our daily life.

I recalled this episode when I heard Pope Leo's recent address to a delegation of French political representatives, especially one passage:

"The salvation Jesus obtained with his death and resurrection encompasses all the dimensions of human life, such as culture, economics and work, the family and marriage, respect for human dignity and life, health, communication, education and politics. Christianity cannot be reduced to a simple private devotion, because it implies a way of living in society imprinted by love for God and for one's neighbour who, in Christ, is no longer an enemy but a brother.

There is no separation in the personality of a public figure: there is not the politician on one side, and the Christian on the other. Rather, there is the politician who, under the gaze of God and his conscience, lives his commitments and responsibilities in a Christian manner!"

One of the things I find most attractive about our Christian faith is that, being a true love story, it unifies our life. If we live it as a simple private devotion, we haven't encountered love. The German theologian Romano Guardini used to say: *"In the experience of a great love, everything becomes an event."* The experience of God's love - reaching us today through the words and gestures of the Church - opens us to the world, draws us out of our shells, and makes life an adventure worth living.

Fr Luca

GEM OF THE WEEK

This week's GEM is Pope Leo's address to a delegation of French political representatives.
You can find this on our website.



For the next Newsletter, items should be received into the Parish Office by **10am on Wednesday 17th September 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 14th September 2025: YEAR C - YEAR 1- PSALTER WEEK 4

PSALM RESPONSE: NEVER FORGET THE DEEDS OF THE LORD!

1st reading Numbers 21:4b-9 **Psalm** 78 (77) **2nd reading** Philippians 2:6-11 **Gospel** John 3:13-17

Sunday 21st September 2025: YEAR C - YEAR 1- PSALTER WEEK 1

PSALM RESPONSE: PRAISE THE LORD, WHO RAISES THE POOR.

1st reading Amos 8:4-7 **Psalm** 113 (112) **2nd reading** Timothy 2:1-8 **Gospel** Luke 16:1-13

PARISH GROUPS



Growing In Faith Together Group (GIFT) - every Tuesday at 10.15am in the Holy Cross Resource Centre. We will be studying Luke's Gospel.

The Little Flowers Baby & Toddler Group

Meet on Wednesdays during term time from 10am in Holy Cross Resource Centre. We will restart on Wednesday 17th September. The group is for 0-4 years and their families. More information is on the website or you can email: littleflowers.sswp@gmail.com

MESSAGES



Awake My Soul - a group for young adults (aged 18 to 25) in the parish will begin in September. We will meet every other Wednesday from 7pm until around 9pm in the presbytery of Holy Cross (53 Leigh Road, Eastleigh - the house next to the church). We will start with dinner together, followed by a discussion on how our faith relates to our daily lives. If you would like to participate, please email Fr Matteo: mpagani@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk. The first meeting will be on Wednesday 24th September.

OLQA Wilfred Walk - Members of OLQA will be walking through the Hampshire countryside, visiting 5 churches in the Meon Valley dating back to Saxon times and founded by St Wilfred in the 7th century. The walk will start at 10am on Saturday 20th September at St Peter & St Paul's church in Exton. All are welcome. Please contact Angus Somerville for more details on 07929 867472 or angussomerville@hotmail.com

Good Companions - Our next gathering is at 12 noon on Friday 19th September in the Cloister at St Edward's. Please join us for some friendly company and delicious food. All welcome. Please contact Tony Wilson on 023 80266617 so we can assess likely numbers. Hope to see there.

Weddings - Congratulations to Sylvanus Ehiabhi & Klaudia who were married on 9th September. Please pray for Ria Cagampang & Kristian Ott Milbo who are getting married at 1pm on Saturday 13th September in St Edwards.

Wanting to get married? - if you are recently engaged or planning to get married, please contact one of our priests and we will be happy to support and help you. The Sacrament of Marriage is a wonderful gift and a joyful vocation. If you are already living in a committed relationship we can also help you to receive the Sacrament of Marriage. Please speak with a priest.

Reminder for Counters - please keep charity specific Gift Aid envelopes (e.g. CAFOD, Stella Maris) sealed and forward to the parish office as this saves admin for the charity. Thank you!

St Anne's Catholic School open events - For families of children in years 4, 5 and 6 on Wednesday 24th September. Open Morning 9am – 11am: see the school on a normal working day and tour with student guides. Open Evening 6pm – 8pm: meet staff, hear from the Headteacher, Head Girls and Year 7 pupils, and enjoy a guided tour. Please visit our website <https://st-annes.uk.com/about-us/news/65/st-anne-s-open-events-autumn-term-2025> to find out more and book free tickets.

KSC National Relics Tour coming to this Parish - On Friday 19th September the Relics of St Columba, St Margaret of Scotland and St Andrew will be coming to St Edwards along with the Fraternal Cross and the Cross of St Columba. This is part of a National Relics Tour and we are honored to bring these to our Parish and allow Parishioners to venerate them at the 10.00am Mass at St Edwards that day.

Pilgrimage to Portugal - after the success of last year's pilgrimage we are organising another parish pilgrimage to Portugal (Lisbon and Fatima). It will be from Thursday 30th April to Monday 4th May 2026. More details to follow. Save the Date!

The National Pilgrim Virgin Statue of Our Lady of Fatima - and relics of the Fatima Visionaries, Saints Francisco and Jacinta Marto will be coming to St John's Cathedral in Portsmouth on Saturday 4th and Sunday 5th October 2025. Please see the posters in each church with details of the programme for the weekend. All welcome!

MESSAGES CONTINUED



Youth Groups (including First Holy Communion & Confirmation)

Stars of Abraham (school years 3, 4, 5 & 6) *Holy Cross Saturdays 10.30am to 12 noon; St Edward Tuesdays 4pm to 5.30pm; St Andrews Fridays 4.30pm to 6pm*

Grail Seekers (school years 7, 8, 9) *New time: Sundays 6.30pm to 8.30pm*

Student Youth (school year 10 until sixth form) *Fridays 6.30pm to 8.30pm*

Our Youth Groups for children in primary school and young people in secondary school will restart at the end of September 2025. They are also the path we propose to those who want to be prepared to receive First Holy Communion and Confirmation. Registrations for the year 2025/2026 are now open on our website: www.stswithunwellsparish.org.uk (scroll down to Youth Groups).

We would like to remind you that if a child or a teenager wants to be prepared to receive First Holy Communion (and is at least in school year 3) or Confirmation (and is at least in school year 9) we will ask them to come regularly to one of the three groups according to their age. They will receive First Holy Communion or Confirmation when they are ready (usually after one year).

There will be a meeting on **Saturday 20th September 2025 at 11am in St Edward's Cloister** for all the parents and guardians where we will present the **2025/2026 Stars of Abraham programme** in the Eastleigh and Chandlers Ford area. Another meeting to present the Stars of Abraham programme in the Romsey & North Baddesley area will be held at **St Andrew's Church, North Baddesley on Friday 26th September at 5pm**.

The first event of Grail Seekers and Student Youth will be a weekend away from **Friday 19th September to Sunday 21st September at St Cassian's Centre, Kintbury**. For more information about the weekend and to register please go to our website. **Registration closes on 14th September**. There will be a meeting with parents to present the Grail Seekers programme at **6.30pm on Friday 12th September in the Holy Cross Resource Centre**.

OLQA Exhibition - Wonderful examples of some of the research work by the youngster Carlo Acutis (who was canonised on 7th September) will be on display in the church hall entitled 'The Eucharistic Miracles of The World'. **Saturdays and Sundays 18th, 19th and 25th October from 11am - 6pm. Sunday 26th October 11am - 12.30pm**. Volunteers are sought to help at these times. Further information from Kornelia on 077380 13097. All are welcome to this unique occasion.

Macmillan Cancer Care coffee morning - Margaret French is holding her annual coffee morning from **10.30am to 12 noon on Saturday 27th September in St Andrew's church hall**. Please come and support this worthy cause and you may even win a prize!!

Street Pastors - Could you spare one Friday night a month to volunteer with either Eastleigh or Fair Oak Street Pastors? Over the last 16 years Street Pastors have played an essential part in keeping people safe with night-time patrols, building community in new ways, loving our town and offering reassurance, safety and support through listening, caring and helping. **Our next training weekends will be 3rd October to 5th October, 17th October to 19th October and 31st October to 2nd November**. Contact Eric Hyom on 07736967921 or erichyom@hotmail.com

The Parish of St Swithun Wells require a Part-Time Communications & Events Coordinator

The position will be based in Eastleigh and involves maintaining the parish website, promoting parish events using social media platforms, organise and plan parish events in accordance with Diocesan policies, including Health & Safety, GDPR & Safeguarding, and comply with copyright law.

The role promises a varied and interesting workload.

The job is part-time (15 hours per week) on an initial fixed term contract of 18 months.

Salary offered for the role is £9,523.80 per annum based on 15 hours per week.

For more details and how to apply, please see the parish website www.stswithunwellsparish.org.uk or contact the Parish Office on 02380 273882 or accounts@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk

CAFOD Meeting - You are invited to a meeting on **Saturday 20th September from 10.30am - 1.30pm at St Bedes Church Hall, Basingstoke** to hear about the difference your donations are making to communities around the world and CAFOD's work with partners. A simple lunch will be provided so please book your place by emailing jlewry@cafod.org.uk

At a Glance - List of Upcoming Parish Events

19th Sept:	Good Companions
19th-21st Sept:	Weekend Away Grail Seekers & Student Youth
20th Sept:	OLQA Wilfred Walk

ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Tuesday: St Edward - after Mass (6.30pm-7.30pm)

Wednesday: Holy Cross - after Mass (10am-11am)

Thursday: OLQA - after Mass (12.30pm-1pm)

Thursday: St Joseph - before Mass (5pm-6pm)

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

(CONFESSION)

Tuesday:	9.30am-10.00am (before Mass)	St Andrew
Tuesday:	6.30pm-7.30pm (after Mass)	St Edward
Saturday:	10.00am-10.30am (after Mass)	Holy Cross
	5.30pm-6.00pm (before Mass)	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

MASS TIMES FOR OUR CHURCH COMMUNITIES

DATE	TIME	CHURCH	MASS INTENTION
Sat 13th Sept <i>St John Chrysostom</i>	9.30am 5.00pm 6.00pm 6.00pm 6.30pm	Holy Cross St Swithun Wells OLOA St Joseph St Edward	Marjorie Harris RIP FM People of The Parish Maria Szczetnikowicz RIP Anniversary
Sunday 14th Sept <i>The Exaltation of The Holy Cross</i>	8.30am 9.00am 9.00am 9.30am 11.00am 11.00am 5.30pm	Holy Cross St Edward St Andrew OLOA Holy Cross (& livestreamed) St Joseph Holy Cross	<i>Polska Msza Święta</i> Mrs Edward Christian FM Kathleen & Albert Harrison RIP Anniversary Michael John Newth RIP Martin Reilly RIP Tom & Thérèse Everatt (Special Intention)
Mon 15th Sept <i>Our Lady of Sorrow</i>	9.30am	Holy Cross	Holy Souls in Purgatory
Tues 16th Sept <i>Ss Cornelius & Cyprian</i>	10.00am 6.00pm	St Andrew St Edward	
Wed 17th Sept	9.30am 10.00am	Holy Cross St Edward	Special Intention to Our Lady, St Joseph & St Padre Pio
Thurs 18th Sept	9.30am 12 Noon 6.00pm	Holy Cross OLOA St Joseph	Rosa Donovan (Wellbeing)
Fri 19th Sept	10.00am 10.00am 12 Noon	St Joseph St Edward OLOA	Brothers Past & Present at The Eastleigh Knights of St Columbia
Sat 20th Sept	9.30am 5.00pm 6.00pm 6.00pm 6.30pm	Holy Cross St Swithun Wells OLOA St Joseph St Edward	Special Intention Jan & Helena Ferenc RIP Judy Van Willigenburg (Wellbeing)
Sun 21st Sept <i>Twenty Fifth Sunday In Ordinary Time</i>	8.30am 9.00am 9.00am 9.30am 11.00am 11.00am 5.30pm	Holy Cross St Edward St Andrew OLOA Holy Cross (& livestreamed) St Joseph Holy Cross	<i>Polska Msza Święta</i> Denis McCormack RIP Newton Carrasco RIP Anniversary Keith Small RIP In Thanksgiving People of The Parish

CLERGY & PARISH OFFICE

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

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

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

Fr Matteo Pagani (Assistant Priest)
Tel: 023 8061 2430; E: mpagani@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Fr Pietro Paiusco (Assistant Priest)
Tel: 023 8061 2430; E: ppaiusco@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

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

Deacon Emmanuel Chituh
Tel: 07915 379686; E: echituh@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

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

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

Parish Secretary: Mary Dingle
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