



Our Vision is a Person, Our Vision is Jesus Christ 3rd DECEMBER 2023: FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

THE LORD IS COMING

This weekend we start Advent and the liturgy is different. We don't have the Gloria at the beginning of Mass. The song of the angels at the time of Jesus' birth is removed for four weeks as we prepare for Christmas. The vestments we wear are purple, which is both a sign of penance, but also a sign of deep reflection. We have the Advent wreath, which symbolizes a growing light of Christ in the darkness of the earth. Every week a new candle is added to the one lit the Sunday before. All of this tells us that Advent is starting.

Advent is a Latin word which refers to the coming of Jesus. The Church asks us to be attentive, to wake up, to pay attention, so that we don't miss the Lord when he comes. And, in fact, the gospel of this Sunday says, "Stay awake, because you never know when the time will come. (...) If the master of the house comes unexpectedly, he must not find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake!"

There are three focuses of Jesus coming in this season of Advent.

The first, of course, is his coming at the end of time. We believe as a Church that Jesus will come again at the end of time to judge the living and the dead. You and I will be part of that group. We don't know the day or the hour.

The second is looking back in time to Jesus' coming among us in human flesh at the time of his birth in Bethlehem. That was many centuries ago.

The third, which is perhaps the most important coming for most of us, is Jesus' coming to us now. The season of Advent is a time when we think about all three of those dimensions of Jesus's coming in our life: the meaning of the incarnation which is the meaning of Christmas, the meaning of the judgment at the end of time and the attentiveness to Jesus coming into our lives today.

In the end this is what Advent is about, it's about having the heart of Mary, who paid attention when the angel spoke to her and pondered those things in her heart. The difference between Mary and us is that she was wholly attentive to the Lord. We are seldom attentive to God.

May the Lord give us a holy Advent full of awareness of the many ways He comes to us, in particular in prayer, in the sacraments of the Church, in the voices of our neighbours and our friends, and in spectacular ways we can't imagine.

Fr Raffaele

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 6th December 2023**, please email your messages/notices to: office@stswithunwellsparish.org.uk

LITURGICAL INDICATIONS



Sunday 3rd December 2023: Year B - Year 2 - Psalter Week: 1

PSALM RESPONSE: GOD OF HOSTS, BRING US BACK; LET YOUR FACE SHINE ON US AND WE SHALL BE SAVED.

1st reading Isaiah 63:16-17;64:1,3-8 Psalm 79 2nd reading Corinthians 1:3-9 Gospel Mark 13:33-37

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

PARISH GROUPS



Youth Groups (including First Holy Communion & Confirmation)

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

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

Student Youth (school year 10 until sixth form)

For Grail Seekers & Student Youth we usually meet on Friday evenings in the Holy Cross Resource Centre at 6.30pm. Please check the parish website for the calendar of meetings, times and venues.

Growing In Faith Together Group

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

Fellowship Group - Wednesday 6th December, 7pm at St Swithun Wells Church, Fair Oak. We continue our Advent Bible study. This week is, "The Bible". Everyone is welcome and if you wish to join us on Zoom please contact Peterbaggott@aol.com for the link.

Learn to Pray with the Weekly Scripture Readings Wednesdays at 11am in St Joseph's Parish Centre, 26A Abbey Water, Romsey;

Thursdays at 10am in St Edward the Confessor Church, Chandler's Ford.

Please come along if you would like to grow in your life of prayer by praying with the following Sunday's Mass readings. All are welcome.

Christmas Themed Afternoon Club will be held at the Parish Centre, 26A Abbey Water in Romsey on Tuesday 5th December commencing at 2pm.

Come and join us for mulled wine, mince pies, cake and good fun. For further information telephone Elizabeth Gare on 01794 515265.

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!

60 Club - There will be no 60 Club in December. New dates will be announced in January.

MESSAGES



Bishop Philip's Pastoral Letter

Please read Bishop Philip's Pastoral Letter, "Christian Sunday", copies are inserted into this weekend's newsletter and are also available to pick up in all of our churches from this weekend.

Advent & Christmas 2023 Sheet - copies have been inserted into this weekend's newsletter, alternatively see our website or pick up your copy from church welcome areas.

My Day by Day Advent Booklets - these are available in the church welcome areas. Children's booklets are free; a suggested donation of £1 for the adult booklets would be most welcome.

Parish Retreat for Advent

on Sat 2nd December, 2.30pm-4.30pm at St Edward's. Open to everyone. There will be a talk about Advent, some time for private prayer in the church and a time for questions and sharing thoughts.

Second Collection Next 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 next weekend. Please do not use the yellow gift aid envelopes for this collection.

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

Advent to Christmas Carol Service at St. Swithun Wells Church, Fair Oak, on Sunday 10th December at 5.30pm. All are welcome. Please join us for mulled wine and mince pies afterwards!

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!

KSC Christmas cards designed by the pupils of St Swithun Wells school will be on sale after most Masses from this weekend. All for a good cause with all proceeds going towards local charities supported by the Knights of St Columba.

MESSAGES CONTINUED



Parish Christmas Party

Sunday 10th December, 1pm-4pm at St Swithun Wells Primary School

Menu: Main - Chicken (in a cream sauce with mushrooms and vegetables), a vegetarian option will be available; Dessert - To be confirmed; Please bring your own drinks.

Price £10 per person, children 16 and under free. We have kept the ticket price the same as last year (£10), however if you are able to pay more, please do so. In Holy Cross, St Andrew & St Edward's you can pay by contactless if you would prefer.

Tickets are available in our churches (in the welcoming areas) this weekend. A limited number of tickets is available, the **deadline for purchasing tickets is Sunday 3rd December.**

Admission by ticket only

Christmas jumpers and fancy dress actively encouraged!

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.

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.

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

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)

St Swithun Wells, Fair Oak - Christmas Card

CAFOD Collection: From 2nd December we are encouraging everyone to send one Christmas Card to church friends, and place it on our special notice-board 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).

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.

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

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

SCHOOL NOTICES

St Swithun Wells Catholic Primary School

Will be holding their annual Christmas Fair on **Thursday 7th December, starting at 3.30pm.** All are welcome!

MASS TIMES FOR OUR CHURCH COMMUNITIES

DATE	TIME	CHURCH	MASS INTENTION
Saturday 2nd Dec	9.30am 5.00pm 6.00pm 6.00pm 6.30pm	Holy Cross St Swithun Wells OLQA St Joseph St Edward	In Memoriam FM People of the Parish Herbert Howie RIP Anniversary Jessie Regan RIP
Sunday 3rd Dec <i>First 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> Kathleen Vaughan RIP For the Patino Porto Family Fr Marco (Wellbeing) Mrs Maureen Murphy (Wellbeing)
Monday 4th Dec	9.30am	Holy Cross	Fraternity of St Charles Akhil Sebastian RIP 1st Anniversary
Tuesday 5th Dec	10.00am 6.00pm	St Andrew St Edward	Special Intention Mary Uphill RIP FM
Wed 6th Dec	9.30am 9.30am 10.00am	Holy Cross OLQA St Edward	 Keith Small RIP
Thurs 7th Dec <i>St Ambrose</i>	9.30am 12 Noon 6.00pm	Holy Cross OLQA St Joseph	Phil Talbot RIP
Friday 8th Dec <i>The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary</i>	10.00am 10.00am <u>10.30am</u>	St Joseph St Edward <u>OLQA</u>	Deceased and Living Members of Rebecca's Family Intentions of the Layzell Family
Saturday 9th Dec	9.30am 5.00pm 6.00pm 6.00pm 6.30pm	Holy Cross St Swithun Wells OLQA St Joseph St Edward	Ellen Lane RIP FM Sr Eileen Farrell (Wellbeing) Intentions for Phil & Angie
Sunday 10th Dec <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

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 Mario Toma (Assistant Priest)
Tel: 023 8061 2430; E: mtoma@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 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