

THE WORD MADE FLESH

We have spent the last three weeks watching and waiting for the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ and rightly so.

Today and next weekend the gospel speaks of people who extol us to prepare and listen. John the Baptist, 'Prepare a way for the Lord', Mary, called to be Mother of Our Lord: 'Do whatever He tells you'. Both of these draw us more closely into a right relationship, one in which Christ not only comes to the stable in Bethlehem but is incarnate in our very being.

John the Baptist was given the grace to point out to the world 'the word made flesh'. The man he preceded was God made flesh and made flesh in order that we could be one with Him.

But without Our Blessed Lady there would have been no incarnation, no fulfilment of salvation history.

In December we have celebrated two significant Marian feasts: the Immaculate Conception and Our Lady of Guadalupe. Mary not only teaches by her example: a life without stain and sin, a life that is ordered and obedient, one who constantly draws up into a deeper relationship with her Son.

Last week a group of us completed a 33 day consecration to Our Lady as part of our Advent preparation. This was a wonderful opportunity to draw deeper and closer to the one who said 'Yes', who became the spouse of the Holy Spirit, who carried the Son of God in her very being. Pope St John Paul said 'you cannot love Mary too much but you must always love Jesus more'. Consecration to the heart of Mary calls us to a deeper commitment to the mother of all mothers, to the intercessor of all intercessors.

The church describes consecration to Jesus through Mary as a free and mature decision to live the life that is already ours in Baptism. It means to make our lives one continuous and resounding 'fiat' to the Lord's will. This is why Mary plays such a central role in our Advent preparation and in the whole of our Christian lives, showing us how to live the Christian life without reserve. Let us join with her in saying 'Let it be done to me according to your will'.

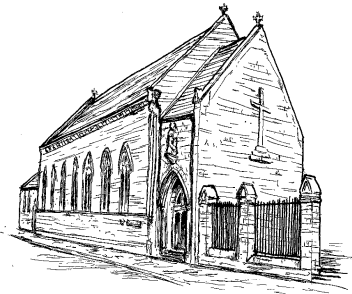
Come Lord Jesus Come.

Tina Quinn

THOUGHTS FOR THE WEEK:

1. John 'came as a witness' (3rd Sunday Gospel); who has 'witnessed' faith to you and affected your faith for the better? To whom have you been 'a witness'?
2. Like Isaiah (3rd Sunday's first reading) you too have been 'anointed' and sent! Who do you think God is sending you to?
3. Mary's 'plans' were, in a sense, interrupted by God (4th Sunday). When has God 'interrupted' your plans? How did you feel? What did you do? How did you respond?

Vincent Harvey



17 & 24 DECEMBER
2017

THIRD & FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

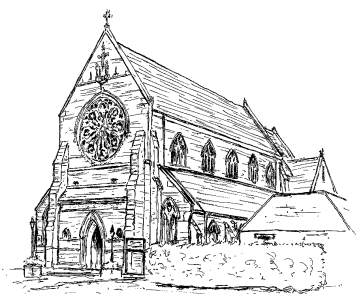


ST JOSEPH'S & ST EDMUND'S CITY CENTRE CATHOLIC PARISH SOUTHAMPTON

ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF
PORTSMOUTH REG. CHARITY NO. 246871

STELLA MARIS DEANERY
INCLUDES:

- ST. BONIFACE, SHIRLEY
- HOLY FAMILY, MILLBROOK
- ST. VINCENT DE PAUL,
LORDSWOOD
- IMMACULATE CONCEPTION,
PORTSWOOD
- CHRIST THE KING &
ST. COLMAN'S, BITTERNE
- OUR LADY OF ASSUMPTION,
HEDGE END
- ST BRIGID, WEST END
- ST. PATRICK'S, WOOLSTON
- THE ANNUNCIATION,
NETLEY ABBEY



TODAY SUNDAYS 17 & 24 DECEMBER

RETIRING COLLECTION TODAY is for *Christmas Flowers and decorations* and next weekend, **24/25 December**, the *Christmas collections are for our two priests*. Envelopes attached. Thank you for your generosity.

TODAY Advent we continue to 'await' the 'coming of God'. Let us prepare in such a way so as to experience in a real/concrete/substantial way, God in Christ as Christmas.

A CHRISTMAS GIFT FROM THE BISHOP! "This Christmas, as a help to the work of evangelisation across the Diocese, I wish to give a gift to everyone who comes to Christmas Mass – not only to the regularly practising but to all the Christmas attendees. A generous donor has provided me with 40,000 copies of Matthew Kelly's best-selling book "Rediscover Jesus" for distribution to all the faithful of our Diocese of Portsmouth". Please take your copy from the porch.

ALTAR SERVERS ... please sign up for Christmas Masses, and return the letter from Father Vincent and Father Ross for the celebration on St Stephen's Day (26 December).

THIS WEEK

FOR INFORMATION:

Mon: Day off: VH/RB

Tues Reconciliation Service: VH/RB/AP

Wed Team meeting: VH/RB/AP/TQ

Wednesday Lunch club: VH

Fri Teams of Our Lady: VH

CONFESSIONS IN POLISH 6pm Monday 18 December in St Edmund's Church.

ANNUAL ADVENT PENITENTIAL SERVICE *Tuesday 19 December at 7:30pm in St Edmund Church.* This is a great opportunity to celebrate God's immense love and mercy and to receive, if we wish, sacramental Absolution. A number of priests from the Pastoral Area will be here to assist and 'hear Confessions' for all who wish to avail themselves of this opportunity. This is the last time to celebrate sacramental reconciliation this side of Christmas. Come and 'be prepared' for the Coming of our God. **PENITENTIAL SERVICE** **please note**

CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER GROUP St Michael's, Bugle Street, Tuesdays 6pm—6:45pm.

BIG CHOIR PRACTISE FOR CHRISTMAS MIDNIGHT MASS AT ST EDMUND'S takes place at 7:30pm Wednesday 20 December. All choir members welcome to join.

POLISH COMMUNITY CRIB MAKING in the Our Lady Chapel, St Edmund's Church, Thursday evening 21 December and Saturday morning 23 December.

RCIA GROUP meet at 7:30pm on Thursdays in St Edmund's Hall, Rockstone Place for those enquiring about the Catholic Faith.

NEXT WEEK

PARISH OFFICE closed 25.12.17—2.1.18. Contact our priests on 023 8033 4891 if your call is urgent.

CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR MASS TIMES

ADVENT RECONCILIATION SERVICE

****TUESDAY 19 DECEMBER 2017****

7:30PM AT ST EDMUND'S

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

SATURDAY 23 DECEMBER 2017

5pm	CONFESSIONS IN POLISH	ST EDMUND'S
6:15pm	(1ST OF SUNDAY)	ST JOSEPH'S
7pm	SATURDAY MASS IN POLISH	ST EDMUND'S

SUNDAY 24 DECEMBER 2017

9am & 11am	SUNDAY MASS	ST EDMUND'S
10am	SUNDAY MASS	ST JOSEPH'S

CHRISTMAS EVE—SUNDAY 24 DECEMBER 2017

6:00 pm	CHRISTMAS FAMILY MASS	ST EDMUND'S
9:00 pm	CHRISTMAS MASS IN POLISH	ST EDMUND'S
11:30pm	CHRISTMAS NIGHT MASS	ST JOSEPH'S
11:30pm	CHRISTMAS NIGHT MASS	ST EDMUND'S

CHRISTMAS DAY - MONDAY 25 DECEMBER 2017

9:00 am	CHRISTMAS DAY MASS	ST EDMUND'S
10:00 am	CHRISTMAS DAY MASS	ST JOSEPH'S
11:00 am	CHRISTMAS DAY MASS	ST EDMUND'S

ST STEPHEN'S FEAST DAY - TUESDAY 26 DECEMBER

11:00am	ALTAR SERVERS MASS	ST EDMUND'S
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NEW YEAR'S DAY, MONDAY 1 JANUARY 2018

10:00am	MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD MASS	ST EDMUND'S
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GENERAL ITEMS

PARISH THEME: as we begin the 'New Liturgical Year' (with the Gospel of Mark) we pick up the theme of 'Peace'. November 2018 will see the 100th anniversary of the end of World War One. *As the year progresses, without doubt society, civic and religious, will be focusing on world peace, maybe more needed now than ever in our world history!* We in the Parish will pick up a different aspect/facet of peace each month, beginning in December/Advent with 'personal peace', 'at one with oneself, with others and God'.

POPE FRANCIS' INTENTION FOR DECEMBER: **The Elderly:** That the elderly, sustained by families and Christian communities, may apply their wisdom and experience to spreading the faith and forming the new generations.

EUCCHARISTIC CONGRESS takes place in Liverpool on the 7, 8 & 9 September 2018 (Friday-Sunday). Friday will be a 'Theological Symposium'; Saturday the Congress itself (Keynote Speakers: Cardinal Vincent Nichols and Bishop Robert Barron); Sunday Mass and Eucharistic Procession. If you are interested in attending let one of the Clergy know, or contact the Parish Office.

'A TIME OF PRAYER' after or before Sunday Mass once a month. Watch this space.

ADVENT: IDEAS

- Pop into Adoration at St Edmund during the week for a 'time of quiet' in the presence of our Eucharistic Lord
- Buy an 'Advent Booklet' to guide you through this period of 'expectant waiting'

PREPARING THE CHURCH FOR CHRISTMAS ST EDMUND'S BIG CHURCH CLEAN:

****Tuesday 19 December from 2pm—4pm****

HELP REQUIRED TO prepare the Church for Christmas with candles, stars, flowers etc. daily from 11:30am Saturday 16 December to Saturday 23 December.

SATURDAY MASS AND CONFESSIONS 23 DECEMBER CANCELLED (as previously advised). Please let people know. The only Masses on the 23rd will be the usual Mass in Polish at 7pm (St Edmund) and the Mass in English at 6:15pm (St Joseph).

STEWARDS / WELCOMERS / READERS / E. MINISTERS For Reconciliation Service and Christmas Masses

All offers of help greatly appreciated. Please add your name to the sign-up list at the back of the Church. (Altar Servers list in the Sacristy.)

SEMINARIAN: Kevin Conmee, a student for the Priesthood, currently studying in The Beda College, Rome, will be with us over the Christmas period (arriving on the 20 December until first week of January). The Presbytery will become his 'Diocesan base'.

WHEN BUYING CHRISTMAS GIFTS there are lots of opportunities to make ethical choices. If you feel you have enough already you can have fun with charity "World Gifts" from CAFOD for example where you give a card and someone in need receives the gift – a goat – chicken or even a toilet! <https://worldgifts.cafod.org.uk/> This year **Aid to the Church in Need** also have produced "Christmas Gifts of Faith" to support persecuted Christians <https://acnuk.org/get-involved/gifts-of-faith/>

INTERFAITH: 'THE SILK ROUTE CLUB' fundraising for 'Save the Children' on Saturday, 16th December from 10am-4pm: Authentic Syrian Cuisine: Crossfield Hall, Broadwater Road, Romsey, SO51 8GL. Tickets: Please register interest at: www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/syrian-cuisine-authentic-food-on-sale-tickets-39815747974 For more info contact us on: silkrouteclub@gmail.com

MEDJUGORJE IRISH CENTRE PILGRIMAGES 2018: 7 nights B&B and airport shuttle service from 279 euros per person. Book any flight—any time and we provide guaranteed airport shuttle service. Tel Jackie 0203 239 8662 or email reservations@med-irishcentre.com see noticeboards.

SIGN UP FOR BISHOP PHILIP'S WEEKLY E-NEWS: Bishop Philip invites you to sign up for his weekly e-Newsletter to keep in touch with the latest news and forthcoming events around the diocese. Visit www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/enews to register.



NAME A STAR to hang in the church at Christmas in memory of a loved one. Now available in both churches at £1.50 per star. All proceeds towards HCPT.

CARERS NEEDED—CATHOLIC HOME CARE are looking to recruit new carers to join a friendly and supportive team. If you like elderly people and have a few hours spare during the week this is the job for you. Car driver is an advantage (but not essential) and full training will be given. Success at the interview will lead to an enhanced DBS check before being appointed. Permanent and holiday cover carers are required. Full details and application form available from Anne Monaghan Tel 023 8017 0498. Closing date 5.1.2018.

QUIZ UPDATE: The next fund-raising Quiz Night [with Chili-con-Carne supper] **is scheduled for 7:30pm Saturday 20 January 2018**. Because of particular need, this time the evening's proceeds will go to **Catholic Home Care**. *More news about Asin'get School on the night.* ****Because of the current health of intended organisers, to make this Quiz actually happen, we need your help! We'll need a hand with the food [helping Roz with the preparation beforehand and serving on the night] and also with setting out the furniture in St Joseph's Hall on the day, as well as tidying up afterwards.**** If you feel you can spare an hour [or two] please call Ros Peters [07717 681 982] or Helmy Duyvesteijn [07831 22 7 602].

POITIERS CARE is a Catholic charity that delivers food to people who would otherwise go hungry. Since March this year, Poitiers has fed over 5,000 people in the Southampton area. This means each week 90 adults and 60 children have received food. Thank you to everyone who has donated food and money to Poitiers. They really value our help and hope we will continue to donate in the future. *They need people who would be willing to give 2 to 3 hours of their time to help them continue this important work. Some volunteers work weekly, others work monthly. Volunteers are needed to:*

- receive and stack the supplies (Monday morning)
- pack the bags for delivery (Thursday morning)
- deliver the bags (Friday morning)
- help with administration (Wednesday or Friday)

If you are interested in helping with this lovely charity, please call Kate Greaves 07894 441 775.

PLEASE PRAY FOR Father Vincent (full recovery), Kay Walshe (op. recovery), Dolina MacKinnon, Judy Brown, Karen Nugent, Andrea Reiter, Abbas Akperally, Lucky, Sujatha & Mano Disshnayake, Himat Amlani, Francis Ponniah, Daham Korlage, Kushmi, CA, Alan West, Jackie Galbraith, Joan Forbes, Keiran Walstall, Doris Leggett, Marisa Tellegen (op. recovery), John O'Reilly, Albie Escorcio, Carmen Escorcio, Linda Seikus, Bill Eastman, Shane Wing, Janice Cummings, Kathryn Morley, Carol Butt, Maureen Lee, Roy Reeves, Myra & Bosco Andrade, Joachim Rodrigues, Marie Adams, Ken Rouse, Donna Madden, Joyce Mguni, Jackie Duggan, Esther Pananwela, Noreen Kealy, Kay Kelly, Colm O'Riordan, Valerie Summerton, Simon Parry, Sue Tutton, Alex Boyle, Janette Brookes, Joy Grant, Joanne Cunio, Ludwig Basisty, Irene Green, JL, Malcolm Cross, O'Hanlon family, John Morris, Paul Sassu, Moyra Clearkin, Peter Scott, Phyllis Grattan, Maria Annunziata, Vera Morris, Perry Cunio, Mike Mantle, NW, Joe Sculley, Pauldia Grant and all parishioners on the prayer list who are ill, having surgery or treatment at this time.

MASS INTENTIONS FOR WEEK BEGINNING SUNDAYS 17 & 24 DECEMBER 2017

*(Key to City Centre Catholic Masses below are SJ = St Joseph's Church, Bugle Street, SO14 2AH and SE = St Edmund's Church, The Avenue, SO17 1XJ)

SAT	16 DECEMBER	VIGIL MASS	6:15PM SJ MICHAEL HOGAN RIP (MY) 7:00PM SE MASS IN POLISH
SUN	17 DECEMBER	THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT 'Gaudete'	9:00AM SE AGOSTINHO GONCALVES RIP (MG) 10:00AM SJ AMY PEARL ROBINSON RIP (JJR) 11:00AM SE CHEVALIER M.B. DISSANAYAKE RIP (DAD)— THANKSGIVING AND GOD'S BLESSINGS (ANUSHKA) 7:00PM SE PATRYK K, MONICA S & ANCESTORS—HEALING OF FAMILY TREE (RK)
TUES	19 DECEMBER	LITURGY OF THE DAY	10:00AM SE PADDY HANNIGAN RIP (F)
WED	20 DECEMBER	LITURGY OF THE DAY	7:00PM SE NIKOLA S & ANCESTORS—HEALING OF THE FAMILY TREE
THURS	21 DECEMBER	LITURGY OF THE DAY	12:15PM SJ CONCETTA OVERY RIP (JP)
FRI	22 DECEMBER	LITURGY OF THE DAY	7:00PM SE ROBERT & FAMILY—THANKSGIVING (RK)
SAT	23 DECEMBER	LITURGY OF THE DAY	<u>*11:00AM SE</u> ***NO 11AM MASS & CONFESSIONS*** 6:15PM SJ MARGARET SINCLAIR RIP (MY)
SUN	24 DECEMBER	FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT	9:00AM SE PEOPLE OF THE PARISH 10:00AM SJ PEOPLE OF THE PARISH 11:00AM SE JOY POLOUSE RIP (JS)
SUN	24 DECEMBER	THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD	6:00PM SE EVELYN NOLAN RIP (6TH BIRTHDAY ANNIV) (NLeP) 9:00PM SE MASS IN POLISH 11:30PM SJ PEOPLE OF THE PARISH 11:30PM SE PEOPLE OF THE PARISH
MON	25 DECEMBER	THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD	9:00AM SE JANUSZ EUGENIUSZ KOBYLINKSI (RIP) (DN) 10:00AM SJ ETHELDREDA CONWAY RIP (F) 11:00AM SE CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR BLESSINGS & THANKSGIVING TO THE WHOLE UNIVERSE FOR PEACE, LOVE & HARMONY; CHRISTMAS BLESSINGS TO JESUS CHRIST, OUR LADY & ALL THE SAINTS; DAHAM KORALAGE 30th & MICHAEL 50th BIRTHDAY—GOD'S BLESSINGS & THANKSGIVING (ANUSHKA PONNIAH)
TUES	26 DECEMBER	ST STEPHEN	11:00AM SE ALTAR SERVERS MASS OF THANKSGIVING
WED	27 DECEMBER	ST JOHN	7:00PM SE LESZEK & ANCESTORS—HEALING OF FAMILY TREE (RK)
THURS	28 DECEMBER	THE HOLY INNOCENTS	12:15PM SJ MRS MARY FINNERTY RIP (PMcA)
FRI	29 DECEMBER	ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY	7:00PM SE JUDY & MERVYN BROWN—50th WEDDING ANNIVERSARY—THANKSGIVING & GOD'S BLESSINGS (JB)
SAT	30 DECEMBER	LITURGY OF THE DAY	11:00AM SE PADDY, BRIDIE & TOMMY REILLY RIP (PR)

17 DECEMBER 2017
THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR B
Psalm Response: My soul rejoices in my God.
Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! The spirit of the Lord has been given to me. He has sent me to bring good news to the poor. Alleluia!

24 DECEMBER 2017
FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR B
Psalm Response: I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord.
Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! I am the handmaid of the Lord: let what you have said be done to me. Alleluia!

READINGS 31 DEC 2017—THE HOLY FAMILY
1st reading: Ecclesiasticus 3:2—6. 12—14
2nd reading: Colossians 3:12—21
Gospel Reading: Luke 2:22—40

Contact Details: Parish Priest: Mgr Canon Vincent Harvey
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Presbytery Tel. No: 023 8033 4891
Presbytery Address: 14 Rockstone Place, Southampton, SO15 2EQ
Deacon: Andy Philpott andrew.philpott@virginmedia.com
Pastoral Assistant: Tina Quinn Tel 023 8017 0497 (Mon-Wed)
Mobile 07827 810 457 email: tqinn@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk
Parish Secretary: Anne Wheeler

READINGS 24 DECEMBER 2017
FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR B
1st reading: 2 Samuel 7:1—5. 8—12. 14—16
2nd reading: Romans 16:25—27
Gospel Reading: Luke 1:26—38

2ND COLLECTION TODAY CHRISTMAS FLOWERS
CHRISTMAS COLLECTIONS 24/25.12.17 FOR OUR TWO PRIESTS

COLLECTIONS 10.12.17	1st	2nd CATHOLIC HOME CARE
Total	£2,718.31	£437.75
Cash	1,147.55	284.00
S / O	1,256.61	123.00
Gift Aid	314.15	30.75

Thank you for your generous contributions and gift aiding. Your donations make the life and work of the Parish possible.

CONFESSION TIMES
St Joseph's: Thursdays 11:45am
Saturdays 5:45pm