

19th December 2021

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR C

“Yes, blessed is she who believed that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled.

Luke 1:45

Immaculate Conception Church

Within the Pastoral Area of Southampton East
346 Portswood Road, Southampton, SO17 3SB

Tel: (023) 8055 5470

Website: www.immaculateconception.church

Email: office@immaculateconception.church

Facebook: Immaculate Conception Church, Portswood

Twitter: @icportswood

Parish Priest: Fr Antony Gatt

Hospital Chaplaincy: (023 8120 8517)

University Chaplain: Sr Emelliana Silva (07426 000213)

Safeguarding Officer: Pat Saunders


Parish Secretary: Rachel Brady (023 8055 5470)

Confessions: Saturdays, 10.30 am (after Mass)

Hall Bookings: contact the parish secretary

(currently available for regular bookings only)

ALL MASSES ADVERTISED BELOW ARE AVAILABLE TO JOIN LIVE, ONLINE AT
www.churchservices.tv/portswoodchur

Date	Solemnities & Feast days	Mass Times	Mass details & intentions	 SUNDAY'S READINGS 1st Reading: Micah 5:1-4 Psalm: 79:2-3,15-16,18-19 2nd Reading: Hebrews 10:5-10 Gospel: Luke 1:39-45
Sun 19 Dec	FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT	8.30 am 10.30 am	†Alfred Rosario RIP †Eileen Fallon RIP	
Mon 20 Dec	Liturgy of the Day	-	No Mass	
Tues 21 Dec	Liturgy of the Day	10.00 am	-	
Wed 22 Dec	Liturgy of the Day	10.00 am	-	
Thur 23 Dec	Liturgy of the Day	10.00 am	-	
Fri 24 Dec	CHRISTMAS EVE Vigil of the Nativity of the Lord	5.00 pm 8.30 pm 9.00 pm	Family Mass Carol Service Vigil Mass	
Sat 25 Dec	NATIVITY OF THE LORD	9.00 am	Christmas Day Mass	
Sun 26 Dec	FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH	8.30 am 10.30 am	†Alec Palmer RIP †Gobbi/O'Brien families RIP	

My dear Friends:

Well, here we are about to celebrate the Fourth Sunday of Advent! The Fourth Advent Candle is named the *Angel Candle*. It is the symbol of Jesus as the bearer of *Peace*. I think, possibly, Jesus, as *Weaver of Peace* might be a more accurate description! Jesus came among us to weave us together, a global family, woven and bonded together, by God's love, peace, justice compassion and forgiveness. As we hear in today's gospel, Mary's cousin, Elizabeth, experienced her child 'leaping with joy' when Mary visited them.

The warm and beautiful Christmas 'scene' of salvation is created! After months of anxiety, fear and disappointment about Covid 19, we await in a state of excited exaltation, with renewed hope, to celebrate with family and friends, Jesus' birth. Then, out of the blue, the gathering of threatening clouds in the form of the mutant virus! *Omicron*, appears in our midst! However, it was into a world of fear and darkness that Jesus, the Light of the World, was born. At this moment in time, when our world sometimes feels filled with uncertainties, fears and anxieties, that same Light of Hope, Faith, Joy and Peace (symbolised in the Advent candles) is born again!

Like the shepherds and Magi, we will experience that 'guiding star' of God's loving presence to help and guide us in these challenging times. We know that the Jesus, whose birth we are celebrating, walks every step of this ever-evolving Covid experience with us. His love embraces us. It supports us. It assures us that we are not alone on this journey. Like Mary, especially in our love and compassion, we can become the *God-Bearer* for the people we meet each day. Each one of us, in our words and actions, can be a light in their darkness; a fountain of hope in their distress; a source of comfort in their loneliness and isolation... In the words, I have quoted from Teresa of Avila, in my 'Christmas Blessings':

Christ has no body now but yours. No hands, no feet on earth but yours. Yours are the eyes through which he looks compassion on this world. Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good. Yours are the hands through which he blesses all the world. Yours are the hands, yours are the feet, yours are the eyes, you are his body. Christ has no body now on earth but yours

Remember me as loving you,
Fr. Antony

ITEMS FOR THIS WEEKEND:

READERS FOR SUNDAY 10.30 MASSES

Please would all 10.30 readers, including new readers meet briefly in the church with Chris Nwoguh **after 10.30 am Sunday Mass this weekend.** Thank you

URGENT

READERS & STEWARDS AVAILABILITY FOR CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR MASSES

We still need more volunteers for all of these Masses. Please could readers and stewards please use the sign up sheets in the church porch THIS WEEKEND to let us know your availability for the following services:

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| *Christmas Eve 5 pm | *Christmas Eve 9.00 pm |
| *Christmas Day 9.00 am | *New Year's Eve 11.15 pm |
| *New Year's Day 10.30 am | |

TEA AND COFFEE AFTER MASSES

Please join us in the hall for refreshments after the 10 am Mass on Saturday and 10.30 am Sunday Mass this weekend



CHRISTMAS NATIVITY CELEBRATION 2021

Immaculate Conception
Sunday 19th December
2.30pm – 3.30pm

Some of our parishioners including some of our younger members have worked very hard to put together this special celebration. Please do come along to support them and begin this season of Christmas. All welcome.

FATHER CHRISTMAS IS COMING TODAY!

He will be in the hall TODAY Sunday 19th after the nativity in the church. Due to COVID numbers have to be limited. Parish children aged 1 to 10. Parents must book a place on the sheet in the porch, available before Sunday masses.



CHRISTMAS HAMPERS RAFFLE

Thank you for all donations received so far. Any others need to be handed in TODAY, Sunday 19th December. The raffle will be drawn on 22nd December. Tickets on sale after weekend Masses for £1 each.



OTHER PARISH NOTICES:

CHRISTMAS CARD POST BOX

Available in the porch, please just sanitize your hands before using it! It will be on the shelf near the bookshop and will be removed on the Epiphany.

PARISH CHARITY CHRISTMAS CARDS NOW ON SALE

Christmas Cards beautifully made by Sue Deadman are now available to buy in the Bookshop before and after weekend Masses. All proceeds to parish charities. Also in the bookshop a range of other cards and religious items/gifts.

HELP WITH CLEANING AFTER 10.30 AM SUNDAY MASS

We would very much welcome offers of more help to clean up around the church after the 10.30 am Mass on Sundays, so that we can set up a rota requiring a commitment of no more than one Sunday a month per volunteer. This is a fairly quick, easy task and the more helpers we have the easier it is on everyone!

If you are willing to help, please let Mary Gobbi or Fr Antony know.

NEW FIRST HOLY COMMUNION PROGRAMME

CLOSING DATE COMING UP



Our next First Holy Communion programme will be beginning in February. If you would like to register your child to begin this programme please contact the parish office as soon as possible to request a registration form by email, or pick one up at the back of the church. Please return all forms, copies of baptism certificates and payment to the parish office before 31st December 2021.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS FROM

JOHN & MARYVONNE TIPPER, TEIGNMOUTH, DEVON

Dear friends

John & I wish you all a very Happy, peaceful & healthful Christmas. I think of you often, especially the 8.30 regulars! Omicron has put paid to so many plans, including our own to spend a festive week in Dublin with Katie and family : we cancelled the flights last week due to the many concerns surrounding the trip. Our second Christmas in glorious Devon will be chez Marie-Claire, David & their 3 boys so it will be noisy but nice. I volunteer at Teign Comprehensive, listening to slower readers & I will be a helpful elf at St. Michael's Church this Christmas - - I don't have to dress up! John & I keep well with long walks at Teignmouth beach - - not far away. We would love to hear from you.

John & Maryvonne

SECOND COLLECTIONS:-

TODAY, SUNDAY 19TH DECEMBER

- No Collection

CHRISTMAS MASSES 24TH & 25TH DECEMBER

- Parish Priest

The collections at the Christmas Masses are all donated to the parish priest. This is an important part of clergy income. Apart from this they depend on a limited stipend from the Diocese. Please be as generous as you can. Envelopes will be available to put your donation in. Alternatively donations can be made on line via the following page:

<https://donate.giveasyoulive.com/fundraising/southampton-immaculate-conception-catholic-church-christmas-collection-2022>

For all donations given in ANY envelope – purple, yellow, brown or your own, PLEASE MAKE IT CLEAR WHAT YOUR DONATION IS FOR, so that we can ensure it goes to the fund to which it was intended, ie General Fund (Offertory collection) or the name of the second collection you are donating to. **If you are registered with the parish for gift aid, please also ensure your gift aid number is given on the envelope.**

The Parish Bank Account details are:

Name: PRCDTR Immaculate Conception Church, Sort Code: 30-93-04, Account No: 00887995

PORTSMOUTH DIOCESE E NEWS

<https://mailchi.mp/portsmouthdiocese/issue347?e=34c55ac6ce>

COVID UPDATES

Should there be any changes in relation to current Covid precautions, Fr Antony will update on these at the end of Masses and a link to any relevant information will also be added to the front page of the parish website.

PERMIT PARKING OFF PORTSWOOD ROAD

For anyone who comes to the church during the week for more than a couple of hours, please be aware that parking restrictions will come into force on 1st February 2022 on some of the side roads opposite the church, allowing 2 hour parking only, Monday – Friday. . Belgrave Road remains unrestricted at all times.

CHARITY APPEALS:

MARY'S MEALS BIG FAMILY CHRISTMAS

Give until 31 January 2022 and your donation will be doubled by a group of generous supporters, up to £1.6 million – meaning we can reach even more hungry children with life-changing school meals.

<https://bigfamilychristmas.marysmeals.org.uk/big-family-christmas-table>

AFGANISTAN CRISIS APPEAL

CAFOD is combining efforts with the DEC (Disasters Emergency Committee) to launch the Afghanistan Crisis Appeal. In Afghanistan, 8 million people are on the brink of famine because of drought, collapsing economy, food shortages, conflict, and COVID. CAFOD is supporting sister Caritas agencies to reach communities most in need with food, clean water, and fuel. During Advent, when we open ourselves to the needs of others, let's do all that we can to save lives. You can donate on the CAFOD website at cafod.org.uk/AfghanistanAppeal and please pray for the people of Afghanistan.

SOUTHAMPTON CATHOLIC SCHOOLS INFO:



SPRINGHILL CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL - APPLICATIONS FOR NEW RECEPTION CHILDREN STARTING IN

2022 Closing date: 15th January 2022.

Click [here](#) to apply for a school place online directly through Southampton

City Council. Additionally you should complete [this](#) supplementary information form and submit it with supporting documentation, as per Springhill Catholic Primary School's Admissions Policy 2022-23. The school are also offering Tour dates as follows to any prospective parents:

Friday, 10 December at 9:30am

Tuesday, 4 January at 9:30am

ST ANNES CATHOLIC SCHOOL CONSULTATION ADMISSIONS ARRANGEMENTS SEPTEMBER 2023

As required by regulations the governing body of St Anne's Catholic School, Southampton, SO15 2WZ is conducting a consultation which is open for feedback now until 29/12/21, on its proposed admissions arrangements for the school year 2023 – 2024.

Please see our website below for further information and to review the proposed admissions arrangements:

https://www.st-annes.uk.com/web/admissions_consultation/254331

Any feedback is welcome and should be emailed to info@st-annes.uk.com with the subject 'Admissions Guidance 2023-24 Consultation'.

St Anne's Admissions Team



PARISH OFFICE HOURS NEXT WEEK

Tues, Weds & Thurs 9.30 am – 4.30 pm,