



# IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CATHOLIC CHURCH

**SUNDAY 21<sup>st</sup> December – SUNDAY 4<sup>th</sup> January 2026**

*"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel" - which means, God with us.."* **Matthew 1:18-24**

**Our Parish vision is to bring people closer to Christ  
by inviting, welcoming, nurturing and nourishing everyone**

## CHRISTMAS OFFERING FOR FR. ANTHONY

Christmas is a moment to appreciate the people who quietly shape our lives – and for our parish, that's surely Fr Anthony. Week after week he guide us, pray for us, support our families, and faithfully leads our community with gentleness, wisdom, and a great deal of love. The Christmas Collection is one of the few opportunities we have to give something back. Your offering – whatever you're able to give – helps sustain his ministry and says a simple but heartfelt "thank you" for all he pours into our parish.

If you're not able to contribute financially, your prayers are just as meaningful. Every gift and every prayer reminds him that his ministry truly matters. This Christmas, let's show Fr Anthony how much he is appreciated. Thank you for your generosity, your kindness, and your support.

To help with the Christmas offering, we would like to suggest that you can make your donation in one of the following ways: An envelope marked **"Clergy Christmas Offering"**, using the Contactless terminal in the Porch or transfer directly into the Parish bank account -

Account Name - CDP Southampton Immaculate Conception

Sort code: 30-93-04

Account: 00887995

**Note: Please make sure you reference "Christmas Offering"**

**Address:** 346 Portswood Road, Southampton, SO17 3SB

**Tel:** (023) 8055 5470

**Website:** [www.immaculateconception.church](http://www.immaculateconception.church)

**Email:** [office@immaculateconception.church](mailto:office@immaculateconception.church)

**Facebook:** Immaculate Conception Church, Portswood

**Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth, (Reg Charity No: 1199568)**

**Bank details:** CDP, Immaculate Conception Church

Sort Code: 30-93-04

Account No: 00887995

**Parish Priest:** Fr Anthony Chiatu

**Parish Deacon:** Dcn Gerard Dailly

**Hospital Chaplaincy:** (023 8120 8517)

**University Chaplain:** Sr Emelliana Silva (07426 000213)

**Safeguarding Officer:** Laura Sparmann

(safeguarding@immaculateconception.church)

**Parish Administrator:** Cynthia Barretto(023 8055 5470)

**Confessions:** After 10 am Mass on Saturdays

**Hall Bookings:** Contact the Parish office

Parish Office will be **closed** from Thursday, 25th December through 5<sup>th</sup> Jan

**ALL MASSES ADVERTISED BELOW ARE AVAILABLE TO JOIN  
LIVE, ONLINE AT  
[www.churchservices.tv/portswoodchur](http://www.churchservices.tv/portswoodchur)**

### REGULAR MASS TIMES

Sunday	8.30 am & 10.30 am
Monday	No Mass
Tuesday	10.00 am
Wednesday	10.00 am
Thursday	10.00 am
Friday	10.00 am
Saturday	10.00 am
Holy days of Obligation	10 am & 7.30 pm

### CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR MASS TIMES

	Daily Morning Mass	10 am
Christmas Eve	Family Mass	5:30 pm
Wednesday 24 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Carol Service	10 pm
	Christmas Vigil Mass	10:30 pm
Christmas Day	Day Mass	9:30 am
Thursday 25 <sup>th</sup> Dec		
St Stephen's Day	Mass (All altar servers encouraged to attend)	10 am
Friday 26 <sup>th</sup> Dec		
Feast Of Holy Family	Mass	8:30 am & 10:30 am
Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup> Dec		
New Year's Eve	Daily Morning Mass	10:00 am
Wednesday 31 <sup>st</sup> Dec	New Year Vigil Mass	11 pm
Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God		
Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup> Jan	New Year's Day Mass	11 am
Feast Of the Epiphany	Mass( Holy day of obligation)	10 am
Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> Jan		

## TODAY'S GOSPEL REFLECTION:

### Saint Joseph, Our Patron and Protector

*Such was his intention when, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her." Matthew 1:20*

Joseph knew that the penalty for adultery was death by stoning. His heart must have been deeply conflicted. On one hand, the virtues of his betrothed wife, Mary, were abundantly clear. Mary radiated holiness. Impurity was foreign to her Immaculate Heart. Yet she was pregnant, and Joseph was not the father. What should he do?

To protect Mary from public shame, Joseph decided to do what he believed was the most merciful thing—he “decided to divorce her quietly. Such was his intention...” Though little is known about Joseph, this Gospel passage identifies him as “a righteous man.” Many saints, popes, and Church documents highlight his unquestionable sanctity. He was not immaculate and free from sin as was his wife, but God the Father would have chosen a righteous and holy man to be the foster father of the Son of God.

Joseph's actions reveal his deep faith. As he slept, “the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, ‘Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her.’” The angel explained to him that Isaiah prophesied that the Messiah would be born of a virgin (see Isaiah 7:14) and that Joseph was to take Mary and her unborn Son into his home and care for them. When he awoke, he did as the angel commanded.

Joseph's dream was no ordinary dream. The Holy Spirit accompanied the angel and instilled the certitude of faith in Joseph's mind, empowering his will to obey God's will. Joseph became the father and guardian of the Savior of the World. On December 8, 1847, Pope Pius IX declared Saint Joseph to be the Universal Patron and Protector of the Catholic Church. Just as he protected the Son of God, so he intercedes for us who are members of Christ's body, the Church.

As our Advent season enters its final week, we are reminded of the role that Jesus' foster father played not only in the life of the Holy Family, but also about the role Saint Joseph continues to play in the life of the Church and in each one of our lives. His intercessory power from Heaven is great, and we should not hesitate to call upon his prayers, especially when we need protection, struggle with fear, or face some grave challenge.

Reflect today on your personal devotion to Saint Joseph. Ponder, especially, his deep faith and obedience to the will of God as was communicated to him in a dream. Strive to imitate that obedience in your own life, never hesitating to undertake the mission God has given you. Turn to Saint Joseph in prayer and know that his powerful intercession will help protect you and win God's grace in the areas you need it the most.

*A reflection for Fourth Sunday of Advent (Year A)*

[www.mycatholic.life](http://www.mycatholic.life)

**If you like to read these Sunday Gospel reflections, future weeks this month can be found at**

<https://mycatholic.life/upcoming-reflections/#cal>

## PARISH NOTICES

### Christmas Family Mass - 24th December, 5.30pm

Children will receive invitations in the next two weeks.

Families are asked to bring a “present for Jesus” at the Offertory, which will be shared with those in need. Children may also add prayers or wishes to our Wish Tree for 2025-2026 and come in party clothes or Nativity costumes if they prefer.

### Winter Night Shelter – Volunteers Needed

In January, Christian volunteers will run a Winter Night Shelter for homeless and vulnerable people. There are three shifts: Evening (7.00–9.30pm), Through the Night (9.30pm–6.30am), and Breakfast (6.30–8.00am). Each shift will have a Team Leader and 3–4 helpers. If you can assist on any shift, please contact Steve Deadman (07540 229973) or Paul Woodman (07387 108669). This shelter has been a vital service in our city for many years, offering warmth and care to those most in need.

MASS READINGS

21 <sup>st</sup> Dec	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Reading:</b> Isaiah 7:10-14 <b>Psalm:</b> 24(23):1-2. 3-4b. 5-6. <i>R</i> cf. 6 <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Reading:</b> Romans 1:1-7 <b>Gospel:</b> Matthew 1:18-24
25 <sup>th</sup> Dec	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Reading:</b> Isaiah 52:7-10 <b>Psalm:</b> 98(97):1. 2-3b. 3c-4. 5-6. <i>R</i> 3cd <b>2nd Reading:</b> Hebrews 1:1-6 <b>Gospel:</b> John 1:1-18
28 <sup>th</sup> Dec	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Reading:</b> Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14 <b>Psalm:</b> 128(127):1-2. 3. 4-5. <i>R</i> 1a <b>2nd Reading:</b> Colossians 3:12-21 <b>Gospel:</b> Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23
1 <sup>st</sup> Jan	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Reading:</b> Numbers 6:22-27 <b>Psalm:</b> Ps 67(66):2-3. 5. 6, 8. <i>R</i> 2a <b>2nd Reading:</b> Galatians 4:4-7 <b>Gospel:</b> Luke 2:16-21
4 <sup>th</sup> Jan	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Reading:</b> Sirach 24:1-2, 8-12 <b>Psalm:</b> 147: 12-13. 14-15. 19-20. <i>R</i> 12a <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Reading:</b> Ephesians 1:3-6, 15-18 <b>Gospel:</b> John 1:1-18
6 <sup>th</sup> Jan	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Reading:</b> Isaiah 60:1-6 <b>Psalm:</b> 72(71):1-2. 7-8. 10-11. 12-13. <i>R</i> cf. 11 <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Reading:</b> Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6 <b>Gospel:</b> Matthew 2:2

MASS INTENTIONS THIS MONTH

Tue 20 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Ann Dunkley RIP
Sun 21 <sup>st</sup> Dec, 8:30am	Dear member of McCarthy'st Dunn's family RIP
Sun 21 <sup>st</sup> Dec, 10:30am	Deceased members of the Doherty & Gough families RIP
Tue 23 <sup>rd</sup> Dec	Martin Jonsela RIP & Ronnie Castelino RIP
Fri 26 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Aleck Palmer RIP
Sun 28 <sup>th</sup> Dec, 10:30am	Coyle family RIP
Fri 2 <sup>nd</sup> Jan	Wilfred Perera RIP
Sun 4 <sup>th</sup> Jan, 8:30am	Roland and Annabel Surlis RIP

DIOCESAN MEDAL RECIPIENTS

Anne Brady  
Brian Stephen Physick  
Lawrence Vella  
Margaret Tollerton (Fry)  
Veronica White



Anne Brady would also like to thank the Parish for remembering her and arranging for the Diocesan Medal and Certificate.



### Grateful For Every Part You Play

As we come to the close of this year, I want to offer my heartfelt thanks to God and to each one of you for all that we have shared as a parish community.

Over the past twelve months, our parish has continued to grow and to serve because of your faithfulness and generosity. In so many ways, large and small, visible and unseen, you have given of your time, your energy, and your care. These quiet acts of service and kindness have sustained the life of the parish and ensured that it remains a place of welcome, prayer, and hope for all who come through our doors.

One of the great blessings of this year was the beautiful celebration of the 70th anniversary of the dedication of our church. That moment allowed us to give thanks for the generations who have worshipped here before us and to rejoice in the living faith of our parish today. It was a joyful reminder that we are part of something enduring, built on prayer, sacrifice, and love. I am deeply grateful for all that you do and for the spirit with which you do it. Please know that you are remembered in my prayers and that your contribution truly matters. As we look ahead, I warmly encourage you to continue walking with me, and I joyfully welcome anyone who feels called to become more involved in this shared life of faith and service.

As we celebrate the birth of Christ, I wish you and your families a blessed, peaceful, and joy-filled Christmas. Thank you, sincerely, for being such an important part of our parish family.

With gratitude and every blessing,

Fr Anthony.