IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CATHOLIC CHURCH

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

"For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance." - Matthew 25:14-30

• **Parish Priest:** Fr Anthony Chiatu • **Parish Deacon:** Dcn Gerard Dailly • Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth (Registered Charity No. 1199568) • **Parish Administrator:** Cynthia Barretto • **Safeguarding:** safeguarding@immaculateconception.church • **Confessions:** After 10am Mass on Saturdays • **Hospital Chaplaincy:** (023) 8120 8517 • **University Chaplain:** Sr Emelliana Silva (07426 000213) • **Address:** 346 Portswood Road, Southampton SO17 3SB • **Website:** www.immaculateconception.church • **Facebook:** Immaculate Conception Church, Portswood • **Tel:** (023) 8055 5470 • **Email:** office@immaculateconception.church
PARISH OFFICE TIMINGS: Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday 9:00-3 pm, Friday 9-4pm, Monday Closed
• **Bank Details:** CDP, Immaculate Conception Church • Sort Code: 30-93-04 • Account No: 00887995

ALL MASSES LISTED BELOW ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE TO JOIN LIVE on our website or www.churchservices.tv/portswoodchur

Solemnities, Feast days & Memorials	Times & Liturgies		Mass Intentions
Sun 15 November *THIRTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME*	8.30 am 10.30 am	Mass Mass	Lou O'Shea (RIP) Coyle family RIP
Mon 16 November *ST EDMUND OF ABINGDON*	***-NO MASS-***		
Tue 17 November *St Hilda*	9.00 am 10.00 am	Eucharistic Adoration Mass	--
Wed 18 November *Dedication of the Basilicas of St Peter & St Paul*	10 am 6pm	Mass Eucharistic Adoration	--
Thu 19 November *Feria*	10 am	Mass	Lorance Perera RIP
Fri 20 November *Feria*	9.00 am 9.30 am 10.00 am	Eucharistic Adoration Rosary Mass	Wilfred Perera RIP
Sat 21 November *The Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary*	10 am	Mass Confessions after Mass	Tonney Fernado RIP
Sun 22 November *OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, KING OF THE UNIVERSE*	8.30 am 10.30 am	Mass Family Mass	Cecilia Randall RIP Teodosio Rodrigues RIP

Second Collection*: Sunday 15 November, *Priests' Retirement Fund: On the weekend of 14/15 November, we will hold our first Second Collection for the Priests' Retirement Fund. This is an opportunity to support the priests who have faithfully served our parishes and communities throughout their lives. After decades of ministry, our retired priests deserve the security of knowing that the care and support they may need in later life will always be available. Your donation will help ensure that they can live with dignity and peace of mind in retirement. Donation envelopes will be available with printed newsletters and at all Masses that weekend. You can also give using the Dona contactless terminal in church by selecting Priests' Retirement Fund Second Collection. If you would like to support the Fund on an ongoing basis, regular gifts by Direct Debit or standing order are especially valuable. To make a regular or one-off donation, and to read more about the Fund, please visit: www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/support-our-work/priests-retirement-fund-2 . There you can read Bishop Philip's message about the importance of supporting our retired priests and hear Fr John Nelson, Chair of the Priests' Retirement Fund Committee, explain how the Fund helps those who have dedicated their lives to serving Christ's Church. Our retired priests remain a valued part of our Church family. Just as we would support our own loved ones in later life, we are invited to care for those who have cared for us. Please support this appeal as generously as you can.

SUNDAY READINGS

1st Reading: Proverbs 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31
'She does him good, and not harm'

Psalm: Ps 128(127):1-2. 3. 4-5. R1a
Blessed are all who fear the Lord.

2nd Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6
For you are all children of light

Gospel: Matthew 25:14-30
..enter into the joy of your master

OTHER REGULAR WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

All are welcome to join!

- Mon- The Monday fun for all Cooking sessions 10 am – 1 pm, Church Hall kitchen
- Tues- Tea & Coffee after 10 am Mass – Church Hall
- Thurs- Maintaining the parish gardens – from 10:30 am
  Multicultural group – 10:30 am in the Church Hall
- Sun- Refreshments after 10.30 am Mass-Church Hall

Come along, meet new people, and enjoy being part of our parish community.

Gospel Reflection: 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)
Commentary by Deacon Andrew Collins

We are rapidly approaching the end of the Liturgical Year. Next weekend, we celebrate the great Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe before beginning our preparation for his incarnation at Christmas. This weekend, however, Jesus leaves us with the parable of the servants and the talents, with its provocative conclusion.

What are we to make of the servant who did not dare to venture out with his single talent? Is the 'moral' of the story, verse 29, "to everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away" an operational principle of the Kingdom of God?

It is easy to get caught up in looking at the monetary aspect of the parable. The sums are huge, a single talent would be similar in value today to six hundred thousand pounds, with a denarius being a day's wages, a little over a hundred pounds for an eight-hour shift on minimum wages, and six thousand of those to a talent. The money entrusted to each servant is vast, likewise the profit gained by the first two servants in doubling the return to their master. However, to focus on this leads us down a path where we can see this as an excuse for exploitation and greed, as Bertolt Brecht does in his criticism of business practices and social conditions in his Threepenny Novel, which features a memorial sermon based on our Gospel reading following the sinking of a warship, launched in unseaworthy conditions by the greedy owners.This is not the God we recognise. Instead, we need to move away from financial rewards and understand the money given to the servants as the generous gifts which we receive from God, but which remain his, not ours. They are on loan from God, through Christ, the master in the parable, to each of us; they are our commissions. We have received these, each according to our abilities. The first two servants get to work immediately, an indication of their obedience. It is always important to be ready for the master's return. We are called to be active. It is the servants who do the work, not the talents. They are bearing the fruit which Christ calls each of us to do. The third servant, in burying the single talent he has received. He keeps it safely hidden away, not putting it to work, failing to bear fruit.

When the Master returns, as Jesus will at the last, the servants are called to account, the first two bringing the fruits of their labours, and are rewarded alike, irrespective of the amount earned. The third; the return of his gift unused. His fear of his master has led to a defensive attitude which fails to yield fruit. Fear is a bad advisor.

The last two verses are no longer a metaphor but speak directly of the last judgement. Matthew adds 'in abundance ' to remind us that the rewards in the final judgement are a gift which far exceeds what we earn with our deeds. Eternal life is not an addition to the deeds; it is something different. Thus, Jesus, the slave owner of the parable is shown to be a trustworthy master rather than a cruel speculator.

The meaning for us today is clear. Jesus, through the gifts of faith we have received, is calling us to action, to do something positive with them, to contribute to his Kingdom in a meaningful way through good works.

A commentary from The Liturgy Project

PARISH NOTICES



First Holy Communion: Preparation classes for children enrolled in the First Holy Communion Programme will begin on Sunday, 29 November, at 9:30am in the Church Hall. If you have registered and have not yet been contacted by the First Holy Communion team, please email the Parish Office as soon as possible. Please note that registrations are now closed. Any new applications will need to be submitted for next year's programme.

BE READY – A LITTLE PREPARATION GOES A LONG WAY

You may have heard about the UK Government's Be Ready campaign. This is a national initiative encouraging individuals, families and communities to take a few simple steps to prepare for unexpected situations that could temporarily disrupt everyday life.

This might include severe weather, flooding or a power cut, which could affect electricity, water supplies, mobile phone networks, internet access or the ability to get to the shops. The message is a positive and straightforward one: being prepared is about being sensible, not being worried. The Government is encouraging households, where they are able, to think about how they could manage for up to three days (72 hours) if normal services were temporarily disrupted.

There are some simple things we can all consider:

- Food and water: Keep a small supply of bottled drinking water and food that does not need refrigeration or cooking. The recommendation is three days' worth, but you can build this up gradually.
- Light and warmth: Have a torch, spare batteries and some warm clothing or blankets available.
- Keeping in touch: Make sure you have important telephone numbers written down, as well as a way of receiving information if the internet or mobile networks are unavailable.
- Everyday essentials: Think about any essential medication, first aid supplies or other items that you or your family might need.
- Looking after one another: Keep in touch with family, friends and neighbours. A little thought about who might need some extra help can make a real difference.

There is no need to rush out and buy lots of things or spend money unnecessarily. Many households will already have some of these items. The advice is to start by checking what you have, think about what you might need and add to it gradually when convenient.

The campaign also recognises that some people may need additional support. Checking whether you are eligible for the Priority Services Register, which helps utility companies identify customers who may need extra assistance during service interruptions, is another useful step. If you depend on electricity for medical reasons, you can also ask your electricity supplier to add you to their free Priority Services Register.

The PSR - The Priority Services Register (PSR) is a free UK wide service which provides extra advice and support, including when there's an interruption to your electricity or gas supply - https://www.thepsr.co.uk/

HOW CAN WE HELP EACH OTHER?

Following recent government advice that we should all be prepared for emergencies such as power cuts or disruption to food supplies, our parish wants to make sure that no one is left alone if such a time comes.

We are putting together a confidential list of parishioners who may need extra help, so that we can check on you, and offer practical support such as a phone call, food or a lift to somewhere warm.

You may wish to add your name if, for example, you:

- are elderly and live alone
- are housebound or have limited mobility
- rely on electrical medical equipment
- have a serious illness or disability

- have no family or friends nearby
- care for someone who is vulnerable
- are a family with young children who would struggle in an emergency

If this is you, or someone you know (with their permission), please contact the Parish Office or speak to Fr Anthony Dcn Gerard or Anastasia after Mass. Forms are also available at the back of the church. Your details will be kept private, held securely by a small team, and used only to offer you help.

If you have any concerns about the Be Ready campaign, feel that you may need some assistance, or would simply like to talk to someone about what it means for you, please contact the Parish Office in the first instance.

We appreciate that everyone has different circumstances and that not everyone will be able to do everything suggested. Please do not feel embarrassed about asking for help. We would much rather hear from you so that we can understand your concerns and see what support or advice may be available. For further information, the Government's official website provides helpful advice and a practical checklist: https://beready.campaign.gov.uk/

Let's take a few simple steps, stay connected and continue looking after one another.

"Bear one another's burdens" (Galatians 6:2). Let us look out for one another.

BE READY – STAY CONNECTED – LOOK OUT FOR ONE ANOTHER.

- **Second Collection - 29 November - Christmas Flowers:** Donations from the second collection will go towards our **Christmas flowers**, helping to decorate the church for Christmas celebrations.
- **THE MONDAY FUN FOR ALL COOKING SESSIONS- 10.00AM TO 1.00PM IN PARISH HALL**
  We meet at 10am and prepare the vegetables and other items, getting ready to cook soups and other dishes, depending on what has been brought and given by donations. NO COSTS OR FEES. We cook and then sit down about 12.30 to share the prepared items and chat happily, with teas and coffees too. PLEASE COME AND JOIN US, HELP GIVEN IF NEEDED AND WE WILL ALL SHARE AND WORK TOGETHER.
- **St George Catholic College Quiz Night:** St George Catholic College invites all parishioners, families and friends to a Quiz Night on Thursday 26 November 2026. Come as a team or join one on arrival. Tickets: £5 adults (includes a drink) and £3 children. Refreshments and a raffle will also be available. For details, contact cmcgrath@stgcc.co.uk.
- **Could you help shape the future of St Anne's?** St Anne's Catholic School and Sixth Form College in Southampton is seeking Foundation Governors. This voluntary role offers an opportunity to support young people and help guide the future of our school, rooted in its Catholic mission and the tradition of the La Sainte Union Sisters. No previous governance experience is needed; support and training are available. To find out more, visit https://st-annes.uk.com/joining-us/as-a-governor or email pahead@st-annes.uk.com to arrange an informal conversation with the Headteacher.
- **Christmas Chocolate Appeal – 2026**: Can you help us give a Christmas chocolates to Seafarers in Southampton this December? Stella Maris meets and supports seafarers around the world. We want to show them that they are not forgotten this Christmas, so we're planning to collect hundreds of chocolate Christmas presents for seafarers visiting the Southampton ports in the days before Christmas. We need to prepare now.



- **Church Bookshop:** pre-Christmas sales on selected items have now begun. £2 raffle tickets are available for a chance to win a Christmas Hamper worth £25. Please visit the Bookshop for details



Who's got a beard that's long and white?
A very special visitor will be arriving at out Church on 6 December! Watch this space for more details about our Christmas Grotto!