



# IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CATHOLIC CHURCH

8<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2024 - TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

*'Courage! Do not be afraid. Look, your God is coming.*

*Isaiah 35,4*

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

**Address:** 346 Portswood Road, Southampton, SO17 3SB  
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**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 Secretary:** Cecilia Kovacs (023 8055 5470)  
**Confessions:** After 10 am Mass on Saturdays  
**Hall Bookings:** contact the parish secretary

**PARISH OFFICE OPEN NEXT WEEK: Tuesday 10:30 3.30 pm, Wednesday and Thursday 1pm-5pm, Friday, 10:00 am – 3 pm**

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

Date	Solemnities & Feast days	Times & Liturgies		Mass Intentions
Sun 8 September	<b>23RD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME</b>	8.30 am 10.30 am	Mass Mass (Childrens)	<b>Only at 10:30:</b> Bryan Rosario RIP & Members of the Maxfield & Deadman family RIP
Mon 9 September	St Peter Claver, Priest		NO MASS	
Tue 10 September	Feria	9.00 am 10.00 am	Eucharistic Adoration Mass	Nora Savage RIP
Wed 11 September	Feria	10.00 am 6pm	Mass Eucharistic Adoration	Joanne - health
Thurs 12 September	The Most Holy Name of Mary	10.00 am	Mass	
Fri 13 September	St John Chrysostom, Bishop, Doctor	9.00 am 9.30 am 10.00 am	Eucharistic adoration Rosary Mass	
Sat 14 September	The Exaltation of the Holy Cross	10.00 am	Mass	Joanne - health
Sun 15 September	<b>24TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME</b>	8.30 am 10.30 am	Mass Mass (Childrens)	Peter and Leanore Fernando RIP Jim & Kathleen Earl



**READINGS FOR THIS SUNDAY**

**1<sup>st</sup> Reading:** Isaiah 35:4-7  
**Psalm:** Psalm 145(146):7-102<sup>nd</sup>  
**Reading:** James 2:1-5  
**Gospel:** Mark 7:31-37

**SECOND COLLECTIONS:**

**SUNDAY 8<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER** – Catholic Education Service  
**SUNDAY 15<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER** – Home missions

**NEXT WEEK IN THE PARISH:**

**Tues 10<sup>th</sup>** Tea & Coffee after 10 am Mass – church hall  
**Baptism preparation course** – 7pm church hall  
**Wed 11<sup>th</sup>** Adoration for students and anyone else who would like to join us – 6-7 pm in the Lady Chapel  
**Thur 12<sup>th</sup>** Caritas activity group– 10.30am  
**Sat 14<sup>th</sup>** First Holy Communion Class - 11am-12pm church hall  
**Sun 15<sup>th</sup>** Refreshments after mass  
**Choir Practice** 11.30 am in the church. Anyone welcome to join.

**TODAY'S GOSPEL REFLECTION:**

***Humble Instruments of Grace***

*He put his finger into the man's ears and, spitting, touched his tongue; then he looked up to heaven and groaned, and said to him, "Ephphatha!"—that is, "Be opened!"—And immediately the man's ears were opened, his speech impediment was removed, and he spoke plainly. [Mark 7:33-35](#)*

One interesting point in this story is that the people who brought this deaf and mute man to Jesus begged Him to “lay his hand on him” so as to heal him. But what did Jesus do? Instead, He took the man away from the crowd, put His divine finger into the man’s ears, touched the man’s tongue with His own sacred saliva and the man was cured. At first, the act of putting your finger into someone else’s ear and touching their tongue with your own saliva may seem repulsive. Normally it would be. To understand these two actions, we must understand the symbolism.

The image of a finger is used a number of times in the Scriptures to refer to God’s power. In the Book of Exodus after the plague of the gnats, Pharaoh’s magicians said that this was clearly done “by the finger of God” (Exodus 8:19). On the mountain when Moses received the Ten Commandments we know that it was also God’s finger that wrote them (Exodus 31:18). In the book of Daniel, a finger appeared and wrote a prophetic message on a wall (Daniel 5:5). In the New Testament, Jesus cast out a demon “by the finger of God” (Luke 11:20) and in today’s Gospel He healed this man’s hearing with His finger. The “finger of God” is understood as the power of God and an action of the Holy Spirit. Thus, by using His sacred finger to heal, Jesus was symbolically revealing that He fully exercised the power of God and acted in perfect union with the Holy Spirit and the Father.

The image of saliva is also interesting. Perhaps you have noticed that when an animal has a wound it often licks that wound. This is a natural instinct but also one that makes sense. Saliva has a certain medicinal power of healing. It contains antibacterial agents. Therefore, since normal saliva can help heal a wound, Jesus’s saliva is able to heal in a supernatural way. Recall, also, that Jesus healed a blind man by spitting on the ground and then smearing the mud on his eyes (John 9:6).

Did Jesus need to use His finger and His saliva to heal this man? Certainly not. He could have done it with a mere thought. But He chose to use His body as an instrument of His healing power. Doing so reveals to us that Jesus’ humanity became the source of unity between God and man. Even His finger and His saliva unite us to God. Everything about the Son of God in His human form dispensed grace, healing and mercy. Even that which may, at first, seem most repulsive.

Though there is much we can take from this passage, one thing that should not be missed is that if Jesus chose to use His finger and even his saliva to dispense His power, so, also, He desires to continue using the members of His Body to distribute His grace. By Baptism, you are a member of Christ’s Body, the Church. You are His hands and feet, His eyes and voice, His heart and finger, and even His saliva. That last thought is very humbling. But if Jesus can use His saliva for healing, He can use you. If we can humbly understand that, then we will be better disposed to become an instrument of His divine mercy to those who need it. God is able to use us NOT because we are worthy of being used. Rather, He can use us because He has chosen to do so, even in our most humble state.

Reflect, today, upon the image of Jesus healing this deaf and mute man. If you ever feel as though God cannot use you, call to mind the way in which our Lord worked this miracle. If God can use His finger and His saliva, He certainly can use you, no matter how unworthy or sinful you may be. This miracle shows us that God can use all things for His glory for the simple reason that He is God. Humble yourself and offer yourself to God to use you as He wills. Doing so will give God the opportunity to manifest His almighty power through you.

## PARISH NOTICES

### CAKE SALE MASS



Join us for cakes, tea and coffee after the 10:30 mass in the parish hall.

### FIRST HOLY COMMUNION 2025

This is a reminder that our first First Holy Communion (FHC) class is taking place on Saturday 14th September between 11am and 12pm in the parish hall.

### IMPORTANT NOTICE TO PARENTS



Children's Liturgy is back after the summer break. Please be aware of the following the Diocese guidelines: **CHILDREN UNDER 3 MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ADULT (over 18) An older sibling does not count!**

There also needs to be at least 3 other adults supervising, so we are looking for any parishioners who would be willing to help. This might only need to be once every few weeks. Please see **Sue Deadman** after mass or contact the parish office if you think you can help. Thank you!

## CHRISTMAS SHOE BOX APPEAL



Christmas presents this year collected for disadvantaged and displaced children in Moldova, Montenegro, Romania and Ukraine via Poland



Boxes are available to take away and fill with presents. Please also take a leaflet to guide you.

**PLEASE RETURN YOUR FILLED BOX (TOGETHER WITH £2 ATTACHED) AS SOON AS YOU CAN, AND BY FRIDAY 18<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER AT THE LATEST, TO HELP THE ROTARY CLUB IN PREPARING THEIR DELIVERIES.**

Contact Norman and Mary for any queries.

*Thank you*

INCOME FOR AUGUST 2024	
Candles	8.97
Donation roof Fund	125.00
Repair café	57.45
DONA	204.52
ENVELOPES (GIFT AID)	254.00
ONLINE GIVING	239.00
OFFERTORY	1,690.17
STANDING ORDERS & D DEBITS	3,189.00
Total	5,768.11
Special Collections	
Emergency relief Fund	10
	10

## SAFEGUARDING TRAINING

If you volunteer and you are working with children or vulnerable adults you will already have had a DBS check. In addition, you will also need a safeguarding training certificate, no more than 3 years old.

**We have been offered a face-to-face training session on the 26th October, which will only go ahead if we have at least 10 people attending.**

**Emails have been sent out to everyone but in case you missed it or you think you have been missed, please contact the parish office as soon as possible to sign up.**

## RCIA COURSE

We will be starting our new **RCIA course** on **Tuesday 8 October'24 (8:00 to 9:30pm) each week**

The RCIA (or "Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults") is a process of Christian formation – based on ancient tradition – offered to those who seek to become Catholic. The initiation of new members is a gradual process, allowing enquirers time to grow in faith and become full participants of the Catholic community.



**If you are interested please speak to Fr. Anthony or Deacon Gerard in the first instance.**

## PARISH EVANGELISATION CELL SYSTEM (PECS)



As we proceed with the implementation of the 10-Year Plan for our Diocese here in Southampton, we are invited to dream of how Catholic life in the city might look in the future and what is needed to make that a reality.

Most importantly we need committed disciples of the Lord, people and priests, with a heart for making disciples of everyone with whom they come into contact. In short, we need people possessed of a deep love for Our Lord and desiring to grow in that love.

**On Saturday, September 21st, at St. Joseph's, Ashurst, beginning with Mass at 10 am** we will host an information and vision day on Parish Evangelisation Cell System. PECS is not a programme but a change to our thinking about Catholic life. It seems an opportune and providential moment to develop these cells or groups as the six parishes of our Southampton Central and West Pastoral Area becomes a single parish. Everyone is warmly welcome to this day which will end with a **shared lunch at 1 pm.**

## Diocesan Formation Day for Readers:

Fr Anthony Fyk, Director of Liturgy Formation, is running a formation day for readers on:

**Saturday 19th October from 10.30 am to 2 pm at St Bede's Church/Hall in Basingstoke.**

Registration in email: [liturgy@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:liturgy@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

## CARITAS OUTREACH GROUP THURSDAY MORNINGS 10.30am to 12:30pm



Programme for 12th September: **Cookery - making traditional English food. PLEASE COME AND JOIN IN!**

No costs. Parents need to accompany and be responsible for their children.

## CARITAS AUTUMN NEWSLETTER

The new Autumn newsletter can be found here:

<https://mailchi.mp/5f83b022d4f5/autumn-newsletter>



## PORTSMOUTH DIOCESE E NEWS & JOB VACANCIES

Activities, events, news and job vacancies from around the Diocese.

<https://mailchi.mp/portsmouthdiocese/issue456?e=34c55ac6>



## CONGRATULATIONS TO

**Declan Clifford and Liliana Jeziorska** who celebrated their wedding on 31<sup>st</sup> August in our parish church.

# St Anne's Catholic School

Year 4, 5, 6 Open events  
Wednesday 25th September  
Open morning 9-11am  
Open evening 6-8pm



The open morning gives parents the opportunity to see the school on a normal working day and talk to their student guides as they tour the school. The open evening gives families the opportunity to talk to a range of staff, hear a talk from the Headteacher, Head girls and some Year 7 pupils and to tour the school with student guides. **We look forward to seeing parents at St Anne's to find out why St Anne's is hard to beat!**

Ride and Stride 14-16th September 2024



Ride and Stride is a national sponsored event for cyclists, walkers, joggers, runners, horse-riders and mobility scooter drivers. People can also be sponsored as a welcomer on duty in a church. Of the fundraising total, 50% of sponsorship money goes to the church or chapel nominated by the participant, with the other 50% going to the Historic Churches Trusts.

Those taking part plan their own route (which may cross county borders) using the List of Churches and Chapels that are intending to open on the day. Riders and Striders ask their relations, friends and colleagues to sponsor them - so much for each church or chapel they visit between 10.00am and 6.00pm on the day, or a lump sum. The List of participating Churches and Chapels (including some within the Diocese) be found here: <https://ridestride.org/> and there is still to time to register as a participating church within your county. <https://hihct.org.uk/ride-and-stride/>

Ofsted  
Outstanding  
Provider

SAINT GEORGE  
CATHOLIC COLLEGE

# Open Evening

Thursday  
3<sup>rd</sup> October  
5pm - 8pm

ACHIEVEMENT  
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RELATIONSHIPS  
ENJOYMENT



Online Prospectus



[www.stgcc.co.uk](http://www.stgcc.co.uk)

Southampton 2024

## A RETREAT FOR CATECHISTS

Saturday 14th September 2024  
9.00am - 3pm  
Holy Family Church

Fr Tom Kleinschmidt leads a day of prayer, reflection  
and spiritual conferences  
for catechists and those interested in this ministry

*Please bring food to share for lunch.  
For more details or to confirm attendance contact  
[ministry@holyfamilysouthampton.org.uk](mailto:ministry@holyfamilysouthampton.org.uk)*