



IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CATHOLIC CHURCH

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

"The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes"? - Matthew 21:33-43

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Website: www.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:

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 TIMINGS: Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday 9:00-3 pm, Friday 9-4pm, Monday Closed

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

Solemnities, Feast days & Memorials	Times & Liturgies		Mass Intentions
Sun 4 October TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	8.30 am	Mass	Denis and Naomi Philpot RIP
	10.30 am	Mass	Sister Maisie RIP
Mon 5 October St Faustina Kowalska	-NO MASS-		
Tue 6 October St Bruno	10.00 am	Service of the Word (No Mass)	--
Wed 7 October Our Lady of the Rosary	10 am	Mass	--
	6 pm	Eucharistic Adoration & Rosary	
Thu 8 October Feria	10 am	Mass	Lorance Perera RIP
Fri 9 October St JOHN HENRY NEWMAN	9.00 am	Eucharistic Adoration	Rosemary Spencer RIP
	9.30 am	Rosary	
	10.00 am	Mass	
Sat 10 October St Paulinus of York	10 am	Mass	Lydie & Oscar Tchuisseu RIP
Sun 11 October TWENTY-EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	8.30 am	Mass	Tina Gibbs RIP
	10.30 am	Mass	Eddy Vales 60 th Birthday



PASTORAL LETTER FROM THE BISHOP: THINGS VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE

In his latest pastoral letter, Bishop Philip reflects on our profession of faith in God, "the Creator of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible", and invites readers to complete a short questionnaire. The full letter is available to read online at:

[Pastoral Letters - Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth.](#)

Printed copies of the pastoral letter will also be available in the church porch.

SUNDAY READINGS

1st Reading: Isaiah 5:1-7

'The vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel.'

Psalm: Ps 80(79):9, 12, 13-14, 15-16, 19-20. R
Isaiah 5:7a

2nd Reading: Philippians 4:6-9

'Do not be anxious about anything'

Gospel: Matthew 21:33-43

'He will let out the vineyard to other tenants.'

OTHER REGULAR WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

All are welcome to join!

- Mon- Cooking with Confidence 11 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: Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A)

BALANCINGTHE BOOKS AND BEARING FRUITS

In my second year of Theology, I had an experience that taught me a great deal about human life and its important lessons. One of the prominent priests whose life and pastoral zeal drew me to the priesthood was diagnosed with cancer and told he had a few months to live. He was at the height of his pastoral ministry and much loved by his parishioners. When he received the sad news, everyone expected him to go berserk and question God about his ordeal; however, we were all surprised by how calm he was and how peacefully he accepted the news. When he returned to his parish, he informed his Bishop, his family, and close friends, then published it in the parish newsletter. Afterwards, he began putting his affairs in order by writing his Last Will and Testament, his own Order of Funeral Mass, and finally summoning all his family and friends to distribute his possessions. I was among those who stayed by his side throughout this period to support him and help him manage his affairs.

A few days before he died, we were having lunch together when a few of his priest friends dropped by to see him. He welcomed them warmly and laughed with them. While they reminisced about the old days, one of them asked him an important question: Fr Anthony, do you have any regrets, and are you not afraid to die? Fr Anthony's reply shocked and moved us all. He said: "Since I received the news of my health situation, I have searched my conscience thoroughly and can tell you that I do not have any regrets at all. I am by no means perfect; however, I have made my peace with God and all those around me. I am not afraid of death; in fact, I am looking forward to going back to God, and I hope He will look upon me with mercy. I hope I have balanced my books and borne some fruits for God." Fr Anthony died peacefully a few days later with a smile on his face. When his personal diary was opened, the caption there in was – BALANCINGTHE BOOKS AND BEARING FRUIT! Yes, this balancing of books and bearing good fruit is what we encounter in this Sunday's readings.

Using the imagery of a vineyard, its owner and the hired workers, we are reminded of the importance of balancing the books and bearing good fruit. In today's First Reading, Isaiah's Song of the Vineyard, the Prophet reminds us of God's tender, loving care for His vineyard, His chosen people. Despite this care, they failed to bear the fruit He expected. In today's Gospel, set during the Passover week, Christ tells the parable of the wicked tenants, revealing the ingratitude, spitefulness, and darkness of the unexamined human heart. The English word 'leased', which we encountered in today's homily, comes from two Greek root words, ek and didomi (ekdidómi) meaning to let out for one's own advantage. Yes, everything we possess is a gift God has bestowed on us for His advantage; as good tenants, we must read the details of our Tenancy Agreement, for one day we will be called to balance the books and display the fruits we have produced from the many gifts God gave us. One way we can bear fruit is by heeding St Paul's instructions in today's Second Reading, living lives that are honourable, just, pure, lovely, commendable, and worthy of praise. That is the kind of lifestyle that will move modern men and women, as Pope St Paul VI enjoined on us in Evangelii Nuntiandi #50: to be witnesses, not just teachers.

A reflection by Fr Johnpromise Umeozuru from The Liturgy Project

October – Month of the Rosary

Bishop Philip writes...This Thursday, we enter the month of October, traditionally the month dedicated to Our Lady of the Rosary. The Rosary developed in the High Middle Ages period and the reason that October came to be devoted to its recitation is primarily because the liturgical feast of Our Lady of the Rosary is celebrated annually on 7th October. The Rosary is a wonderful prayer for us to say, praying to Our Lord for protection from all danger, sickness and evil. [Praying the Holy Rosary with Bishop Philip](#).

We also invite you to join our parish Rosary every Wednesday at 6pm and Friday at 9:30am. If you are unable to attend in person, you are welcome to join us online via our live stream as we pray together with Our Lady.

PARISH NOTICES

Sacramental Preparation Classes Starting Soon

Baptism: Our next Baptism Preparation Course will take place on Tuesday 13 October, at 6:30pm in the Church Hall. If you would like to have your child baptised, please get in touch with the Parish Office for further information and to register for the course.

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. The session will finish at approximately 10:30am, allowing participants and their families to attend the 10:30am Mass. If you would like your child to prepare for First Holy Communion but have not yet registered, please contact the Parish Office for further information and to enrol.

Time to Return Your Wessex Rotary Shoeboxes!

A gentle reminder to please return your filled shoeboxes and leave them either in the church porch or at the parish office.

The final date for returning shoeboxes is **Sunday 18 October**. Please do your best to bring them in by this date so they can be collected and prepared for dispatch. We look forward to receiving your filled shoeboxes.

For more information, please contact Norman Fairchild or parish office. For guidance on what items may be included in the boxes, please visit:

www.wessexrotaryshoebox.org.uk



This Sunday, Second Collection

CAFOD Family Fast Day Appeal this Harvest

Please donate to our *Family Fast Day* parish collection. Put your faith into action and share the Lord's love by supporting our global neighbours experiencing shortages of food and safe water. Your gift can support children like Tayla in Zimbabwe to stay in school by helping communities and schools provide nourishing meals, improve access to water and grow food in school gardens. Use the CAFOD envelope in church, donate online at cafod.org.uk/envelope or call 0303 303 3030.



AN APPEAL FOR READERS

Have you ever considered yourself reading at Mass? Proclaiming God's Holy Word to the assembly is one of the great privileges given to the faithful. But reading well in church is a skill in its own right: pacing, clarity, breathing, knowing where to pause and where to let a line land. It takes practice to do it justice. That's exactly why we're inviting you to train. Experienced readers, who have already mastered this craft, will pass on their skill to you, so that when you stand at the ambo you can proclaim the Word with confidence and reverence. If you've ever felt that quiet nudge to take part, this is your invitation. Please complete a form, copies are in the box near the sacristy door. Training sessions will be arranged, and you'll be able to undertake the privilege of proclaiming God's Holy Word. You can also contact Parish office to register your interest.

RCIA - Autumn 2026

Curious about the Catholic Faith

Have you ever wondered what Catholics believe, why we celebrate the Mass, or what it means to have a relationship with Jesus and His Church? Perhaps you are thinking about becoming Catholic, or simply want to find out more.

If you would like to explore the Catholic Faith with us, or prepare for a Sacrament, please complete the form here- [SOUIC - RCIA - 2026/27](#) or scan the QR Code.



Alternatively, contact the **Parish Office**, leaving your name and contact details, and we will be in touch.

If you have questions or would simply like to talk about whether RCIA is right for you, please speak to **Fr Anthony or Deacon Gerard**.

We would be very happy to hear from you.

ALPHA - Autumn 2026

What if there's more to life?



What do you think about faith, God and the bigger questions of life? Alpha is a relaxed and welcoming space to explore those questions together. Our next Alpha course on a Wednesday Evening begins in early October and runs through to mid-December 2026. Over eleven weeks, each session looks at a different aspect of faith, followed by an open conversation. So, whether you're 16 or 99, committed, curious, questioning or sceptical – why not give Alpha a try? Come along. Ask questions. Share your thoughts. You might be surprised where the conversation leads. Please sign up using the QR Code or complete the form here - [SOUIC - ALPHA - Autumn 2026](#).



Everyone is welcome.



Christmas Fayre - Saturday 14 November - Donations Needed!

Our Christmas Fayre will be held on Saturday 14 November, and we would be very grateful for your support. We are now collecting good quality donations for the fayre. Items can be left at the back of the church or in the parish hall. We are also looking for volunteers to help with preparations, setting up, running stalls on the day, and clearing away afterwards. If you can spare some time, please speak to the parish office.



Energy Action Month October 2026

Transition Southampton (TS, also behind the Repair café) and the Environment Centre, tEC.

The evening will be a relaxed talk and panel discussion on the new opportunities to save energy and cost, make your home more comfortable and help support wider climate & nature goals (taking action on Laudato si) – and where and how to get good free advice (tEC).

Linked to that, over the **whole of October**, is **Green Open Homes** when you have an opportunity to visit a home and hear from ordinary householders the reality of heat pump, solar panels, insulation and other energy saving measures as well as domestic water-saving, food growing, low impact travel ... you get the picture, but you need to book in to the TS web site, <http://www.greenopenhomes.org>. You'll see what each home has to offer, the approximate location & the type of property.



Upcoming Sundays events

- 11 Oct - Nigerian Mass and celebration in the hall after 10:30 Mass
- 25 Oct - Family Mass at 10:30
- 1 Nov - Bamenda Sunday
- 8 Nov - Remembrance Sunday

Catholic School Open Day



St Anne's Sixth Form is an outstanding 16–18 Catholic mixed gender college.

Open Evening: Wednesday 7th October, from 6pm to 8pm.

