

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CATHOLIC CHURCH

8th DECEMBER 2024 SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

“And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High.” Luke 1.31-32a

**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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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 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/Friday 10:00 5 pm, Wednesday/Thursday 1-5pm

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

Date	Solemnities & Feast days	Times & Liturgies		Mass Intentions
Sun 8 December	SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT	8.30 am 10.30 am	Mass Mass	Nial & Myles - health & wellbeing Gerard Perrin, Neal Cookson RIP
Mon 9 December	The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary		NO MASS	
Tues 10 December	of the 2nd Week of Advent	9.00 am 10.00 am	Eucharistic Adoration Mass	Lorance Perera RIP
Weds 11 December	of the 2nd Week of Advent	10.00 am 6pm	Mass Eucharistic Adoration	Lorance Perera RIP
Thurs 12 December	of the 2nd Week of Advent	10.00 am	Mass	Nicolasa Paredes de Moreno RIP
Fri 13 December	St Lucy, Virgin, Martyr	9.00 am 9.30 am 10.00 am 12pm	Eucharistic adoration Rosary Mass Funeral mass	Deceased friends and family of McMahan/Hempson/Charnley families Frederick Watt RIP
Sat 14 December	St John of the Cross, Religious, Doctor of the Church	10.30am 10.00 am	Confession Mass	Bill Chandler
Sun 15 December	THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (Gaudete)	8.30 am 10.30 am	Mass Mass	Fr Michael Peters RIP Alfred Rosario RIP

READINGS FOR THIS SUNDAY



1st Reading: Baruch 5:1-9
Psalm: Ps 126(125):1-2b. 2c-3. 4-5. 6. R3
2nd Reading: Philippians 1:3-6, 8-11
Gospel: Luke 3:1-6

SECOND COLLECTIONS:

8th December – Life group

NEXT WEEK IN THE PARISH

Tues 10th Tea & Coffee after 10 am service – parish hall
RCIA Course – 7.30-9 pm in the parish hall
Wed 11th Adoration - 6-7 pm in the Lady Chapel
Thur 12th Caritas activity group– 10.30am
Fri 13th Funeral Mass - 12pm Frederick Watts RIP
Night of Light - 5-8pm
Sat 14th First Holy Communion – 11am Session 7 **meet in the church**
Sun 15th FHC children at mass - Refreshments after mass
 Choir Practice 11.30 am in the church. Anyone welcome to join.

REMOVING THE OBSTACLES TO GRACE

“Every valley shall be filled and every mountain and hill shall be made low. The winding roads shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.” Luke 3:5-6

These, the words of the prophet Isaiah, were spoken about the mission of Saint John the Baptist. John was to “Prepare the way of the Lord” and to “make straight his paths.” In prophesying this, Isaiah goes on to give this very descriptive image of John’s ministry. It would be one that levels mountains and valleys, straightens every winding road, and smooths out the rough terrain. In other words, John came to remove every obstacle to God, making it easy to encounter the Messiah.

How does John complete this mission? By calling the people of that time to the dry and empty desert where all the false allurements cease to exist. This is done by detachment from the many sins and temptations they faced. Their repentance was an act by which the people humbled themselves before God, admitted their sins and acknowledged their need for a Savior. This humble admission, coupled with the commitment to change their ways, prepared heart after heart for the grace and mercy that came through Christ the Lord.

Today, there are countless obstacles to grace that so many people encounter. Some have been drawn into the satisfactions of earthly riches and material comforts and find little need for God. Others have very little that this world can offer but are consumed with a desire for money and the passing comforts it promises. And still others are drawn into many other forms of sins and false satisfactions. But there are some who are like a dry and deserted desert, just waiting to soak up the gentle rain of God's grace. These are those who have sought to detach themselves from the false promises of this world and remain "empty" and "dry" so as to be prepared for the abundance of grace when it comes. These holy souls have heeded the call to repentance and have humbly acknowledged their need for the Savior. Reflect, today, upon whether or not your soul is like that dry and barren desert, detached from all the false and passing satisfactions of this world, and prepared to soak up the mercy and grace of God alone. Repentance brings forth detachment, and detachment prepares the soul for God. When one is truly detached and free from the many obstacles to God, then the road from God to your soul will be straight and easily traveled. Reflect upon your soul today and where you see unhealthy attachments. Repent with all your heart so that you are among those most fully ready for an abundance of the grace and mercy of God.

A reflection for the Second Sunday of Advent (Year C)
www.mycatholic.life

PARISH NOTICES

COFFEE & TEA AFTER MASS CHRISTMAS SPECIAL FOR CHILDREN

Children are invited both this Sunday, the 8th and the next Sunday the 15th to come into the hall after 10.30 mass for a Christmas craft activity while adults can enjoy a cup of coffee and a chat with friends.

8th: Make an angel for the Christmas tree.

15th Make a star for the Christmas tree.

NIGHT OF LIGHT 13th December 2024 5pm-8pm



As the nights get cold and dark, pause amidst the Christmas rush and pray for yourself and your loved ones to recognise Jesus Christ, the True Light of the World by lighting a candle. Invite your friends and neighbours too to contemplate and reflect upon the true meaning of Christmas.

ADVENT 2024 FAITH FORMATION

St Edmund's, The Avenue, Southampton
7.45pm-8.30pm Speaker: Ryan Hawkes

Advent is a time of mystery and a time for reflection on the mysteries of our faith, so why not come along on Wednesday evenings during Advent to delve into some of the details of the of the Comings of Christ? These seminar-style sessions will include a talk and chance for discussion and debate. All are welcome to come and join in or just to sit and listen. There is no cost, nor any need to register.

Wednesday 11 December | The Mystery of Advent on the prophecies we sing in the 'O Antiphons'

Wednesday 18th December: *The Mystery of Mary*, on our Lady and the Incarnation.

RECONCILIATION SERVICES THIS CHRISTMAS

16th December 7pm – St Edmunds

17th December 7pm – Immaculate Conception

SOUTHAMPTON IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CATHOLIC CHURCH CHRISTMAS COLLECTION



The Christmas Collection for our clergy supports Father Anthony and is both an important opportunity for us to express our gratitude to him for his service, care and guidance – and constitutes a significant element of clergy remuneration and support.

Making a donation is fast, easy and secure thanks to Give as you Live Donate. They'll take your donation and pass it onto Southampton Immaculate Conception Catholic Church. Just follow this link:

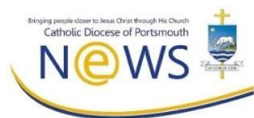
<https://donate.giveasyoulive.com/fundraising/southampton-immaculate-conception-catholic-church-christmas-collection-2024>

NEXT BAPTISM PREP COURSE

Our next baptism preparation course takes place on **Wednesday, 11th December at 7pm**. If you would like your child baptised and you have not attended the preparation course in the last three years, don't miss the opportunity to find out more about baptism. There is still time to enrol.

ANNUAL LEAVE

Please note that the last newsletter of this calendar year will be published on the 20th December and it will be a bulk issue covering three weeks. The next issue will be published on 10th January. Please make sure that any items for the bulk newsletter are sent to Cecilia by Wednesday 18th December. Thank you!



PORTSMOUTH DIOCESE E NEWS & JOB VACANCIES

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

<https://mailchi.mp/portsmouthdiocese/issue469?e=34c55ac6ce>

NEW YEAR – NEW BOOKS

News from the Repository-Bookshop

We have taken delivery of the new CTS Sunday Missals, updated with the new translations for the scripture readings. These are now available to purchase from the **Bookshop**.

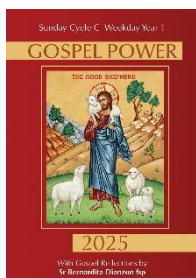
We have been able to secure these at a special price at £13.00 (published price is £19.95). Grab your copy at this low price while our stock lasts, as future prices will be determined by what we are charged.

There will be a smaller number of the One Year Missals available for £6.50.

Additionally, orders are now being taken for the Gospel Power 2025.

This book covers the following:

- Scripture references for daily Mass
- Response to the Psalm
- The daily Gospel and two Scripture readings for Sunday Masses
- Excellent, short reflection on the Gospel reading for the day
- A short prayer



At a 10.5 x 15 cm It is smaller than a Bible and can fit in a handbag. The price will be £7.50.

To order please see the lovely volunteers in the Bookshop. Last orders taken on the 8th December.

INVITATION FOR CONSULTATION

St Anne's Catholic School are consulting on their admission arrangements for 2026/27. The consultations will run to 23rd December 2024.

The school welcomes views from any interested parties. In giving views, please state whether you are a parent/carer of a student (and of which school), a local resident, a member of school staff or any other interested party.

More details: <https://st-annes.uk.com/about-us/news/44/consultation-admissions-policy-2026-2027>

Vocations Prayer Newsletter December 2024

<https://portsmouthvocations.org/so/z1PECYCbA?languageTag=en&cid=8eeb309f-dcf5-4938-a4a3-1108ca4991af>



Stella Maris Seafarers Christmas Chocolate Appeal 2024

Suggested Chocolate Gifts



We're planning to collect hundreds of chocolate Christmas presents for seafarers visiting our Southern Region ports in the days before Christmas. Stella Maris chaplains and ship visiting volunteers will go into ships to meet and support the crew, helping them feel they are not forgotten and much appreciated.

Can you help us by donating chocolate gifts? All donations can be left in the labelled box in the church porch. The last day for donations is 15th December 2024.

Your gift may be the only present a seafarer receives this Christmas.

WINTER NIGHT SHELTER

The Southampton Churches
WINTER BEDS 2025
is back and we need volunteers!

The project starts in January to take people off the streets who are sleeping rough. Help them to be safe and warm this winter.

For more information email Laura@citylife.org.uk

We need volunteers to help on different days for the Evening Shift, the Night Shift and the Breakfast Shift. You will help as part of a team and training and guidance is given. Notice on our boards or chat to Steve at Mass or on 07540229973..... Please help our Christians in Southampton care for the Homeless and troubled.

JOB VACANCY

Our lovely cleaner Halyna is sadly leaving us at the end of December, so we are looking for a new cleaner to keep our parish sparkling! The job is 7 hours per week.

Anyone interested please contact the parish office at office@immaculateconception.church

Portsmouth Diocese has a new Bluesky account at:



<https://bsky.app/profile/portsmouthrc.bsky.social>



Bishop of Portsmouth

Rt. Rev. Philip A. Egan BA, STL, PhD

Bringing people closer to Jesus Christ through His Church

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MESSAGE FROM THE BISHOP OF PORTSMOUTH in relation to the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill

Our world here in the UK has now changed, unfortunately not for the better. Last Friday, MPs voted to legalise assisted suicide, 330 in favour with 275 against. As people of reason and people of faith, we know this is a truly bad move. It will put pressure on the elderly and the dying, making them feel they are a burden. It will undermine palliative care and the trust that should exist between patients and doctors. More, the range of eligibility is bound to expand over time so that death by suicide will become normal. Although not unexpected, this vote poses a grave danger. Britain is now crossing a line from which there will be no return. Yet even so, all those of good will must continue the fight and the argument. As the bill goes through its lengthy committee stages, we now need to pray earnestly, and to work tirelessly, to contain its range and its reach, to ensure that people of conscience are not forced into participation. Indeed, given that some MPs who voted in favour are now wavering in their support, we should contact our MPs to urge them to vote against the bill at its Third Reading.

This legislation, however, makes one thing crystal clear. Britain is no longer a Christian country. To be a Christian in future will not be easy, if ever it was. More and more, as in ages past, we will stand out from the crowd and from others in our society who see human life, its dignity and value, in a radically different way. It is my hope that God will give us the grace to live our discipleship ever more authentically so that the true beauty of our Catholic faith might become even more evident. I pray that the *splendor veritatis*, the beauty of the Truth, the hope it gives, especially to the vulnerable, and the Gospel vision of the human person - fallen but redeemed, an incarnate spirit called to live a good life here on earth and one day to be with God for ever in Paradise - will shine out for all to see.

The Church is the Ark of Salvation. I pray that this sinister legislation and the bleak future it unleashes will cause such a reaction that many more people will be drawn to the Person of Christ and the glorious communion of His Church.

In Corde Iesu,

+Philip

Bishop of Portsmouth

Given on the First Sunday of Advent, 1st December 2024