



IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CATHOLIC CHURCH

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

'Therefore, every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house, who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.' - Matthew 13:44-52

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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/portswoodchur

Solemnities, Feast days & Memorials	Times & Liturgies		Mass Intentions
Sun 26 July SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	8.30 am	Mass	John Cooney RIP & Sheila Gorham RIP
	10.30 am	Mass	Robert (BOB) Henry 70th Birthday
Mon 27 July Feria	-NO MASS-		
Tue 28 July Feria	9.00 am 10.00 am	Eucharistic Adoration Mass	Birthday Blessings for Veronica
Wed 29 July Ss Martha, Mary & Lazarus	10 am 6 pm	Mass Eucharistic Adoration	Rebekah Ewurabena Shields 18th Birthday
Thu 30 July St Peter Chrysologus	10 am	Mass	For the repose of the soul of K.T. John RIP
Fri 31 July St Ignatius of Loyola	9.00 am 9.30 am 10.00 am	Eucharistic Adoration Rosary Mass	For the repose of lost souls
Sat 1 August St Alphonsus Liguori	10 am	Mass	Audrey Reid RIP
Sun 2 August EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	8.30 am 10.30 am	Mass Mass	Ted Andrews – 60th Death Anniversary RIP Emelda Che RIP



Thought for the Week

"The civilization of love will not arise from a single or spectacular gesture, but from the sum total of small and steadfast acts of fidelity that serve as a bulwark against dehumanization."

(Pope Leo: Magnifica Humanitas, 213)

SUNDAY READINGS



1st Reading: 1 Kings 3:5-6a, 7-12

Psalm: Ps 119(118):57, 72, 76-77, 127-128, 129-130. R 97a

2nd Reading: Romans 8:28-30

Gospel: Matthew 13:44-52

OTHER REGULAR WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

All are welcome to join!

- Mon- Cooking with Confidence - Summer break closure Reopens Sunday, 7 September. 11 am – 1 pm, Church Hall
- Tues- Tea & Coffee after 10 am Mass – Church Hall
- Thurs- Maintaining the parish gardens – from 10:30 am - Multicultural group – Summer break closure, Reopens, 27 August, 10:30 am in the Church Hall
- Sun- Refreshments after 10.30 am Mass -Church Hall

A Priceless Discovery Awaits! Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A)

“The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure buried in a field, which a person finds and hides again, and out of joy goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant searching for fine pearls. When he finds a pearl of great price, he goes and sells all that he has and buys it.” [Matthew 13:44-46](#)

In the first parable above, a person unexpectedly discovers a treasure buried in a field. Imagine that you take a metal detector with you while on a hike, simply curious about what might lie beneath the soil. Suddenly, the detector gives a strong signal.

Expecting perhaps a rusted can or an old nail, you begin to dig. But as your shovel strikes something solid, you uncover an old chest. With growing anticipation, you lift it from the earth and open it—only to find it brimming with ancient and priceless jewels, gold and silver coins, and other precious items of immense worth. In the second parable, the merchant is actively searching for a valuable pearl. He knows what he seeks and finally discovers one of exceptional worth—one that eclipses all others. In both cases, however, the response is the same: the man and the merchant each go and sell all they possess to obtain the treasure they have found. These parables pose two fundamental questions for each of us:

- Have I discovered the priceless treasure of the Kingdom of Heaven?
- If I have, am I willing to let go of everything else to attain it?

Like the man who stumbles upon the buried treasure, many people encounter God’s grace in surprising ways—through a moment of prayer, a profound experience at Mass, an act of charity, or even during suffering. Maybe those people were not actively seeking divine treasure, yet in a moment of providence, the veil is lifted, and the beauty of God’s Kingdom is revealed. Once they discover the treasure, their souls realize that nothing else compares. From that point on, they are moved to reorient their entire lives to possess that treasure fully.

The path of the merchant, by contrast, is that of the soul who longs for truth, beauty, and goodness, diligently seeking them out. The one who searches might spend years studying, praying, yearning, and pursuing what is of eternal value. And then—finally—the “pearl” is found. Christ is discovered. The Gospel becomes clear. The longing is fulfilled. Again, everything else is willingly surrendered for the sake of that one Pearl of great price—Jesus Christ.

In both parables, the decision to sell all to gain the treasure is an easy choice. The discovery is so great that everything else the person possesses pales in comparison. But how many people have truly made such a discovery?

Many of us are like someone who learns of a buried treasure in a field and, out of curiosity, drives out to look—but spends little or no time searching. Or we are like a merchant who is informed of a rare and valuable pearl for sale far from home. Though interested, we note the length of the journey and abandon the thought.

Though we may have heard about the glory of God’s Kingdom, unless we truly discover it, we will not see the value of attaining it at any cost. We will only be willing to sell all we have—to detach from every hindrance to grace, every sin, obsession, and distraction—if we make the initial discovery of the priceless nature of God’s Kingdom already present on earth and the fullness of His Kingdom that awaits us in Heaven.

Reflect today on this invaluable treasure, waiting to be discovered. Consider where you are on that journey of discovery. Have you heard about the priceless treasure of coming to know, love, and serve God? Have you read about the radical



response made by many saints? Have you discovered God for yourself, through prayer and moments of profound enlightenment? If you have not, keep searching—the Kingdom is near. If you have made this discovery, then consider all your attachments, and willingly surrender them to God, acknowledging that nothing is too much to offer to our loving God in exchange for the untold riches of the life of grace to which we are called.

A reflection from www.mycatholic.life

Pope Leo invites us to pray 'for respect for human life'



Pope Leo XIV releases his prayer intention for the month of July and invites Catholics to pray 'for respect for human life,' so all may 'recognize and protect the unique and unrepeatable value of every human being.' Take a moment, pray with the Pope. Visit the [Pope's Prayer website](#) to learn how to experience deep prayer and click on the picture for this month's video.

PARISH NOTICES



My PhD: Beyond Access Towards Belonging



Following my graduation, many parishioners have kindly asked what my PhD was about. In many ways, it explored a deceptively simple question: **What does it really mean for every child to belong?**

My research argues that inclusive education cannot be reduced to the integration of children with disabilities into mainstream classrooms. Such a view overlooks the complex social, political, economic, cultural, and linguistic realities that continue to exclude many learners, particularly in Cameroon. A child may be physically present in school yet remain educationally, socially, and emotionally excluded.

To understand this complexity, I brought together three complementary perspectives. Mike Oliver's Social Model of Disability challenged the assumption that exclusion lies within the child, locating it instead in the barriers society creates. Building on this, Leon Tikly's Regimes of Equality demonstrated that these barriers are not accidental but are shaped by wider structures of power, history, poverty, language, and political conflict. Roger Slee then extends the critique into the school itself, arguing that exclusion is continually reproduced through institutional practices, assumptions, and power relations that determine whose knowledge is valued, whose differences are accommodated, and ultimately, who is allowed to belong.

Rather than simply analysing these realities, I adopted **Critical Communicative**

Methodology, which transformed research from an act of observation into an act of dialogue. Teachers, pupils, parents, and school leaders became partners in interpreting their own experiences, allowing knowledge to emerge through critical reflection rather than being imposed by the researcher. This communicative process not only exposed barriers but also uncovered transformative practices already flourishing in schools despite overcrowded classrooms, scarce resources, and the ongoing challenges of conflict.

Ultimately, the thesis contends that inclusion is neither a programme nor a policy but a continual commitment to dismantling barriers, redistributing opportunities, and recognising the dignity of every learner. As a priest, I see this not only as an educational imperative but also as a profoundly Christian one. To affirm that every person is created in the image and likeness of God is to insist that every child has the right not simply to attend school, but to belong, participate, and flourish. I remain deeply grateful for your prayers and encouragement throughout this journey. My hope is that this work will contribute to educational transformation in Cameroon and, in its own small way, help build communities where no one is left behind.



Fr Anthony Chiatu
Parish Priest



World Day of Prayer for Grandparents & Elderly – Sunday 26 July

This is the sixth World Day, which always takes place on the Memoria of SS. Joachim and Anne, the parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary and grandparents of Jesus. The theme chosen by Pope Leo XIV for this year is: “I will never forget you” (Is 49:15). It reminds us that God’s unwavering love is the ultimate answer to the isolation and neglect so often experienced by the elderly. Since its creation in 2021, the World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly has grown into a cherished tradition that teaches our communities to truly value the elderly, not through occasional gestures, but as a permanent, central part of our lives. This celebration helps us appreciate older generations as vital keepers of our history, witnesses to our faith, and teachers for our lives. Let this Day be a tangible opportunity for everyone — especially young people — to spend time with their grandparents, the elderly in their families, and most importantly, those who are completely isolated.



Cleaner Vacancy - Parish of the Immaculate Conception, Portswood



We are looking for a reliable and dedicated Cleaner to help maintain our church premises and presbytery to a high standard, ensuring they remain clean, safe, and welcoming for worship and parish life. This vital role supports the dignity of our spaces and the mission of the Parish by fostering a respectful and well-cared-for environment for all. Interested applicants are warmly invited to contact the Parish Office for further details.

Career Opportunities in our Diocese

Please visit our website for details of our [current vacancies](#) within the Diocese including:

- [Parish Finance Administrator, Andover](#)
- [Parish Administrator, Southampton](#)
- [Development and Fundraising Manager, Portsmouth](#)
- [Parish Campaign Coordinator, Portsmouth](#)
- [Parish Administrator, Fareham](#)

Diocesan School Vacancies

For career opportunities in our **Diocesan schools**, please see [here](#).

Wessex Rotary Shoebox Appeal



We are once again supporting the Wessex Rotary Shoebox Scheme, which sends shoeboxes filled with gifts to disadvantaged children in Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, and Ukraine (via Poland), ensuring they receive them in time for Christmas. Shoeboxes are available from the church porch or the parish office. 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. Thank you for helping to bring joy and hope to children in need

Obituary

It is with sadness that we share the news that Sister Maisie Nevin passed away at the weekend.

Sister Maisie was one of the sisters who lived at Redcote Convent, Bitterne, and was a familiar and much-loved presence in many parishes across Southampton, including the Parish of the Immaculate Conception.

Sister Maisie resided at a nursing home in Shirley, where she spent her final years. May she rest in peace



Have a blessed and peaceful week ahead.