

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CATHOLIC CHURCH

30th March 2025

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

Your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found. Luke 15,32

**LAETARE
SUNDAY -
REJOICE!**



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

Address: 346 Portswood Road, Southampton, SO17 3SB

Tel: (023) 8055 5470

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Email: office@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 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



THIS WEEKEND THE CLOCKS GO FORWARD AN HOUR – DO NOT MISS MASSES!



Date	Solemnities & Feast days	Times & Liturgies		Mass Intentions
Sun 30 March	FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT Laetare Sunday (Mothers' Day)	8.30 am 10.30 am	Mass Mass and Easter Pageant	Grace Chiatu (health) Deceased family members of Jane Ronaldson (RIP) TBA
Mon 31 March	of the 4th Week of Lent		NO MASS	
Tue 1 April	of the 4th Week of Lent	9.00 am 10.00 am	Eucharistic Adoration Mass	Lawrence & Luigiana Clegg RIP
Wed 2 April	of the 4th Week of Lent	10.00 am	Mass	Maria Bibbo RIP
Thu 3 April	of the 4th Week of Lent	10.00 am	Mass	
Fri 4 April	of the 4th Week of Lent	10.30 am 11.00 am 11.30 am	Eucharistic adoration Stations of the Cross Mass	Elizabeth Nurser RIP
Sat 5 April	of the 4th Week of Lent	10.00am	Mass	Deceased members of the Philpot family RIP
Sun 6 April	FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT	8.30 am 10.30 am	Mass Mass	Claire Starley RIP Anthony Ferrao RIP

READINGS FOR THIS SUNDAY

8.30 Mass
1st Reading: Joshua 5:9a, 10-12
Psalm: Ps 34 (33):2-3. 4-5. 6-7. R cf.18b

2nd Reading: 2 Cor 5:17-21
Gospel: Luke 15:1-3,11-32



10.30 Mass
1st Reading: 1 Samuel 16:1b,6-7, 10-13a
Psalm: Ps 23(22):1-3a. 3b-4. 5. 6. R1
2nd Reading: Ephesians 5:8 - 14
Gospel: John 9:1 - 41

NEXT WEEK IN THE PARISH

Mon 31st Lenten reflections - 6:30pm to 7:45pm in the Parish Hall
Tues 1st Tea & Coffee after 10 am service – parish hall
Wed 2nd Adoration for students and anyone else who would like to join us – 6-7 pm in the Lady Chapel
Thu 3rd Caritas activity group– 10.30am
Fri 4th Lent soup lunch – after mass (12pm) Parish hall
Sun 6th Refreshments after mass
Choir Practice - 11.30 am in the church. All welcome to join.

SECOND COLLECTIONS:

30th March: Diocesan Clergy Assistance Fund
6th April: Flowers for Easter

THE HOLY DRAMA OF GRACE

When Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, he found him and said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” He answered and said, “Who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?” Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.” He said, “I do believe, Lord,” and he worshiped him. John 9:35–38

This is the conclusion to the story of the healing of the man born blind. It is the fifth of seven signs (miracles) in John's Gospel that point to the divinity of our Lord. This healing especially confirmed Jesus' teaching from the previous chapter: “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life” (John 8:12). Jesus was the Light Who came to dispel all darkness, and now He illustrates this fact by opening the eyes of the blind man.

This story is quite long and detailed. The details it includes makes it much more than a miracle. It is also a dramatic story revealing both the consequences of rejecting Jesus, as well as the blessings received by one who turns to Jesus in faith.

We begin with the detail that this man has been blind since birth. It was a common misconception at that time that such a birth defect might have been caused by the sins of the parents. In part, this came from a misreading of Exodus 20:5-6 in which God said that He inflicts punishment "on the children of those who hate me, down to the third and fourth generation." Jesus makes it clear that this was not the case; this man's blindness was a result of the natural disorder experienced by humanity as a result of original sin. If humanity had never been cast out of the Garden of Eden, disease and natural disorders would have never existed. For that reason, we should understand that we are all "blind" in the sense of being born into the state of original sin and are, therefore, in need of the grace of spiritual sight.

The healing of this man is done purely on Jesus' initiative. This shows that God's healing action in our lives is always His initiative. But Jesus clearly offered this man healing because He knew the man would eventually come to faith in Him, which is the far more important healing that took place in this story.

After the man is healed, a very interesting drama unfolds. The Pharisees hear of the healing and begin to interrogate the man. Afterwards, they also interrogate the man's parents and then the man for a second time. Throughout their interrogations, two things happen. First, the Pharisees slowly become more agitated, more irrational and end by completely rejecting both this miraculous sign and Jesus Himself. The man, however, begins with what appears to be a bit of ignorance about Jesus, but as he is interrogated and challenged to explain his healing, he deepens and clarifies his convictions, ending in the deepest faith when he cries out to Jesus, "I do believe, Lord." Then we are told that the man worshiped Jesus.

The dramatic unfolding of this story teaches us that when we are given the grace of God by hearing His holy Word spoken and witnessing His mighty hand at work, we must make a choice. Either we will respond in faith and slowly be drawn deeper into that faith, or we will rationalize it away and reject God's saving action in our lives. It is not possible to simply remain indifferent to the Gospel when we hear it spoken or when we see its effects changing us or others.

Reflect, today, upon the two paths this sign from Heaven had on those present to this miracle. You, too, are present to this miracle through your reading of it. How will you respond? Will you imitate the Pharisees and discount the deep spiritual truths this action conveys? Or will you open yourself to the transforming power of this healing? Commit yourself to the path of this blind man. Say to our Lord, "I do believe, Lord." Apply those words to every action of Jesus in your life and allow that faith to lead you into worship of Him Who is the Light of the World.

A reflection for the Fourth Sunday of Lent (Year C)

www.mycatholic.life

PARISH NOTICES

HAPPY MOTHERS' DAY!

Today is Mothering Sunday – and we wish all mothers, grandmothers and great-grandmothers a very happy day!



In Mediaeval England, this day was a holiday from work when people went home to the mother church in which they were baptised. This Sunday please remember to say a prayer to the Blessed Mother for your mother, grandmother and great-grandmother.

THE EASTER STORY – PAGEANT-TODAY



service.

Please note – today will be a slightly longer than usual

Thank You to all those who have volunteered to help in anyway to make this the success it deserves to be.

Stay for refreshments in the parish hall after the service.

LENT LUNCHES -2025

The next weekly Friday soup lunch will take place again on 4th April. The proceeds will go to Aid to the Church in Need. A selection of delicious soups will be provided by our volunteers. Please come and support this effort which is not only a social opportunity to meet but raises money for worthy causes.

**The lunch is available from 12pm.
If you would like to come and need a lift
please contact the office.**



At the same time, the Friday Soup Lunch project would like to thank you for everyone's generosity – they raised £246.55 for the Mountbatten Hampshire Hospice.

REINTRODUCING A PARISH CHARITY

This year we shall be reintroducing a parish charity. This means that a portion of funds raised through fund raising activity within the parish will be given to the selected parish charity. If there's a charity you are keen to support that operates in Southampton please collect a form from the office. Forms will be available from next week and will have additional details of what is required.

Please ensure that you submit your proposal for a parish charity by 30th April. For further information regarding the parish charity please contact anastasia.mulenga@gmail.com

MASS INTENTIONS - IMPORTANT

If you wish to take up the offertory procession, please let the ushers know/come up after the Hail Mary is finished.

Road Closures – Restricted Access to Church on Sunday 6th April 2025

Please note that with the Southampton Half Marathon, road closures may impact your journey to Immaculate Conception. Details of closures can be found here: <https://www.southamptonmarathon.co.uk/residents-info>

EASTER HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

April 9th Wednesday, from 10am to 4pm in the Parish Hall

Activities day for young parish people from 5 to 15 years. Please bring drinks and a packed lunch or ingredients for pizza making. It would be great if one or two parents or students might spare an hour or two to lend a hand.

Contact the organiser: Steve Deadman

GOOD FRIDAY AT 9.30 AM IN THE CHURCH

Childrens' Way of the Cross with Father Anthony.

CARITAS GROUP

Caritas is planning to run cooking classes after Easter – details to be confirmed. In the meantime: **Do you know the whereabouts of about 9-10 CARITAS aprons?** Somebody must have taken them home to be washed but we don't know where they are. Please contact the office if you can help.

Programme of the Hong-Kong Group for the upcoming few weeks:

3/4/25 Ching Ming festival / cold food festival

10/4/25 Stretch Exercises/ Board Game

17/4/25 No activities

24/5/25 Activities Reviews and Planning

EASTER EGG COLLECTION TO SEAFARERS



Stella Maris Chaplains and Volunteer Ship Visitors will be visiting ships in our Southern ports during Holy Week and after Easter, and expect to bring this great celebration to many hundreds of seafarers who remain confined to their ships at this time, without the prospect of taking shore leave or visiting a church.

Together with faith materials, we would like to offer Easter Eggs and chocolates, the international symbol of celebration of this Solemnity of Solemnities, and would greatly appreciate the support of your parish/school/group in our Stella Maris Easter Egg appeal.

Can you help us by donating Easter eggs and chocolates? Your gift may be the only gift a seafarer receives this Easter. Collection basket can be found in the church porch.

CLERGY ASSISTANCE FUND SECOND COLLECTION 2025

The Clergy Assistance Fund contributes to the work of the Department for Clergy Team. The Department for Clergy, which has four members of staff, exists to provide care and support for the ordained in our Diocese.

The Diocese of Portsmouth is responsible for supporting the diocesan clergy in active ministry, those from religious orders, the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham or overseas, and our retired priests, who with dedication and care serve our parishes, chaplaincies, schools, outreach and mission: bringing people closer to Jesus Christ through His Church.

This appeal resources our Diocese to assist our priests towards holiness, happiness and health - to serve those who serve us.

The Clergy Support Team is responsible for looking after the welfare, ongoing formation and personal support of our clergy, such as the provision of spiritual direction, counselling, appraisal, ongoing formation and practical advice. It organises retreats, ministerial formation days, courses and sabbaticals. It looks after the junior clergy, the overseas clergy and especially the retired clergy. It is the principal mechanism through which the Bishop looks after the wellbeing of the clergy.

You can donate via the usual methods (cash and card) or using the link below:

<https://donate.giveasyoulive.com/campaign/clergy-assistance-fund-second-collection-2025>

THE REPAIR CAFÉ RETURNS

The Repair Café returns to Immaculate Conception on **Saturday 19 April from 10.30 till 1pm.**

A variety of repairs can be undertaken for a donation. Refreshments available throughout this session.

DAVID'S MAMMOTH 160 MILE FUNDRAISER FOR SOUTHAMPTON SIGHT



Our parishioner, David Maddocks is embarking on a challenge to raise funds for **Southampton Sight**. David, who suffers from chronic open angle glaucoma, a degenerative eye disease, is severely sight impaired. Southampton Sight have been helping him with their counselling, training, advice and physical aids.

At the age of 72, he wanted to challenge his disability and do something to help others affected by sight loss. He will walk the famous Camino de Santiago de Compostela choosing an old pilgrim route 160 miles long from Porto in Portugal to Santiago in Spain. The route will take over 13 days, including 1 rest day, from the 13th - 26th of May 2025 and he will be accompanied by his brothers in law, Mike and Adrian.

You can support his fundraiser on justgiving.com/page/southampton-sight-fundraiser-6

JUBILEE PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES



This year is a Jubilee Year, declared by Pope Francis to have the theme 'PILGRIMS OF HOPE'.

Our parish is planning to form a group to go on a Pilgrimage to Lourdes with the Diocesan Pilgrimage led by Bishop Philip Egan.

Dates Monday 7th – Friday 11th July 2025

Booking Forms are now available from the office or Liz Bellamy.

Please could the completed forms be returned by Sunday 13th April so that the bulk of the forms can be taken to the Diocesan Office before Easter. Later bookings will be accepted. Please be aware that the balance payment will be due at the end of May.

For further information please contact the office, Fr Anthony or Liz Bellamy

The Liturgy Project FORMATION DAYS

Talks & Reflections
(Bring own sandwich, tea/coffee provided)



Fr Anthony Fyk, Director of Liturgy Formation, will be running further formation days for readers and EMHC. The EMHC day will include a session on taking HC to the sick and housebound. The Readers' Day will include a session on Lectio Divina.

3rd May 2025 - Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion
18th October 2025 - Day for Readers

There will also be a day for Ministers of Children's Liturgy on Saturday 7th June, further details to follow.

Times and Venue: 10 am to 2 pm @ St Bede's Church, Popley Way, Basingstoke RG24 9DX

Anyone interested is encouraged to register via liturgy@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk



"LOVE HOPES ALL THINGS..."
1Cor 13:7

This is the title for the Easter Triduum Retreat at the

Verbum Dei centre, on the Isle of Wight, 17- 20 April.

An opportunity to live the Easter Triduum in prayer, experiencing Christ's love and hope for us in his death and resurrection. For more information, please contact us: verbumdei.iow@gmail.com and www.uk.verbumdei.org



SUPPORT FIONA THOMPSON

Our lovely Fiona is taking to the skies on the 14th June to complete a parachute jump in support of the Mountbatten Hospice. You can sponsor her by scanning the QR code (also see the poster in the hall).



PORTSMOUTH DIOCESE E NEWS & JOB VACANCIES

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

<https://mailchi.mp/portsmouthdiocese/issue484>

IMPORTANT PETITION

Please consider signing the Care Not Killing petition which calls on MPs to vote against legalising assisted suicide in England and Wales.



Please see the notice board or use this QR code.

Act for Creation

Renewing our commitment to create a world in harmony with creation

Celebrating 10 years since the publication of Laudato Si'

CAFOD and CARITAS invite you to an event packed with practical information, ideas and resources to help make the changes we need in our lives and parishes.

Including:
CAFOD's LiveSimply award and projects from around the Diocese
Journey to 2030 Let's Dream
Q&A with the Estates Team

Saturday 10 May
10am-1pm

Coffee available from 9:45am

St Peter's and Winchester Martyrs
Jewry St, Winchester, SO23 8RY



Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth Registered Charity No. England 1199568, Jersey 457, Guernsey CH263

More information and to register visit <https://caritasportsmouth.org.uk>
Everyone welcome.