



IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CATHOLIC CHURCH

5th MAY 2024

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

“This is my commandment: love one another as I love you”

John 15:12

**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: Rachel Brady (023 8055 5470)
Confessions: After 10 am Mass on Saturdays
Hall Bookings: contact the parish secretary

PARISH OFFICE OPEN NEXT WEEK: Tuesday, Thursday & Friday, 9.30 am – 2.30 pm

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

Date	Solemnities & Feast days	Times & Liturgies		Mass Intentions
Sun 05 May	SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER	8.30 am 10.30 am	Mass Mass	Winifred McDonnell RIP Tatenda Colin Mandiki RIP
Mon 06 May	of the 6 th week of Easter	-	No Mass	
Tues 07 May	of the 6 th week of Easter	9.00 am 10.00 am	Eucharistic adoration Mass	KW Lorance Perera RIP
Weds 08 May	of the 6 th week of Easter	10.00 am 6.00 pm	Mass Eucharistic Adoration	-
Thurs 09 May	The Ascension of the Lord (Holy Day of Obligation)	10.00 am 7.30 pm	Mass Mass	- -
Fri 10 May	of the 6 th week of Easter after Ascension	9.00 am 9.30 am 10.00 am	Eucharistic adoration Rosary Mass	-
Sat 11 May	of the 6 th week of Easter after Ascension	10.00 am	Mass	-
Sun 12 May		8.30 am 10.30 am	Mass Mass	Irene Matthews RIP -



READINGS FOR THIS SUNDAY

1st Reading: Acts 10:25-26,34-35,44-48

Psalm: 98:1,2-3,3-4

2nd Reading: 1 John 4:7-10

Gospel: John 15:9-17

SECOND COLLECTIONS:

SUNDAY 5TH MAY – CAFOD Sudan Crisis Emergency Appeal
(See note below) (Non Gift Aid)

SUNDAY 12TH MAY - Catholic Communications Network
(Non Gift Aid)

NEXT WEEK IN THE PARISH:

- Tues 7th - **Coffee morning** after 10.00 am Mass
- **Baptism Preparation session** 7.30 pm in the hall
- Weds 8th - **Eucharistic Adoration** 6 pm in the lady chapel
- Thurs 9th - **Community Social/Activity group** –10.30 am, in the hall. All welcome
- **Choir Practice** 7.30 pm in the church. Anyone welcome to join.
- Sat 11th - **First Holy Communion session** – 11 am in the church hall
- Sun 12th - **Parish Barbeque** – after 10.30 am Mass

TODAY’S GOSPEL REFLECTION:

Friendship with God

“I no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not know what his master is doing. I have called you friends, because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father. It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you. This I command you: love one another.” [John 15:15-17](#)

Just prior to the passage quoted above, Jesus says, “You are my friends if you do what I command you.” Is that the measure of true friendship? That we do what our friend commands us to do? That depends upon which friend we are speaking about. There are many images we use for God. We call Him Father, Saviour, Master, Lord, King, Redeemer, Spirit and Friend. When it

comes to God as our divine Friend, it is important to understand the nature of that friendship properly. Jesus' friendship is not one that simply makes us "buddies." Friendship with our Lord is not the same as a friendship between two equals. He is God. And because He is God, our friendship with Him takes on unique characteristics that are not present in other friendships. With that said, there could be no greater friend than the Lord Himself.

Among humans, our friendships have various foundations. It could be that two people have mutual interests and they enjoy engaging in those interests together. It could be that two people have spent much pleasant time together since childhood. Or it could be that two people have endured some difficulty together and that experience has bonded them together. But according to Saint Thomas Aquinas, friendship in its purest form is based on just one thing: mutual charity.

Charity is the form of love that is purely selfless. It's a way of relating to another in which a person's sole focus is the good of the other. It is not based on one's own self interests. It's not a matter of "what do I get out of it?" In [1 Corinthians 13:4-8](#), St. Paul defines the love of charity this way: "Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, it is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails." This is not only the definition of charity, it is also the only foundation for true friendship.

When you consider all of these qualities of charity, you will find that God relates to us in each of these ways. For that reason, God offers us the purest friendship possible. Whether or not we reciprocate these qualities to God will determine the depth of the bond of friendship that we establish with Him. But there is more. When we love God, we must love Him in a way that is proper and proportionate to Who God is. For example, if we offer charity to God, we seek to fulfill only God's interests and rejoice in the Truth of Who He is. Thus, the charity we offer to God comes in the form of worship. He is God and is worthy of worship, adoration, surrender, trust and perfect obedience. When it is God we are loving, the very essence of the Person we love requires these responses.

One beautiful and consoling thing to recognize with this form of charity given to God is that it also establishes a true friendship with God. When we offer our worship to God, we are in a position to receive the very life of God in return. And the giving of ourselves, coupled with the reception of the life of God, establishes a bond of holy friendship that will transform us, unite us with Him and fulfill us to perfection. Friendship with God makes us one with Him and opens us to receive everything that He shares with us—namely, His very Self.

Reflect, today, upon the invitation Jesus has offered you to enter into a true friendship with Him. This means that God becomes the center of your life. It means that you seek to give yourself, selflessly and without reserve, to Him Who is deserving of all your love. It means you choose worship and obedience to perfection. The reward of such love is that you are able to enter into a bond that is so holy, so pure and so fulfilling that it completes you, enabling you to become who you were meant to be.

A reflection for 6th Sunday of Easter, Yr B
www.mycatholic.life

PARISH NOTICES

TEA & COFFEE AFTER 10.30 AM MASS

Please join us. All welcome.

TEA & COFFEE AFTER 8.30 AM MASS

Served on the first Sunday of each month after the 8.30 am Mass. Please do come along as there are only a tiny number of people there these days! If you would be willing to help with setting up and serving refreshments your help would also be very welcome. If however, there seems to be no demand for this opportunity, we will consider discontinuing it in the near future.

CAFOD EMERGENCY APPEAL – The Sudan crisis has escalated and at least 25 million Sudanese need emergency help. Very few aid agencies can get in to Sudan to help. However, CAFOD is able to work with the church in Sudan to respond. Urgent help needed is needed to get humanitarian aid to the people of Sudan. Please pray and please give what you can in today's 2nd collection, on our card machine, or on line: www.cafod.org.uk/SudanAppeal

INFANT BAPTISM PREPARATION

If you would like your baby/young child to be baptised, you will need to attend a baptism preparation session for parents. Next session: **This Tuesday 7th May, 7.30 pm – 9.00 pm in the hall.** Please contact the parish office to register your child for baptism and to attend the course.

PARISH BBQ – Sunday 12th May after 10.30 am Mass

All the usual BBQ food plus refreshments and cakes – **we need bakers to donate cakes!** All proceeds raised will support the parish and Emergency Relief Fund. If you could help in any way, please speak to Anastasia.

CELEBRATING OUR CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Sunday 19th May, 10.30 am Mass

As part of our celebration, parishioners from India are being invited to take the lead in parts of this Mass. It will also be followed by a 'Bring and Share' Lunch in the hall. If you are from India and would like to participate in the Mass or in helping to organise the lunch, please contact Anastasia or Nisha Dutta.

PARISH SUMMER FAIR

Saturday 13th July

We are once again collecting donations for a raffle, tombola, plants, cakes etc. If you have any donations you would like to offer, please bring them to the hall after Masses. If anyone would like to organise a stall or help in any way, please talk to Anastasia after 10.30 am Mass.

PARISH INCOME – APRIL 2024

Offertory	1,011.45
Gift Aid envelopes	160.00
Standing Orders/Direct Debits	2,630.36
Card machine	315.64
Online donations	305.75
Refreshments after Masses	51.85
Cake Sale	37.40
Candles	102.01
Parish Maintenance 2 nd Collection	383.79
Emergency Relief Fund donations	70.00
TOTAL	5,068.25

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS FOR EXTERNAL CAUSES:

Clergy Training	481.22
Holy Places	231.83
TOTAL	713.05

VACANCY – PARISH ADMINISTRATOR IMMACULATE CONCEPTION, SOUTHAMPTON

Part time, Salary approx £12.00 per hour

Full details of hours, salary and job spec to be confirmed.

Following the announcement last week that I will be leaving my role here as Parish Administrator, if you are interested in this vacancy and would like to visit the parish office for an informal discussion about about what is involved please do feel free to call in or, contact me on 023 80555470 to arrange a suitable time.

This is a pivotal role in serving the community and supporting Fr Anthony. Patience, resilience, tact, diplomacy, flexibility and a firm but friendly personality are vital alongside the ability to manage and prioritise an ever changing and diverse workload plus. An aptitude for technology and a high level of expertise in using Office 365 will also be essential to the efficient functioning of the parish.

****TODAY 2.30 pm****

BLESSING OF THE WATERS, ROGATION DAY,

Onboard the steamship Shieldhall, Southampton Dock – Berth 110, accessible from Dock Gate 10 or 20

There's still time! Last few tickets left. £5 each. Book at:

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/blessing-of-the-waters-tickets-658568214257?aff=ebdssbdestsearch&keep_tld=1

Join the Lord Mayor and her Chaplain Fr Anthony for his final public event where he will be involved in leading this short service. Live music, tea and refreshments and an opportunity to visit the engine room.



PORTSMOUTH DIOCESE

E NEWS & JOB VACANCIES

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

<https://mailchi.mp/portsmouthdiocese/issue443?e=34c55ac6ce>

DIOCESAN EVENTS:

Annual Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes

22 – 26 July 2024

If you would like to participate in this year's pilgrimage, please contact sfield@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

A Day for Readers:

Saturday 19th October 2024, 9:30am – 2:30pm

St Bede's Church, Basingstoke, RG24 9DX.

Hosted by the Diocesan Liturgy Formation Team

Please RSVP to liturgy@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

CARITAS UPDATES

Caritas Portsmouth is hosting Sue Carter from the Alzheimer's Society, to run a **Dementia Friends Information Session** for anyone interested in hosting a Dementia Café, looking to make their parish more Dementia Friendly or just want to know more to support people in their family or community. The session will be held online on **Tuesday 21st May at 7pm**. Please register in advance [HERE](https://caritasportsmouth.org.uk). For more information please contact us at caritas@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk or visit <https://caritasportsmouth.org.uk>

Refugee Week (17th-23rd June),

online networking lunch event **Tuesday 18th June**. Link to be made available nearer the time.

Exploring how we can support refugees and asylum seekers in our parishes.

DIOCESAN FREE WILLS SERVICE

The Diocese has partnered with market-leading solicitors and will-writing providers to offer anyone over 18 basic simple or mirror Will for free. Whether you would like to write your Will in-person, online or over the 'phone, you will be expertly supported throughout a quick and straightforward process. There is no obligation to leave your Parish a gift in your Will, but a gift of this kind is an opportunity to make a lasting gift to the Church, and we hope many will choose to do so. More info at: 'Make your FREE Will' - www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

'HEAVENLY VOICES'

Romsey Abbey, Saturday 8th June at 7.30pm.

Step into the majestic Abbey and experience an evening of heavenly music showcasing some of the most beautiful choral works of the past three centuries, performed by Southampton Philharmonic and the SU Philharmonic choirs. Tickets may be purchased online at www.ticketsource.co.uk/musicinromsey or from Romsey Visitor Information Centre, 13 Church St. Romsey SO51 8BT (tel: 01794 512987)