



IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CATHOLIC CHURCH

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

"For many are called, but few are chosen." - Matthew 22:1-14

Address: 346 Portswood Road, Southampton, SO17 3SB

Tel: (023) 8055 5470

Email: office@immaculateconception.church

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 11 October TWENTY-EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	8.30 am	Mass	Tina Gibbs RIP
	10.30 am	Mass	Eddy Vales 60 th Birthday
Mon 12 October St Wilfrid	-NO MASS-		
Tue 13 October St Edward the Confessor	9.00 am	Eucharistic Adoration	Catherine White RIP
	10.00 am	Mass	
Wed 14 October St Callistus I	10 am	Mass	Luis Greaves
	6 pm	Eucharistic Adoration & Rosary	
Thu 15 October St Teresa of Avila	10 am	Mass	--
Fri 16 October St Hedwig	9.00 am	Eucharistic Adoration	Wilfred Perera RIP
	9.30 am	Rosary	
	10.00 am	Mass	
Sat 17 October St Ignatius of Antioch	10 am	Mass	Kathleen White RIP
Sun 18 October TWENTY-NINTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	8.30 am	Mass	Fr Paul Spellman RIP
	10.30 am	Mass	Ian Warwick RIP



Thought for the Week: "You must remember to love people and use things, rather than to love things and use people." (Blessed Fulton Sheen)



Upcoming Second Collection: Missio - World Mission Sunday - Sunday 18 October 2026



SUNDAY READINGS

1st Reading: Isaiah 25:6-10a

This is the Lord; we have waited for him

Psalm: Ps 23(22):1-3a. 3b-4. 5. 6. R1

In the Lord's own house shall I dwell

2nd Reading: Philippians 4:12-14, 19-20

I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

Gospel: Matthew 22:1-14

'Invite to the wedding feast as many as you find.'

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: 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Mrs. Thatcher. The name provokes strong reactions. But ...

One year when the Conservative Party Conference was in Blackpool, a popular restaurant was crammed full of delegates, including the Iron Lady. Only one large table remained empty, and the proprietor was obviously upset that his booking had let him down on such a lucrative evening. Embarrassed that Conservatives were being given a bad name, Mrs. Thatcher whipped out her cheque book and wrote out a cheque for a large sum. She then nudged Lord Saatchi seated beside her and obliged him to do the same – presumably he could afford it. Honour was saved. Only subsequently did it turn out that the missing party were not Conference participants and did not vote Tory ... Appointments not being kept. A scourge of many lives, including mine, where they have included such varieties as deciding to call off a wedding the day before but not telling me.

Not that this Gospel passage refers to any old invitation. This is the Great Dinner, the image of eternal life.

Jesus was used to people not turning up or delaying the event. But this is not Jesus' meal. True, it is a banquet for "the son's wedding", but the father is the host. Jesus' meal, the Last Supper, was well enough attended, even including the traitor Judas. Subsequently, as we know, most of the apostles failed to keep the appointment at Calvary, but Jesus did not then callout for vengeance. But this is his Father's meal, and that deserves the greatest respect.

The story is another of those about the Chosen People and the outsiders. Who will accept that this is the great "Today"? If the Chosen will not, the Gentile riff-raff must take over. But who is this man without the wedding garment, and how could he be expected to have one? Let us say straight away that it is nothing to do with 'not having enough time to go to the hire department'.

When Jesus speaks in this way, he may seem alarming, but let us say that rather than being a bomb it is more like a firework. It does give a loud bang, but also offers a bright display of colour for those who wish to behold. It is a way of opening our eyes. What is the garment? Some say it is charity. Others that it is conviction and resolve, thinking of the young man wearing a linen garment at Gethsemane (Mark 14) who, when they seized Jesus, "fled naked, leaving his garment behind". The wedding garment may also represent a fundamental attitude to life. The absence of such a garment can point to those who respond not with eagerness but with a sullen "Oh OK then, I suppose so".

But especially the wedding garment may completely exclude any attitude of smugness at having taken the place of others. Many Biblical texts speak of the simple joy and openness of God's invitation to all of us. In that remarkable Biblical love poem the Song of Songs, there is the simplest and purest expression of joy and wonder. "How beautiful you are!" says the girl to her beloved, "How your face surpasses all other men!" And in return the man answers: "How beautiful you are, my beloved!" All this represents the relationship between God and humans. There is no bitterness, no holding back. So the wedding garment represents a proper response to God's wonderful invitation. A proper response totally avoids taking pleasure in other people having been excluded. Otherwise receiving the invitation would be like winning an important race when somebody else has been disqualified on a technicality. It doesn't really feel like winning. That is not the way for us to go. God is not mocked. If we go that way, we try to enter the wedding banquet dressed like the wedding guest of the Gospel. In that case we might as well not turn up. And unfortunately, God, unlike Mrs. Thatcher, won't just step in and pay the bill.

PARISH NOTICES

With Gratitude to Liz

Dear Parishioners,

I would like to share some news with you personally. After many years of dedicated service, Liz Bellamy has decided to retire from her ministry with our Altar Servers this Christmas.

Liz first came to Immaculate Conception Parish on 23 April 2013, generously offering to help with the guidance and training of our Altar Servers. What began as a temporary offer of help became nearly fourteen years of faithful ministry. Her retirement will coincide with a very special day, her 75th birthday on 23 December, and it seems a fitting moment for her to rest a little after giving so much. Over these years, Liz has quietly and patiently formed many servers, young and not so young, helping them to serve at the altar with care, reverence and joy. Much of what she has done has been unseen, but its fruit is visible at every Mass we celebrate together. I am deeply grateful to her, as I know you all are, and I hope you will find a moment to thank her personally in the weeks ahead.

As Liz steps back, we pray that someone will feel called to carry this ministry forward. If you would like to find out more, Liz would be very happy to chat with you before the 10.30am Sunday Mass (from about 10.00am) or after Mass. Please do not feel you need any experience; a willing heart is the best place to start.

Please keep Liz in your prayers as she enters this new season of her life and let us give thanks to God for her generous and faithful service to our parish.

With every blessing,

Fr Anthony
Parish Priest



Welcome Home: A Supper for Our University Students

Dear Parishioners and Students,

We are truly blessed to have so many university students worshipping with us here at Immaculate Conception. To all our students, whether you are just beginning your studies or returning for another year, we want you to know that this parish is your home. Wherever you have travelled from, and however far you are from family, you will always find a welcome here.

Welcome Home Supper – Friday 23 October, 6.00pm, Parish Hall

As is our tradition, we warmly invite all students who worship with us to join us for a simple shared meal in the parish hall. It will be a relaxed evening to meet one another, enjoy some food and friendship, and plan together the activities you would like to see during the year ahead. Your ideas are very welcome.

Please do come, and feel free to bring a friend who might be looking for a spiritual home. To our parishioners, I would ask you to make a special effort to greet our students at Mass and to make them feel at home among us. We look forward to welcoming you on the 23rd.

Parish Youth Day – Autumn half term Activity Day

Looking for something fun to do during the half-term break? Come and join us for a day of friendship, activities, games, music, and fun! All children and young people aged 5 to 16 years are welcome. Possibly please bring a packed lunch.

Wednesday 28 October, 10:00am - 3:00pm, Parish Hall.

Free of charge



Energy Action Month

October 2026

You are warmly invited to an evening hosted by our church, taking place in the Parish Hall from **7.30-9pm on Friday 30th October**. It is part of

Southampton's Energy Action Month organised by Transition Southampton (TS, also behind the Repair café) and the Environment Centre, tEC. The evening will be a relaxed talk and



**GREEN OPEN HOMES
SOUTHAMPTON**

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.

RCIA – Tuesday 3 November, 7:15pm, Parish Hall

Interested in becoming a Catholic, or simply curious? Come along and find out more. Past candidates, especially last year's, are warmly invited to the first session: your story could encourage someone new. Bring a friend! Contact Dudley, Dcn Gerard or Fr Anthony. We will also leave a sheet at the porch.

Alpha Reunion Social – Wednesday 11 November, 7pm, Parish Hall

Our first Alpha course was a huge success! Everyone who took part is warmly invited back for an evening of food, friendship and reconnecting. Please sign the sheet in the porch so we can cater. Details of the next Alpha course will be announced soon.

Remembering Our Loved Ones This November

Dear Parishioners,

November is the month in which the Church prays in a special way for the Holy Souls, and as a parish family we hold close all those we have loved and lost.

- **Bereavement Mass – Saturday 7 November at the 10am Saturday mass.**

We will celebrate a Mass for all parishioners who have died since November last year. We warmly invite their families and friends to join us. During the Mass, anyone who has lost a loved one, whether recently or some time ago, is welcome to come forward and light a candle in their memory. You do not need to have lost someone this year to take part; all who wish to remember someone dear to them are most welcome.

- **Remembrance Sunday – Sunday 8 November**

On Remembrance Sunday we pray for all who have died in war and conflict, and for peace in our world.

- **Blessing of Graves – Stoneham Cemetery, Sunday 8 November at 12:30 pm**

Following Remembrance Sunday, Fr Anthony will go to Stoneham Cemetery to bless the graves. Please join us there and accompany us to the graves of your loved ones so that we can pray with you and bless their resting place.

Grief can be a lonely road, and these occasions are a chance to walk it together, supported by prayer and by one another. Please do come, and feel free to bring family and friends.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.



Upcoming Sundays Events

- 25 Oct - Family Mass at 10:30
- 1 Nov - Bamenda Sunday
- 29 Nov – First Holy Communion Classes Begin

Current Diocesan Vacancies: Please visit [current vacancies](#) including:

- [Parish Administrator, Thatcham](#)
- [Parish Administrator, Winchester](#)
- [Safeguarding & DBS Administrator, Portsmouth](#)

