

# IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CATHOLIC CHURCH

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

*"And even when you saw it, you did not afterwards change your minds and believe him." - Matthew 21:28-32*

**Address:** 346 Portswood Road, Southampton, SO17 3SB

**Tel:** (023) 8055 5470

**Email:** [office@immaculateconception.church](mailto:office@immaculateconception.church)

**Website:** [www.immaculateconception.church](http://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](mailto: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](http://www.churchservices.tv/portswoodchur)

| Solemnities, Feast days & Memorials                                | Times & Liturgies |                               | Mass Intentions                                   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Sun 27 September<br>TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME           | 8.30 am           | Mass                          | Steve White RIP                                   |
|                                                                    | 10.30 am          | Mass                          | For all the deceased of Houedikin Family and Loko |
| Mon 28 September<br>St Wenceslaus                                  | <b>-NO MASS-</b>  |                               |                                                   |
| Tue 29 September<br>THE HOLY ARCHANGELS MICHAEL, GABRIEL & RAPHAEL | 10.00 am          | Service of the Word (No Mass) | --                                                |
| Wed 30 September<br>St Jerome                                      | 10 am             | Service of the Word (No Mass) | --                                                |
|                                                                    | 6 pm              | Eucharistic Adoration         | --                                                |
| Thu 1 October<br>St Teresa of the Child Jesus                      | 10 am             | Service of the Word (No Mass) | --                                                |
| Fri 2 October<br>The Holy Guardian Angels                          | 9.30 am           | Rosary                        | --                                                |
|                                                                    | 10.00 am          | Service of the Word (No Mass) | --                                                |
| Sat 3 October<br>Our Lady on Saturday                              | 10 am             | Service of the Word (No Mass) | --                                                |
| Sun 4 October<br>TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME            | 8.30 am           | Mass                          | Denis and Naomi Philpot RIP                       |
|                                                                    | 10.30 am          | Mass                          | Sister Maisie RIP                                 |



## PASTORAL LETTER FROM THE BISHOP: THINGS VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE

In his latest pastoral letter, Bishop Philip reflects on our profession of faith in God, "the Creator of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible", and invites readers to complete a short questionnaire. The full letter will be available to read online from **Sunday 27 September** at: [Pastoral Letters - Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth](#).

Printed copies of the pastoral letter will also be available in the church porch.

## SUNDAY READINGS

### 1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Ezekiel 18:25-28

*'Is my way not just?'*

### Psalm: Ps 25(24):4-5b. 6-7. 8-9. R6a

*Remember your compassion, O Lord.*

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: Philippians 2:1-11

*'Therefore God has highly exalted him'*

### Gospel: Matthew 21:28-32

*'Which of the two did the will of his father?'*

## 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

## Action over Words

### Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A)

Jesus said to the chief priests and elders of the people: "What is your opinion? A man had two sons. He came to the first and said, 'Son, go out and work in the vineyard today.' He said in reply, 'I will not,' but afterwards changed his mind and went. The man came to the other son and gave the same order. He said in reply, 'Yes, sir,' but did not go. Which of the two did his father's will?" [Matthew 21:28-31](#)

This parable must have been difficult for the chief priests and elders to hear, especially since it was clearly directed at them. In fact, after Jesus tells them a second parable, not included in today's Gospel, we read, "although they were attempting to arrest him, they feared the crowds, for they regarded him as a prophet" ([Matthew 21:46](#)). It seems they dismissed Jesus' words and His rebuke, but fear of public backlash, rather than fear of God's judgment, kept them silent for a time.

In today's Gospel, the first son represents the tax collectors and prostitutes, those who initially violated God's law but later repented after hearing the preaching of John the Baptist and Jesus. The second son represents the chief priests and elders. After telling the parable, Jesus declares, "Amen, I say to you, tax collectors and prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God before you."

Like the second son, the religious and civic leaders paid lip service to God's law, but their actions did not align with its intent. They were hypocrites, blind to their own rejection of God's saving Word, and they misled others by their outward piety and self-righteous attitudes.

Consider more carefully the reactions of the two sons. We might imagine that the second son, who said, "Yes, sir," represents all who put on a false appearance of holiness. In the sight of others, they say the right things, but behind closed doors they fail to act.

The first son is markedly different. Though he initially responds with defiance—"I will not"—his conscience eventually moves him to do what is right. Some may wonder why Jesus didn't include a third son, one who says "Yes, sir," and then follows through. But Jesus likely omits such a son because all of us fall into one of the two categories He presents. Only our Blessed Mother obeyed perfectly in both word and deed from the first moment of her Immaculate Conception.

The first son becomes our model because each of us, in some way, struggles to enter into perfect obedience to God's will. From childhood, we contend with what the Church calls concupiscence, the disordered tendency that arises from Original Sin. Though we are created good and in the image of God, our nature is wounded and inclined toward what is contrary to His will. The spiritual journey we undertake in this life is one in which grace slowly reorders our fallen inclinations and restores us to the obedience we are called to live.

Reflect today on the first son, and humbly see yourself in him. In what ways do you find it difficult to say "Yes" to God's will right away? It is not a sin to struggle with obedience. This struggle is part of our fallen human nature. Like the first son, we must allow grace to work within us, forming our conscience and compelling us to act in accordance with God's will, especially in the areas where we resist. When we allow grace to move us beyond our initial hesitation, we grow in virtue and become more like our Blessed Mother and our Lord Jesus, who both said "Yes" to the Father and followed through completely.

## PARISH NOTICES

### Time to Return Your Wessex Rotary Shoeboxes!



A gentle reminder to please return your filled shoeboxes and leave them either in the church porch or at the parish office.

The final date for returning shoeboxes is **Sunday 18 October**. Please do your best to bring them in by this date so they can be collected and prepared for dispatch. 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](http://www.wessexrotaryshoebox.org.uk)

### This Sunday, Second Collection 27 September SVP. (St Vincent de Paul)

This is the annual collection for our parish SVP group. This group has been active since the opening of the church and has a long history of helping those in need. The needs of people do not change. Loneliness, isolation, difficulties attending appointments, money to pay a bill. SVP members give their time to others to listen and care, irrespective of race or creed. Please support this charity and consider joining the small group which always needs committed members. St Vincent de Paul said, *"It is only for your love that the poor will forgive you for the bread you give them"*.

### AN APPEAL FOR READERS

Have you ever considered yourself reading at Mass? Proclaiming God's Holy Word to the assembly is one of the great privileges given to the faithful. But reading well in church is a skill in its own right: pacing, clarity, breathing, knowing where to pause and where to let a line land. It takes practice to do it justice. That's exactly why we're inviting you to train. Experienced readers, who have already mastered this craft, will pass on their skill to you, so that when you stand at the ambo you can proclaim the Word with confidence and reverence. If you've ever felt that quiet nudge to take part, this is your invitation.

Please complete a form, copies are in the box near the sacristy door. Training sessions will be arranged, and you'll be able to undertake the privilege of proclaiming God's Holy Word.

## RCIA - Autumn 2026

### Curious about the Catholic Faith

Have you ever wondered what Catholics believe, why we celebrate the Mass, or what it means to have a relationship with Jesus and His Church? Perhaps you are thinking about becoming Catholic, or simply want to find out more.

If you would like to explore the Catholic Faith with us, or prepare for a Sacrament, please complete the form here- [SOUIC - RCIA - 2026/27](#) or scan the QR Code.



Alternatively, contact the **Parish Office**, leaving your name and contact details, and we will be in touch.

If you have questions or would simply like to talk about whether RCIA is right for you, please speak to **Fr Anthony or Deacon Gerard**.

We would be very happy to hear from you.

## ALPHA - Autumn 2026

### What if there's more to life?



What do you think about faith, God and the bigger questions of life? Alpha is a relaxed and welcoming space to explore those questions together. Our next Alpha course on a Wednesday Evening begins in early October and runs through to mid-December 2026. Over eleven weeks, each session looks at a different aspect of faith, followed by an open conversation.

So, whether you're 16 or 99, committed, curious, questioning or sceptical – why not give Alpha a try? Come along. Ask questions. Share your thoughts. You might be surprised where the conversation leads.

Please sign up using the QR Code or complete the form here - [SOUIC - ALPHA - Autumn 2026](#).



Everyone is welcome.



## Christmas Fayre - Saturday 14 November - Donations Needed!

Our Christmas Fayre will be held on Saturday 14 November, and we would be very grateful for your support. We are now collecting good quality donations for the fayre. Items can be left at the back of the church or in the parish hall. We are also looking for volunteers to help with preparations, setting up, running stalls on the day, and clearing away afterwards. If you can spare some time, please speak to the parish office.

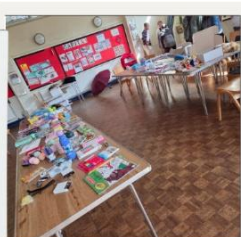


### Shoebox Packing Morning

Join us on 1 October after the 10.00am Service in the Parish Hall to help fill the shoeboxes. There will be refreshments and everyone is welcome.



Volunteers packing shoeboxes at last year's event



### Dates for Diary -

- Sunday 11 October 10:30am Mass will be led by our Nigerian Community.
- Tues 13 Oct – Baptism Preparation Course
- Sunday 1 Nov – All Saints
- Monday 2 Nov – All Souls
- Sunday 8 Nov – Remembrance Sunday

### Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The Catholic Union is delighted to announce that it will be holding a webinar on Monday 19 October at 6.00pm to explore how AI can enhance human experience rather than lessen it. Chaired by Catherine Pepinster, well known journalist, attendees will hear from **Fr Michael Baggot** (Associate Professor of Bioethics at the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum), **Craig Ross** (Assistant Head at St Philomena's Catholic High School for Girls) and **Sam Monaghan** (Chief Executive of Methodist Homes Association). **Kanishka Narayan MP, Minister for Artificial Intelligence**, has been invited. Earlier this year, Pope Leo released his first encyclical, Magnifica Humanitas, addressing the rise of Artificial Intelligence and the need for technology to serve human dignity and the common good rather than driving inequality or replacing human conscience. This webinar will draw on the practical applications of the encyclical.

Those wishing to register for the webinar please email [info@catholicunion.org.uk](mailto:info@catholicunion.org.uk) and a zoom link will be provided. Booking is essential.

### Bookshop

pre-Christmas sales on selected items have now begun. £2 raffle tickets are available for a chance to win a Christmas Hamper worth £25. Please visit the Bookshop for details.

#### Bookshop Volunteers Needed!!

We are looking for additional volunteers to help in the Bookshop:

- After the 8.30am Mass on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month.
- After the 10.30am Mass on at least two Sundays per month.



### Catholic School Open Days



Current Year 6 students are invited to attend the Open Evening at Saint George Catholic College on: Thursday 1 October 2026, 5:00pm - 8:00pm.



St Anne's Sixth Form is an outstanding 16–18 Catholic mixed gender college.

Open Evening: Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> October, from 6pm to 8pm.

