



OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS

A PARISH OF THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF PORTSMOUTH IN THE CARE OF THE SALESIANS OF DON BOSCO

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Office Hours: 10am – 12pm

Parish Priest: **Fr. Michael Hynes SDB**

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9th March 2025 - 1st Sunday in Lent

Dear friends,

Welcome to Our Lady Help of Christians. Everyone is welcome, no matter who you are or where you are on your faith journey.

If you own a vehicle, you will be aware of the importance of the MOT test and an annual service. They ensure that the vehicle meets minimum safety and environmental standards, operates at optimal levels of performance and efficiency and prevents future mechanical faults that can be expensive and hazardous.

In the same way, we need to pause and reassess our relationship with God. The season of Lent is an opportunity and invitation to examine our lives in detail, spending time to reflect upon our thoughts, words and deeds, on where we have strayed from God and to ask his forgiveness.

The first reading today from the Book of Deuteronomy sets the tone. Moses reminds the people how God delivered them from slavery in Egypt. During their wanderings in the desert, they were tested and at times they turned from God. Despite their failings, God finally brought them to the Promised Land when they put their trust in him.

All of us have at times been in the wilderness and we have been tried and tempted. Jesus knows what it is like to be tempted. The Gospel Reading invites us to reflect on the time Jesus spent in the wilderness and the temptations he experienced. Jesus resisted the temptations, and Paul assures us that we will be saved from falling into temptation and retain that close relationship with God if we call on the name of the Lord and keep him in our heart and on our lips.

We can take comfort from knowing that God's love for us is ever present in our pain, our sufferings, our difficulties and when we are tempted. We bring our struggles to the Lord, asking for his help, knowing that he will be there to take us by the hand.

Pope Francis has issued a Message for Lent. You can read it <https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2025/02/25/250225b.html>

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS We are united in praying for Pope Francis and for all who are ill, those who are housebound, those who are unable to join us in person at our celebration of the Eucharist, those who are mentioned in our Parish Book of Prayer Intentions and all who have asked for our prayers.

Mass Times, Intentions and Events for the Week

Sat 8th March	10.00 11.00	Mass <i>Reconciliation Service</i>
Vigil Mass 1st Sunday in Lent	5.00pm	Peter Byrne RIP
Sun 9th March 1st Sunday in Lent	9.30	People of the Parish
Mon 10 th March	9.30	Mass
Tue 11 th March	9.30	Mass
Wed 12 th March	9.30	Mass
Thu 13 th March	9.30 7.30pm	Mass <i>Adoration</i>
Fri 14 th March	9.30 11.30	Mass <i>Stations of the Cross</i>
Sat 15 th March	10.00 10.30	Mass <i>Reconciliation</i>
Vigil Mass 2nd Sunday of Lent	5.00pm	Mass
Sun 16 th March 2nd Sunday of Lent	9.30	People of the Parish

ANNIVERSARIES ABOUT THIS TIME Catherine Cooke, Alexander Callaghan, Patrick O'Sullivan, Agnes Kelleher, Michael Forrest, Theresa Lynch and Christopher Mitchell. May they rest in peace.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS & FRIDAY FRUGAL LUNCHES The Stations of the Cross will be prayed on a Friday at 11.30am. This is a powerful way to walk with Jesus during Lent. Join us in the after Stations of the Cross for a simple meal of soup and a roll. We would welcome anyone who could offer to make soup. Please let Helen Priestly know if you can help. Thank you.

THE POPE'S PRAYER INTENTION FOR MARCH Let us pray that broken families might discover the cure for their wounds through forgiveness, rediscovering each other's gifts, even in their differences.

FRIDAY LENTEN DISCUSSION GROUP meets on Friday at 7pm to 8pm. Come and share your reflections, questions, insights on the Gospel used at Mass the following Sunday. The sessions are informal and are based on the traditional practice of scriptural reading, meditation and prayer.

CAFOD LENT APPEAL – Family Fast Day collection Please donate to our Family Fast Day parish collection and support communities suffering the impacts of war, poverty and climate change to find solutions and hope. Use the CAFOD envelope in church, donate online at <https://cafod.org.uk/fundraise/parishes/virtual-envelope> or call on 0303 303 3030. You can also text CAFODLENT to 70085 to donate £10.

THE ROSARY GROUP We invite all our parishioners to participate in this great prayer tradition of the Church and to meditate on the life of Christ. The New Rota for the Living Rosary is on the Notice Board in the Narthex. The members undertake to pray a decade of the Rosary each day at home for Hope and Peace. If you would like to join the group, please speak to Kate Boardman.

CATHOLIC WOMEN’S LEAGUE The CWL meets on the third Tuesday in each month after the 9.30 am Mass. Their next meeting will be on Tuesday, 18th March. New members are always welcome.

EASTER CARDS There is a selection of Easter Cards for sale at the Repository counter after Mass on Saturday evening and Sunday morning

NATIONAL NOVENA TO ST JOSEPH The annual Novena of Masses and Prayers runs from 10th - 18th March 2025 at St Joseph’s Church, Maidenhead. You are welcome to join them for Mass at 10.00am every day of the Novena. These Masses will be available to follow on Zoom, via the Mill Hill website:

www.millhillmissionaries.com/novena

You are welcome to send in your petitions and/ or to request a Novena Prayer Booklet. Please write to the Novena Director at 6 Colby Gardens, Maidenhead, SL6 7GZ, or email

novenamhm@gmail.com Alternately, you may place your petitions in the Petitions Box in the Narthex.

COFFEE & CHAT Everyone is welcome in the Hall after the Mass on a Sunday morning and the 9.30 Mass on a Wednesday for tea and coffee. It is a great opportunity to get to know fellow parishioners.

HALL HIRE The hall is available for Hire for parties, celebrations and special events. For details and availability, please contact Olein Webster at: olhchallhire@gmail.com

CATECHISTS LENT DAYS OF PRAYER, FORMATION AND NETWORKING The Vicariate for Evangelisation will be hosting three online events during Lent for Catechists across the diocese. These events offer a chance to connect with other catechists, share experiences, and find inspiration to hand on the faith in our parishes. Each event will begin at 7:30 PM and last for one hour. Catechists can choose from the three events based on their area of catechesis:

Thursday 13th March - Children’s Liturgy and First Holy Communion

Thursday 20th March - Marriage Preparation and Baptism

Thursday 3rd April - Confirmation and RCIA

To sign up for these events, please go to

<https://forms.office.com/e/VkCdj1SWzA>

YOUR PARISH NEEDS YOU!

There are many ways of getting involved in the parish.

MUSICIANS: Do you play an instrument? Would you be able to take some of the burden from Maureen and help provide music at Mass and other celebrations. Having different instruments would enable us to add variety and enrich our celebration of the Liturgy. We are hoping to form a group of musicians and singers playing a variety of instruments to enhance our worship and praise. Please speak to David May.

WELCOMING: We are short of welcomers at the Sunday Masses. Can you be the big welcome to all who arrive through the door of the Church? If you would like to participate in this important Ministry, please speak to David

HAVE YOU EVER NOTICED ALL THE THINGS THAT NEED TO BE PREPARED FOR OUR MASSES? Would you be prepared to come earlier and help to prepare the Church for Mass, check on supplies and do all the little jobs connected with the Sacristy. Might you be one of those people? Please speak to David May.

MAINTENANCE We are also looking for volunteers to help look after the maintenance of the buildings and grounds. Weekly and monthly checks are needed of all our buildings to ensure we are compliant with our legal duties. A skill with DIY would be useful but not essential. Please speak to Joe DeBono.

DATES FOR YOUR DARY

14th March	CAFOD FAMILY Fast Day
14th March	Lenten Prayer & Discussion Evening
18th March	CWL Meeting
21st March	Lenten Prayer & Discussion Evening
22nd March	FHC Session
25th March	Fellowship & Discussion Group
28th March	Lenten Prayer & Discussion Evening
23rd April	CWL Coffee Morning
15th June	Celebration of First Holy Communion