



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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22nd December 2024 - Fourth Sunday of Advent

A very peaceful, happy and safe Christmas!

Dear friends,

The waiting is almost over, the sense of anticipation and expectation is tangible. Today we light the fourth candle in our Advent wreath, signifying Peace, and reminding us of the words of the angels: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

Today in the gospel we see Mary travelling to visit and be with her cousin Elizabeth. The meeting of the two expectant mothers is a powerful example for us as we prepare for Christmas: Mary's generosity in wishing to help her cousin, and the welcome she received. The lives of both women have been transformed by the Holy Spirit: Mary when she said 'Yes' to become the mother of God's son, and Elizabeth when she recognises that Mary is blessed by God because she believed what God had promised her: 'that she would conceive and bear a son whose reign will last for ever.

All mothers will empathise with Elizabeth when the baby she was carrying leapt for joy. Every newborn baby is a wonder and a gift from God: a cause for joy and celebration. Do we have the same sense of excitement, expectation, and joy shared by Mary and Elizabeth, as we prepare to welcome the birth of the Son of God made Man?

Given the Gospel this morning, it is appropriate that today we are asked to pray especially for Expectant Mothers.

Christmas is a magical time. A time to thank God for the gifts he has given us. Approach Christmas with the eyes of a child. As Charles Dickens commented: 'For it is good to be children sometimes, and never better than at Christmas, when its mighty Founder was a child himself.'

Mass Times, Intentions and Events for the Christmas Period

Sat 21 st December	10.00 10.40	Reconciliation
Vigil Mass 4th Sunday of Advent	5.00pm	People of the Parish
Sun 22 nd December 4th Sunday of Advent	9.30	Franks Deffains RIP
Mon 23 rd December	9.30	
Tue 24 th December	9.30	Judith Yannis Int.
Vigil Mass The Nativity of the Lord	8.00pm	
Wed 25 th December The Nativity of the Lord	9.30	
Thu 26 th December St Stephen	9.30	Walles Family Int
Fri 27 th December	No Morning Mass	
Sat 28 th December	No Morning Mass No Reconciliation	

Sat 28 th December	No Morning Mass No Reconciliation	
Vigil Mass The Holy Family	5.00pm	
Sun 29 th December The Holy Family	9.30	
Mon 30 th December	9.30	
Tue 31 st December	9.30	
Wed 1 st January Mary the Mother of God	9.30	
Thu 2 nd January	9.30 7.30pm	Adoration
Fri 3 rd January	9.30	
Sat 4 th January	10.00 10.40	Reconciliation
Vigil Mass Feast of the Epiphany	5.00pm	
Sun 5 th January Feast of the Epiphany of the Lord	9.30	

"He came into the world as each child comes into the world, weak and vulnerable, so that we can learn to accept our weaknesses with tender love." Pope Francis

WE REMEMBER THOSE WHO HAVE ASKED FOR OUR PRAYERS All those who are sick, 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. Please pray for Malcolm Seago who died recently. May he rest in peace.

ANNIVERSARIES ABOUT THIS TIME: Mary Olley, Nora Coogan, Patrick McMahon, Frank Deffains, Ann Gregory, Peter Brogan, Agnes Woods, Mary Kennedy, Noreen Murphy, Gerald O'Brien, Mary Corbett, Alan Pryce, Hilary Yeeles, Agnes Kearns, Tonnie Morley, Douglas Marshall, Katherine Champion, Matthew Murphy, Nicole Curran, Roseanna Bunker, Cecilia Pearce, Hannah Chapple, Vera McLoughlin, Mary Brook, Kathleen Hartnett, Ione Fearnley, Pamela Massey, Mary (Maureen) Reid, Margaret Bell Molloy, Audrey Oelmann, Catherine McKeegan, Mary King, Edward Irwin, and Albert Tattersall. May they rest in peace.

KEEP CHRIST IN CHRISTMAS POSTERS The Knights of St Columba have produced Christmas Posters for you to take home and display. A reminder to all about the true message of Christmas. The Posters are available in the Narthex. Please help yourself.

JUBILEE YEAR 2025 – PILGRIMS OF HOPE Pope Francis will solemnly open the Jubilee Year 2025 in St. Peter's Basilica on Christmas Eve. Meanwhile, throughout the world, diocesan bishops will inaugurate the Holy Year in their Cathedrals on Sunday 29th December. Bishop Philip will do this at the 12 noon Mass that day in Portsmouth. We are invited to join him for this Mass. The Jubilee offers a special moment for plenary indulgence, conversion, and grace to rekindle hope in the daily journey of life and the proclamation of the Gospel.

VALENTINE'S DAY BREAKFAST, Saturday morning, 8th February 2025 Bishop Philip will be inviting all the engaged couples of our Diocese - those being married in a church either here or abroad - to come together for a Valentine's Day Breakfast at the Cathedral. Details to follow but for now, if you or anyone you know is getting married next year, make sure you save the date!

MASS INTENTIONS The Sacrifice of the Mass is the greatest possible prayer of intercession. To request a Mass to be offered within the parish, please speak to Fr Michael, or post a written request with an offering through the Office letterbox, with details of the proposed date and time of the Mass.

ADVENT PRAYER AND REFLECTION EVENING Thank you to all who have taken part in the 'Lectio Divina' sessions each Friday evening during Advent. A special thanks to Bro Martin SDB for leading the sessions. The monthly 'Fellowship and Discussion' group will on Tuesday, 28 January.

SUPPORT YOUR PARISH Financial contributions to the Parish may be made by placing a donation in the collection, by standing Order or BACS transfer. Please use the Parish Sort Code: 30-93-04 and Account Number: 00877868
Name: CDP Our Lady Help of Christians.
Gift Aid Declaration Forms are available in the Narthex, or you can download the form off the Website.

INCOME 21ST NOVEMBER TO 12TH DECEMBER 2024 **Offertory Collection:** Envelopes £110.00 Loose £358.90 S/O Gift Aid £1382.00 S/O Non-Gift Aid £81.00 **Total** £1931.90

CHRISTMAS OFFERINGS Your offering on Christmas Day is your traditional gift to the Parish clergy.

NEWSLETTER The current edition of the Newsletter covers two weeks. We are happy to share news and information about our Parish in the Newsletter. Please contact David May if there is any news and information you would like to share.

THANK YOU for all your prayerful and practical help in ensuring that we continue to grow, experience, and share God's love with each other and the wider community. Thank you for all you are doing, your time and energy.

A very happy Christmas and Peaceful New Year to you all.

Wherever you celebrate Christmas, whatever your circumstances, you remain part of our Parish Community and you remain at the heart of our prayers.

DATES FOR YOUR DARY

24th December	Start of the Jubilee Year – Pilgrims of Hope
25th December	Christmas Day
5th January	The Epiphany of the Lord - Parish Brunch
11th January	First Holy Communion Session
21st January	Meeting of the Catholic Women's League
28th January	Fellowship and Discussion Group
8th February	Day for Engaged Couples - Portsmouth Cathedral

