

CATHOLIC PARISH OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES & ST. SWITHUN'S NEWSLETTER



2 MARCH 2025

8TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

PARISH VISION. We are a community of Christian people who seek our strength from the Word of God and the Eucharist, which unites us together. Our mission is to be a living presence of Christ for the people of our area and to share God's love, compassion, reconciliation, and peace with everyone. With His help, we aim to be a place of welcome and hospitality for all.

FR. ANTHONY'S REFLECTION. One of the joys of springtime is to see the trees budding and the early spring bulbs coming up. For vegetable gardeners, it is a special time to start planning to plant seeds inside or in our greenhouses. During the time of Jesus, people worked the soil to provide food and sustenance for themselves and their families. There is a fittingness for Jesus to use gardening as an example in his parables to explain his message. Jesus said, *"For no good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit, for each tree is known by its own fruit."* (Luke 6:43-44a)

What are our 'fruits' as Christians? St. Paul reminds the Christian of Galatia that they consist of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (cf. Gal 5:22). As we approach Lent this coming Wednesday, we are invited to make use of this time for spiritual renewal and growth in order to celebrate the great mystery of our faith - the Paschal Mystery - the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. May God bless this time of renewal in our relationship with Him and with each other.

OLD PALMS NEEDED. If you have any palms from last Palm Sunday, please bring them to church so we may burn them for Ash Wednesday. We will have two Masses on that day: 9.00am and 5.30pm. Please do join us.



GOSPEL. Luke 6:39-45. *'Can the blind lead the blind?'*

LAST SUNDAY'S COLLECTION. £1,098.25

BAPTISM, being the doorway to fullness of life and to the kingdom of God, is the first sacrament of initiation celebrated. If you are thinking of having your child baptised and raising them in the Catholic faith, please speak to Fr. Anthony.

IN THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY, spouses signify and participate in the mystery of unity and fruitful love between Christ and the Church. If you are thinking of getting married, please speak to Fr. Anthony to arrange a meeting. Please keep in mind that a minimum of six months is needed to prepare all the paperwork and to complete the marriage preparation programme.

SICK AND HOUSEBOUND. The Catholic Church shows great love and concern towards the sick and suffering through fellowship and the support of the sacraments. If you are interested in a home visit by a priest or parishioner, please get in contact with the parish office.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE: www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/parish/southsea

MASS TIMES AND INTENTIONS

Saturday 1 March - 8TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

5.30pm - St. Swithun's (Vigil Mass) *People of the parish*

Sunday 2 March - 8TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

8.30am - St. Swithun's - *Sick and housebound of the parish*

10.15am - St. Swithun's - *Bishop Philip Egan*

Monday 3 March - FERIA

No Mass

Tuesday 4 March - FERIA

9.00am - St. Swithun's - *Nevin Turner RIP*

Wednesday 5 March - ASH WEDNESDAY

9.00am - St. Swithun's - *Elizabeth Enoch*

5.30pm - St. Swithun's - *St. Swithun's Primary School*

Thursday 6 March - THURSDAY AFTER ASH WEDNESDAY

9.00am - St. Swithun's - *Private intention*

Friday 7 March - FRIDAY AFTER ASH WEDNESDAY

10.00am - St. Swithun's - *Herbert F. Barlow RIP & Maria Barlow
GE*

Saturday 8 March - SATURDAY AFTER ASH WEDNESDAY

9.00am - St. Swithun's - *Private intention*

5.30pm - St. Swithun's (Vigil Mass) *People of the parish*

Sunday 9 March - 1ST SUNDAY OF LENT

8.30am - St. Swithun's - *Fr. Joseph Val d'Eremao RIP*

10.15am - St. Swithun's - *Sick and housebound of the parish*



OFFERTORY. The Parish bank account details are as follows:

Lloyds Bank Account name: CDP Our Lady of Lourdes' and St Swithun Church

Sort code: 30-93-04

Parish Account no: 01730453

MASS INTENTIONS & OFFERINGS.

It is a long-standing Catholic tradition to have the Eucharist offered for a particular intention, for the living and the dead. We do this because our faith is centred on the celebration of the Eucharist, the source of our life in Christ. Of course, Mass is 'free' but it is customary to make a donation in a form of a Mass offering. If you would like to arrange a Mass offering for yourself or loved ones, whether living or dead, please contact Emma in the office.

POPE'S INTENTION FOR MARCH.

For families in crisis. Let us pray that broken families might discover the cure for their wounds through forgiveness, rediscovering each other's gifts, even in their differences.

OUR BIBLE STUDY GROUP takes place at 7.00pm this Wednesday in the sacristy rather than at its usual time of 7.30pm. Please join us if you can. All are welcome.

PARISH OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES & ST. SWITHUN'S

Address: 105 Waverley Road, Portsmouth, Hampshire PO5 2PL United Kingdom

Priest in Charge: Fr. Anthony Fyk - 023 9282 8305

Email: afyk@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Parish office: southseaparish@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Parish office opening hours: Tuesday - Friday, 9.00am - 1.00pm

Safeguarding: safeguarding.porls@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk (Anne Worden and Teresa Rowe)

Website: www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/parish/southsea

Charity number: 1199568

PARISH EVENTS

Sunday 2 March

11.15am - Tea & Coffee Fellowship
St. Swithun's Hall

Wednesday 5 March

7.00pm - Bible Study Group
Sacristy, entrance through car park

Thursday 6 March

9.30am - Tea & Coffee Fellowship
Canon Kuner Room

Sunday 9 March

11.15am - Tea & Coffee Fellowship
St. Swithun's Hall

PARISH REGISTRATION. We are developing a new parish database and would like you to visit the website www.caspar.church/me?ID=9840 and fill in a few details. If you don't feel confident using the internet, please speak to the parish office.

RECONCILIATION THROUGH THE SACRAMENT OF CONFESSION. Through Confession, we obtain the pardon of God's mercy for the sins we have committed by not loving him and each other. We are reconciled to God and with one another. We are healed, restored, and given peace. Confession times are Saturdays from 9.30am to 10.00am and 5.00pm to 5.25pm. During Lent, the Sacrament will also be available in between the 8.30am and 10.15am Masses. If you would prefer, an appointment can be made with Fr. Anthony.

ASCENSION PRESS APP. The number-one Catholic Bible app. The word of God, commentaries and teachings of our Catholic faith. Video, audio, and textual. <https://ascensionpress.com>.

SECOND COLLECTION. There will be a White Flower Appeal this weekend in support of the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children. Thank you for your generosity to defend the dignity of life.

WORLD YOUTH DAY ROME 2025. The diocese will be joining the World Youth Day pilgrimage to Rome from 28 July to 4 August. There will be thousands of young people in Rome at the invitation of the Holy Father. We will also be there for the Mass and ceremony at which Bl. Pier Giorgio Frassati, Patron of our Youth, will be canonised. For more details, please contact the team at the following email address: youth@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk.

CAFOD Family Fast Day - Friday 14 March. On 8 and 9 March, we welcome Jo Lewry from CAFOD to talk about CAFOD's work in Kenya and appeal for CAFOD parish volunteers at St. Swithun's. You can donate to CAFOD's Family Fast Day parish collection and be a pilgrim of hope with CAFOD this Jubilee Year by using the CAFOD envelope in church, donating online at cafod.org.uk/envelope or calling us on 0303 303 3030. You can also text CAFODLENT to 70085 to donate £10. Many thanks.

PARISH SOCIALS. As Christians, it is important to gather for fellowship or socials to build and strengthen the bonds between us. We are looking for ideas for social activities. Please share your ideas at the back of the church on the Parish Socials Poster.

POPE FRANCIS: LET US JOURNEY TOGETHER IN HOPE

We begin our annual pilgrimage of Lent in faith and hope with the penitential rite of the imposition of ashes. The Church, our mother and teacher, invites us to open our hearts to God's grace, so that we can celebrate with great joy the paschal victory of Christ the Lord over sin and death, which led Saint Paul to exclaim: "*Death has been swallowed up in victory. Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?*" (1 Cor 15:54-55). Indeed, Jesus Christ, crucified and risen, is the heart of our faith and the pledge of our hope in the Father's great promise, already fulfilled in his beloved Son: life eternal (cf. Jn 10:28; 17:3).

This Lent, as we share in the grace of the Jubilee Year, I would like to propose a few reflections on what it means to journey together in hope, and on the summons to conversion that God in his mercy addresses to all of us, as individuals and as a community.

First of all, to journey. The Jubilee motto, "*Pilgrims of Hope*", evokes the lengthy journey of the people of Israel to the Promised Land, as recounted in the Book of Exodus. This arduous path from slavery to freedom was willed and guided by the Lord, who loves his people and remains ever faithful to them. It is hard to think of the biblical exodus without also thinking of those of our brothers and sisters who in our own day are fleeing situations of misery and violence in search of a better life for themselves and their loved ones. A first call to conversion thus comes from the realization that all of us are pilgrims in this life; each of us is invited to stop and ask how our lives reflect this fact. Am I really on a journey, or am I standing still, not moving, either immobilized by fear and hopelessness or reluctant to move out of my comfort zone? Am I seeking ways to leave behind the occasions of sin and situations that degrade my dignity? It would be a good Lenten exercise for us to compare our daily life with that of some migrant or foreigner, to learn how to sympathize with their experiences and in this way discover what God is

asking of us so that we can better advance on our journey to the house of the Father. This would be a good "*examination of conscience*" for all of us wayfarers.

Second, to journey together. The Church is called to walk together, to be synodal Christians are called to walk at the side of others, and never as lone travellers. The Holy Spirit impels us not to remain self-absorbed, but to leave ourselves behind and keep walking towards God and our brothers and sisters. Journeying together means consolidating the unity grounded in our common dignity as children of God (cf. Gal 3:26-28). It means walking side-by-side, without shoving or stepping on others, without envy or hypocrisy, without letting anyone be left behind or excluded. Let us all walk in the same direction, tending towards the same goal, attentive to one another in love and patience.

This Lent, God is asking us to examine whether in our lives, in our families, in the places where we work and spend our time, we are capable of walking together with others, listening to them, resisting the temptation to become self-absorbed and to think only of our own needs. Let us ask ourselves in the presence of the Lord whether, as bishops, priests, consecrated persons and laity in the service of the Kingdom of God, we cooperate with others. Whether we show ourselves welcoming, with concrete gestures, to those both near and far. Whether we make others feel a part of the community or keep them at a distance. This, then, is a second call to conversion: a summons to synodality.

Third, let us journey together in hope, for we have been given a promise. May the hope that does not disappoint (cf. Rom 5:5), the central message of the Jubilee, be the focus of our Lenten journey towards the victory of Easter. May the Virgin Mary intercede for us and accompany us on our Lenten journey.