

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



23 FEBRUARY 2025

7TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

FR. ANTHONY'S REFLECTION. *"I say to you who hear: love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you."* One of the characteristic qualities of being Christian is forgiving others and being merciful. *"Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful."* None of us are perfect, and time and again, we are invited to be merciful and forgiving to one another. We find this thread throughout the celebration of the liturgy. During the penitential rite, the whole liturgical assembly acknowledges the times they have failed to love God and our neighbour. We ask for God's mercy in the Kyrie Eleison.

After the great Eucharistic Prayer and the Lord's Prayer, the Catholic Church prays for unity and peace for herself and for the whole world, and we express our peace, communion, and charity in the 'Sign of Peace' before communicating in the Body and Blood of Christ. The celebration of the liturgy allows us to go forth into the world with peace, to bring forgiveness, mercy, reconciliation, and peace to the world.

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

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

FUNERAL SERVICE - Nevin Turner. A funeral service will be held for Nevin Turner on Thursday 27 February at 9.30am at Kingston Cemetery.



GOSPEL. Luke 6:27-38. *'Love your enemies.'*

LAST SUNDAY'S COLLECTION. £1,051.55. Thank you for your generosity.

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 NEW WEBSITE: www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/parish/southsea

MASS TIMES AND INTENTIONS

Saturday 22 February - 7TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

5.30pm - St. Swithun's (Vigil Mass) *Pope Francis*

Sunday 23 February - 7TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

8.30am - St. Swithun's - *People of the parish*
10.15am - St. Swithun's - *John Bernard Bullock RIP*

Monday 24 February - FERIA

No Mass

Tuesday 25 February - FERIA

No Mass

Wednesday 26 February - FERIA

9.00am - St. Swithun's - *Maurice Marshall Phillipson RIP*

Thursday 27 February - FERIA

9.00am - St. Swithun's - *Viviane Clarke & Sarah Clarke RIP*

Friday 28 February - FERIA

10.00am - St. Swithun's - *Nevin Turner RIP*

Saturday 1 March - ST. DAVID

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



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 FEBRUARY.

For vocations to the priesthood and religious life. Let us pray that the ecclesial community might welcome the desires and doubts of those young people who feel a call to serve Christ's mission in the priesthood and religious life.

OUR BIBLE STUDY GROUP takes place at 7.30pm each Wednesday in the sacristy. 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 23 February

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

Wednesday 26 February

7.30pm - Bible Study Group
Sacristy, entrance through car park

Thursday 27 February

9.30am - Tea & Coffee Fellowship
Canon Kuner Room

Sunday 2 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. 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>.

NEW PARISH COUNCIL & FINANCE COUNCIL. We are pleased to announce the establishment of this council. The members are: Morag Jack (Chair), Caroline Elder (Vice-Chair), Tony Denny, Susy Carvalho, Lucy Sayer, and Fr. Anthony. If you have any matters to raise, please speak with any of us.

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. Could your new year's resolution be to help promote CAFOD's fast days at St. Swithun's? Your desire for a better world will help connect your community with those overseas and enable our sisters and brothers in the poorest places in the world to lift themselves out of poverty. To be a CAFOD parish volunteer, please contact Jo Lewry for more information. jolewry@cafod.org.uk

'KEYS TO ACCOMPANIMENT - GOOD CONVERSATIONS TO ACCOMPANY OTHERS.' Join this online course and explore conversations that can help others to grow closer to Jesus. Listening conversations require us to call on the help of the Holy Spirit to embed our conversations in his love. Email: Inahajski@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk.

CATECHESIS OF POPE FRANCIS – 24 FEBRUARY 2019

This Sunday's Gospel passage (cf. Lk 6:27-38) concerns a central point that characterizes Christian life: love for enemies. Jesus' words are clear: *"I say to you that hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you"* (vv. 27-38). And this is not optional, it is a command. It is not for everyone, but for the disciples, whom Jesus calls *"you that hear"*. He is well aware that loving enemies exceeds our possibilities, but this is why he became man: not to leave us as we are, but to transform us into men and women capable of a greater love, that of his Father and ours. This is the love that Jesus gives to those who *'hear him'*. Thus it becomes possible!

With him, thanks to his love, to his Spirit, we are able to love even those who do not love us, even those who do us harm. In this way, Jesus wants God's love to triumph over hatred and rancour in every heart. The logic of love, which culminates in Christ's Cross, is a Christian's badge and induces us to meet everyone with the heart of brothers and sisters. But how is it possible to overcome human instinct and the worldly law of retaliation? Jesus provides the answer in the same Gospel passage: *"Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful"* (v. 36). Those who hear Jesus, who make an effort to follow him even at a cost, become children of God, and begin to truly resemble the Father who is in heaven. We become capable of things we never thought we could say or do, and of which we would have been rather ashamed, but which now give us joy and peace instead.

We no longer need to be violent, with words and gestures: we discover that we are capable of tenderness and goodness; and we sense that all of this comes not from ourselves but from him! And thus we do not brag about it but are grateful for it. There is nothing greater and more fruitful than love: it bestows all dignity to the person, while, on the contrary, hatred and vengeance decrease it, marring the beauty of the creature made in God's

image. This command, to respond to insult and wrongdoing with love, has created a new culture in the world: *"a culture of mercy"* — we need to learn this well! And properly practice this culture of mercy - which *"can set in motion a real cultural revolution"* (Apostolic Letter *Misericordia et Misera*, 20).

It is the revolution of love, in which the protagonists are the martyrs of all times. And Jesus assures us that our behaviour, inspired by love for those who do us harm, will not be in vain. He tells us: *"forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you"* (vv. 37-38). This is beautiful. God will give us something beautiful if we are generous, merciful. We must forgive because God has forgiven us and always forgives us. If we do not forgive completely, we cannot expect to be forgiven completely. However, if our hearts are open to mercy, if we seal forgiveness with a brotherly embrace and secure the bonds of communion, we proclaim to the world that it is possible to overcome evil with good.

At times it is easier for us to remember the harm they have done to us and not the good things; to the point that there are people who have this habit and it becomes a sickness. They are *"collectors of injustice"*: they only remember the bad things done. And this is not a path. We must do the opposite, Jesus says. Remember the good things, and when someone comes with some gossip, and speaks ill of another, say: *"Yes, perhaps ... but he has this good quality..."*. Turn the discussion around. This is the revolution of mercy.

May the Virgin Mary help us to let our heart be touched by this holy word of Jesus, burning like fire, that it may transform us and make us able to do good without reciprocation, doing good without reciprocation, witnessing everywhere to the victory of love.

Pope Francis