

**CHRIST THE KING & ST. COLMAN (Bitterne) OUR LADY OF THE ASSUMPTION (Hedge End) ST. BRIGID (West End)**

Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth

Registered Charity number 1199568

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**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Lent (Year C, Cycle 1)**

**23<sup>rd</sup> March 2025**

## The God of Second Chances

There is this adage: ‘You never get a second chance to make a first impression.’ True enough! Most people judge us by the first impression we make on them and only rarely do they change their opinion. So, first impressions are important. We may not get another chance. Fortunately, God does not deal with us in this way, as today’s gospel shows. He is a God of second chances, a God ‘of compassion and love, slow to anger and rich in mercy,’ as today’s responsorial psalm echoes. The parable of the barren fig tree illustrates this truth further.

A fig tree planted in a vineyard should have ideal soil conditions to produce abundant fruit, certainly after three years! Sadly, the tree in the parable has remained fruitless. Initially, the owner of the vineyard wants the gardener to cut it down as it was taking up precious ground that could be put to better use. However, the gardener appeals to his master to let it be for another year, during which time he will ‘dig round it and manure it’ (Lk. 13:9). The point of the story is that, just as the gardener was patient with the fig tree, and opted to manure it, so too God is patient with us and gives us ample chances and encouragements to be fruitful. For our part, we must not squander these chances. Jesus warned his contemporaries: ‘Unless you repent, you will all perish’ (Lk. 13:3). Repentance is a core gospel imperative and the principal message of Lent. Jesus begins his proclamation of the Kingdom of God with the injunction: ‘Repent and believe the Good news’ (Mk. 1:15).

But what is repentance? The English word has the rather unfortunate connotation of ‘regret’, ‘remorse’ and ‘guilt feelings’ over something we did in the past. Such feelings can tend to lock us into the past rather than lead us towards the future God wants us to embrace. To understand what Jesus means when he calls us to repent, we

need to go back to the Hebrew word for repentance, which is ‘teshuva.’ This word is derived from the verb ‘to return’ and its focus not on the past but on the future. Teshuva is not an emotion or feeling of regret, but a decision – a decision to turn away from where we are headed and move toward God. It is a turning away from the darkness towards the light. It is a joyous homecoming not a sad departure. It is allowing God to draw us toward Himself and transform us into ‘children of light’ (1 Thess. 5:5). For this to happen we must be willing to let go of the past and open our hearts to the new person God wants us to be. And we must believe that the God of compassion and love can transform and re-create us in the image of his beloved Son.

Our greatest sin, and the biggest obstacle to our repentance, may be our reluctance to believe that God really loves us. If we truly experienced God’s love, we could not help but be transformed by it. Sadly, our understanding of God may often be clouded by our own fears and anxieties, so we turn away rather than approach him in trust and confidence. Sincere repentance provokes God’s compassion, mercy, and love. This Sunday, the good news is that we have the opportunity to learn from our failures. God gives us another chance to call upon the Lord, who is “merciful, compassionate and love.” Jesus wants us to take a bold and positive step towards amending our way of life. This is a call to repentance for the times we neglected and failed both God and our neighbours; for the times we chose wrong over good, and for those moments, we despaired and displayed a remarkable lack of faith in God.

Take the opportunity and be Fruitful.

*Fr. Elijah*

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Lent (23<sup>rd</sup> March 2025)

- 9.15am **Our Lady of the Assumption** (Hedge End)  
*For the people*
- 11.00am **Christ the King & St Colman** (Bitterne)  
*For the people*
- 5.30pm **St. Brigid** (West End)  
*Belinnie & Arif*
- 6.00pm **Christ the King & St Colman** (Bitterne)  
*Polish Mass*

### Mass Times for 25<sup>th</sup> March – 30<sup>th</sup> March

**OLA** – Our Lady of the Assumption (Hedge End)

**CKSC** – Christ the King & St. Colman (Bitterne)

**SB** – St. Brigid (West End)

- Tue 25<sup>th</sup> 10.00am **OLA** *For the people*
- Wed 26<sup>th</sup> 10.00am **SB** *For the wellbeing of Jeremy Clifton*
- Thu 27<sup>th</sup> 11.00am **CKSC** *Funeral Mass for Janet Doyle*
- Fri 28<sup>th</sup> 10.00am **OLA** *Violet Grace Comiskey RIP*
- Sat 29<sup>th</sup> 10.00am **CKSC**
- Sun 30<sup>th</sup> 9.15am **OLA** *Mary Holen (nee Roddick) RIP*
- 11.00am **CKSC**
- 5.30pm **SB** *Private intention*
- 6.00pm **CKSC** *Polish Mass*

**Exposition & Rosary at 9.30am before Mass (Tue–Fri).**

**Sacrament of Confession is available on request.**

Please consider offering Mass Intentions for families and friends (contact Fr. Elijah or Parish Office).

### Stations of the Cross Hedge End & West End

Stations of the Cross will alternate between Our Lady of the Assumption and St. Brigid's on Monday evening at 7.30pm during Lent on the following schedule:

- 24<sup>th</sup> March: OLA
- 31<sup>st</sup> March: SB
- 7<sup>th</sup> April: OLA
- 14<sup>th</sup> April: SB

### Baptism preparation course

The next baptism preparation course will be run on Sundays 11th & 18th May at 2pm in Christ the King & St Colman's church hall.

If you are interested in having your child baptised and attending the course, please contact the parish office to let them know.

### CAFOD's Family Fast Day

Please donate to our Family Fast Day parish collection and be a pilgrim of hope with CAFOD this Jubilee Year. You'll be supporting communities experiencing 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/envelope> or call us on 0303 303 3030. You can also text CAFODLENT to 70085 to donate £10.

### Faith on Fire

We will meet at Christ the King and St Colman church on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> March at 7.30pm. We will be sharing on our experiences of Lent and what difference Lent makes to us. All secondary school and over are welcome.

### Easter Liturgy Planning Meeting

The Easter liturgy planning meeting will be held on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> March at 7.30 at CKSC.

### Lenten Observances at CKSC

Before mass on Thursdays and Saturdays we will be praying the Stations of the Cross and not the Rosary.

### OPEN CHURCH

Our Lady of the Assumption Church in Hedge End is open for private prayer on Thursdays from 10am until midday. To join the rota, please contact Pauline or Jane.

## CKSCOLASB Calendar of Events

**OLA** – Our Lady of the Assumption (Hedge End)

**CKSC** – Christ the King & St. Colman (Bitterne)

**SB** – St. Brigid (West End)

### MARCH

Tue 25<sup>th</sup> 9.30am-12pm **Table Tennis** (OLA Hall)  
7.30-9pm **Growing in Faith** (OLA)

Thu 27<sup>th</sup> 10.30am-12pm **Prayer Group** (CKSC)  
10am-12pm **Open Church** (OLA)

Fri 28<sup>th</sup> 7.30pm Choir Practise in church hall (CKSC)

### APRIL

Tue 1<sup>st</sup> 9.30am-12pm **Table Tennis** (OLA Hall)  
7.30-9pm **Growing in Faith** (OLA)

Thu 3<sup>rd</sup> 10.30am-12pm **Prayer Group** (CKSC)  
10am-12pm **Open Church** (OLA)

Sun 6<sup>th</sup> **Tea, Coffee, Biscuits** after Holy Mass (CKSC)

Tue 8<sup>th</sup> 9.30am-12pm **Table Tennis** (OLA Hall)  
7.30-9pm **Growing in Faith** (OLA)

Thu 10<sup>th</sup> 10.30am-12pm **Prayer Group** (CKSC)  
10am-12pm **Open Church** (OLA)

Fri 11<sup>th</sup> 7.30pm Choir Practise in church hall (CKSC)

Sun 13<sup>th</sup> **Tea, Coffee, Biscuits** after Holy Mass (SB)

### Recurring Events

#### Our Lady of The Assumption (Hedge End)

- **Tea Coffee, Biscuits, Friendly Chat** (and often cake) in the hall every Sunday after Holy Mass
- **Children's Liturgy** during Mass every 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the Month
- **Carers Group** on third Wednesday of every Month from 7.00pm to 8.30pm
- **Growing in Faith** every Tuesday evening 7:30-9pm
- **Table Tennis** every Tuesday from 9.30am to 12pm
- **Open Church** every Thursday from 10am-12pm

#### Christ the King & St. Colman (Bitterne)

- **Prayer Group** every Thursday 10.30am-12 noon
- **Children's Liturgy** for 4 to 7-year-olds every Sunday
- **Tea, Coffee, Biscuits & friendly chat** in the hall every 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month
- **Choir practice in hall** - 7:30pm on 2nd & 4th Friday each month. All welcome.

#### St Brigids (West End)

- **Tea, coffee & cake** every 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month after Mass

If you would like a future event to be included in the Calendar of Events, kindly advise the Parish office.

## Continuing Support of the Church

Please consider setting up a **standing order**.

For Christ the King & St Colman:

**Account Name:** CDP Christ the King & St Colman

**Sort code:** 30-93-04

**Account Number:** 00887553

For Our Lady of the Assumption and St Brigid:

**Account Name:** CDP Hedge End Our Lady

**Sort code:** 30-93-04

**Account Number:** 00879747

Please use your surname as a reference.

Make out cheques for Fr Elijah to Rev Fru N Elijah

Thank you for your support.

## 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

### Our Lady of the Assumption Church

Events to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the church of Our Lady of the Assumption in Hedge End, which was opened on 25<sup>th</sup> April 1975, will include:

25<sup>th</sup> April **Anniversary Mass** at 7pm  
followed by refreshments in hall

17<sup>th</sup> May **Barn Dance**  
at West End Parish Centre at 7pm

14<sup>th</sup> June **Summer Tea Party**

25<sup>th</sup> July 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary **Summer Quiz**

16<sup>th</sup> August **Parish Summer Picnic**  
at Manor Farm

## Catechists Lent Days of Prayer, Formation and Networking

The Vicariate for Evangelisation has been hosting online events during Lent for Catechists across the diocese. The last of these events will take place on:

- Thursday 3rd April (Confirmation and RCIA)
- at 7:30 PM
- and lasting for one hour

To sign up for these events, please go to <https://forms.office.com/e/VkCdj1SWzA>

Fr. Gaston

## **Our Lady of the Assumption** **THE BIG CLEAN – Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> March**

Please spare an hour to come and make the church and grounds spotless in time for Easter and our church's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

### **Hall and church cleaning**

- from 10am to 1pm

### **The church grounds**

- 10am onwards

Please come along to help tidy, do some weeding, prune bushes, plant flowers, etc.

Thanks as always for your help.

## **Dare to Hope**

During Lent we will be following the Programme written by the Dominican sisters at Sway during our Thursday morning Prayer sessions 10.30-12 noon.

To see more just click [Dare To Hope](#) and come and join us





## **Significant Marriage Anniversaries**

Are you celebrating a 25th, 30th, 40th, 50th, 60th wedding anniversary or anniversary over 60 years? If so, Bishop Philip would like to invite you to a Mass of celebration. This will take place at

- St Bede's Church in Basingstoke
- on Saturday 21st June at 11am.

This will be followed by a buffet lunch. It is a wonderful occasion to celebrate and witness to Marriage.

## **Keep in touch with Portsmouth Diocese**

-  @PortsmouthRC
-  Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth
-  @PortsmouthRC
-  <https://www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/>

If you have news to share with the Diocese, contact:

[communications@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:communications@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

## **NOTICE: Closure of Bitterne Road East**

Please be aware that from Monday 17th Feb, Bitterne Road East will be closed for seven weeks from Maybray King Way to Somerset Avenue. Therefore access to Christ the King & St Colman's will only be via Commercial Street or Dean Road.

## **CKSC Readers**

We are looking for more Readers to join our rota for Sunday Mass at CKSC. If you would be interested in reading, please see Elizabeth Diagboya-Izediuno after mass or email your contact details to the office and they will forward to Elizabeth.

## **Sunday's Readings:**

### **Daily Readings**

<https://universalis.com/europe.english/20250309/mass.htm>

### **Reflections**

<http://www.mycatholic.com/>

### **Diocesan eNews**

<https://www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/communications/news/enews/>

### **UK Catholic Newspapers**

<https://www.churchpaper.co.uk>