



9 MARCH 2025

1ST SUNDAY OF LENT

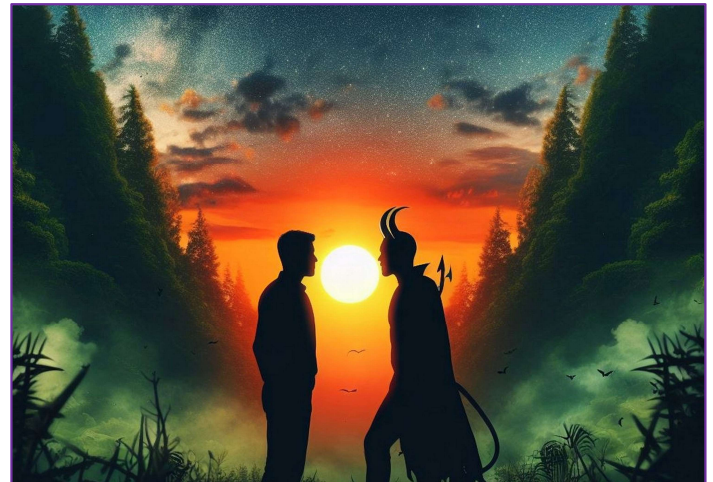
PARISH VISION. We are a community of Christian people who seek our strength from the Word of God and the Eucharist, which unites us together. Our mission is to be a living presence of Christ for the people of our area and to share God's love, compassion, reconciliation, and peace with everyone. With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

FR. ANTHONY'S REFLECTION. Part of being human is to experience temptations in various shapes and forms. These are temporary moments of trial, which can certainly be trying, to test us so that we may trust in the Lord and take refuge in him. We are not able to conquer temptations ourselves; it is only through God's grace that we are able to have victory over temptations. Our faith in God makes us realise that he is in the midst of these moments; he will rescue us and keep us in his ways.

At the same time, today's Gospel highlights that the rejection of temptation is a confession of faith, a confession that we don't live on bread alone, that we worship the Lord our God and serve him alone, and that we don't put the Lord to the test. It is a confession of being single-minded on doing the will of God, which is characterised by Jesus' whole ministry, which eventually leads to the cross and resurrection.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS. This will take place after the 10.00am Mass on Fridays.

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.



GOSPEL. Luke 4:1-13. *The temptation in the wilderness.*

COULD YOU HELP? I am very grateful for your continual support of the parish. Your sharing of your gifts, talents, and time is greatly appreciated. To run the mission of the parish, we depend on your generosity. During this time of Lent, we are invited to be more 'sharing'.

Have you considered 'Stable Giving' by setting up a regular monthly donation to the parish through a Direct Debit? If you are a taxpayer, have you considered 'Sensible Giving' by signing up for Gift Aid, which increases your donation to the parish by 25%? All the forms are available at the back of the church. If you have any questions, please speak with Emma. *Fr. Anthony*

LAST SUNDAY'S COLLECTION. £1,042.20. White Flower Appeal - £252.90. Thank you!

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>.

MASS TIMES AND INTENTIONS

Saturday 8 March - 1ST SUNDAY OF LENT

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*

Monday 10 March - 1ST WEEK OF LENT

No Mass

Tuesday 11 March - 1ST WEEK OF LENT

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

Wednesday 12 March - 1ST WEEK OF LENT

9.00am - St. Swithun's - *Michael Escott RIP*

Thursday 13 March - 1ST WEEK OF LENT

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

Friday 14 March - 1ST WEEK OF LENT

10.00am - St. Swithun's - *Reginald Howard Browning RIP*

Saturday 15 March - 1ST WEEK OF LENT

9.00am - St. Swithun's - *Canon Oliver Heaney RIP*

5.30pm - St. Swithun's (Vigil Mass) *Fr. Terence McClean-Wilson
RIP*

Sunday 16 March - 2ND SUNDAY OF LENT

8.30am - St. Swithun's - *People of the parish*

10.15am - St. Swithun's - *Fr. Andrew Barrett RIP*



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 9 March

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

Wednesday 12 March

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

Thursday 13 March

9.30am - Tea & Coffee Fellowship
Canon Kuner Room

Sunday 16 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.

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.

BAPTISM. If you are thinking of having your child baptised, please speak to Fr. Anthony.

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. This weekend, 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.

A MESSAGE FROM POPE FRANCIS

Last Wednesday, with the penitential rite of the ashes, we began our Lenten journey. Today, the first Sunday of this liturgical season, the Word of God shows us the path to living fruitfully the 40 days that lead to the annual celebration of Easter. It is the road Jesus travelled, which the Gospel, with Mark's essential style, summarizes by saying that before he began his preaching, he withdrew into the desert for 40 days, where he was tempted by Satan (cf. 1:12-15). The Evangelist emphasizes that *"the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness"* (v. 12). The Holy Spirit descended upon him immediately after the baptism he received from John in the River Jordan. The same Spirit now impels him to go into the desert, to face the tempter, to fight against the devil. Jesus' entire existence is placed under the sign of the Spirit of God, who animates, inspires, and guides him.

But let us think of the desert. Let us pause for a moment on this natural and symbolic environment, so important in the Bible. The desert is the place where God speaks to the heart of humankind and where the answer to prayer flows from; that is, the desert of solitude, the heart detached from other things and alone, opens itself to the Word of God in that solitude. But it is also the place of trial and temptation, where the tempter, taking advantage of human frailty and needs, insinuates his lying voice as an alternative to God's, an alternative voice that makes you see another road, another road of deception. The tempter seduces. Indeed, during the 40 days Jesus spent in the desert, the "duel" between Jesus and the devil begins, which will end with the Passion and the Cross. Christ's entire ministry is a struggle against the evil one in its many manifestations: healing from illnesses, exorcisms of the possessed, and forgiveness of sins. It is a struggle. After the first phase, in which Jesus demonstrates that he speaks and acts with the power of God, it seems that the devil has the upper hand when the Son of God is rejected, abandoned, and finally captured and condemned to death. The devil appears to be

the winner. In reality, death itself was the last "desert" to cross in order to definitively defeat Satan and free us all from his power. And in this way Jesus won in the desert of death so as to win in the Resurrection.

Every year, at the beginning of Lent, this Gospel of the temptations of Jesus in the desert reminds us that the life of the Christian, in the footsteps of the Lord, is a battle against the spirit of evil. It shows us that Jesus willingly faced the tempter and defeated him, and at the same time, it reminds us that the devil is granted the possibility of acting on us too, with his temptations. We must be aware of the presence of this astute enemy, who seeks our eternal condemnation and our failure, and prepare to defend ourselves against him and to combat him. The grace of God assures us, with faith, prayer, and penance, of our victory over the enemy. But I would like to underline one thing: in the temptations, Jesus never enters into dialogue with the devil, never. In his life, Jesus never had a dialogue with the devil, never. Either He banishes him from the possessed or He condemns him, or He shows his malice, but never a dialogue. And in the desert it seems that there is a dialogue because the devil makes three proposals and Jesus responds. But Jesus does not respond with his words. He answers with the Word of God, with three passages of Scripture. And we should also all do this. When the seducer approaches, he begins to seduce us: *"But think of this, do that..."* The temptation is to dialogue with him, as Eve did. And if we enter into dialogue with the devil, we will be defeated. Keep this in your mind and in your heart: you can never enter into dialogue with the devil; no dialogue is possible. Only the Word of God.

During the Season of Lent, the Holy Spirit drives us too, like Jesus, to enter the desert. It is not, as we have seen, a physical place, but rather an existential dimension in which to be silent and listen to the word of God, *"so that a true conversion might be effected in us"*.