

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

Parish Priest: Fr. Elijah Fru Nde (emergency use phone number 0777 466 7010)

Office: 2 Dean Road, Bitterne, Southampton SO18 6AP – *Open Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 9.30am–1pm*

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Diocese Safeguarding Contact: safeguarding@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year C, Cycle 1)

7th September 2025

Reflection from Fr Elijah: The Cost of Discipleship

The famous Lutheran pastor, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, stated in his popular spiritual classic, *The Cost of Discipleship*, that the call to discipleship inevitably involves the cross: 'The cross is not the terrible end to an otherwise god-fearing and happy life; it meets us at the beginning of our communion with Christ. When Christ calls us, he bids us come and die.'

In today's gospel, Jesus says of his disciples: 'If anyone comes to me and does not deny his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. Anyone who does not take up his/her cross and follows me cannot be my disciple' (Lk. 14:25-26).

Today's gospel message is not only profoundly counter-cultural; it falls within the category of things that lie beyond the grasp of our limited human understanding, as our first reading from the Book of Wisdom states. 'Who can know the intentions of God? Who can divine the will of the Lord' (Wis. 9:13).

In today's world, Jesus' demands seem altogether unreasonable, completely out of touch with the dominant values of our time and culture – security, comfort, human flourishing, and the support of family and friends. There is no way of interpreting his blunt words to make them less challenging and more acceptable that is not simply escapist. Certainly, the intention of Jesus was not to make us miserable. Surely Jesus does not expect us to take these demands literally. Our following of Jesus may not lead to physical death or to imprisonment but, if it is genuine and not just wishful thinking, it will involve the cross and sacrifice in one form or another.

Mass Times and Intentions

23rd week in Ordinary Time

Exposition & Rosary at 9.30am before Mass (Tue-Fri). Sacrament of Confession is available on request.

Mass Intentions can be requested through Fr Elijah or the Parish Office.

Date	Times & Location			Mass Intentions & Feasts
Sun 7 th September	9.15am	OLA	Mass	Birthday blessings for Christopher St Omer For God's grace and good health for Catherine Bassom
	11am	CKSC	Mass	
	5.30pm	SB	Mass	
	6pm	CKSC	Mass (in Polish)	
Tue 9 th September	10am	OLA	Mass	For the people
Wed 10 th September	10am	SB	Mass	
Thur 11 th September	10am	CKSC	Mass	For the people
Fri 12 th September	10am	OLA	Mass	
Sat 13 th September	10am	CKSC	Mass	Birthday blessings for Christopher St Omer
Sun 14 th September	9.15am	OLA	Mass	For the people For Henry Diagboya RIP In thanksgiving for Roland Hoskins on his 70 th birthday
	11am	CKSC	Mass	
	5.30pm	SB	Mass	
	6pm	CKSC	Mass (in Polish)	

This Sunday's readings can be found at <https://universalis.com/europe.english/20250907/mass.htm>

Second Collection – 14th September – Catholic Education Service

The Diocese of Portsmouth serves children and young adults by providing places of education, university chaplaincy, parish youth ministry and opportunities for social action. There are 69 Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Portsmouth providing education and faith formation to 30,799 pupils.

Within our Parish

First Reconciliation and Holy Communion preparation: All parents who would like their child, in Year 4 or above, to make their First Holy Communion in our parish are invited to attend a parent's information evening on Monday 8th September at 7.00pm at Christ the King and St Colman Church for more detailed information about the preparation sessions, to ask any questions and pick up an application form.

Parish Office availability update: From the beginning of September, the Parish Office will be running at a reduced capacity. The team are likely to be working remotely, so please contact them via email with any request. We hope to resume the usual office hours by advent.

An Evening of Entertainment: Saturday, 13th September at 6.30pm - 8pm. Everyone is invited to this free social event of homegrown talent across our parish and promises to be an evening of fun, laughter, song and dance. If you play an instrument, want to sing, dance, tell jokes, or have another talent, and would like to join in the fun, let us know. Please contact Jane 07761039330 for further information.

Jubilee of Hope Companion Booklets: Jubilee of Hope Companion Booklets are available in all three churches. These are free, with a suggested donation of £1 to cover the cost to the Parishes.

Within the Diocese and beyond

CAFOD Response in Gaza: Your donations to Gaza since the start of the conflict have been a vital lifeline. Right now, CAFOD's partner, Caritas Jerusalem, is delivering essential medical treatment to displaced people and providing medicines to treat chronic illnesses. We have helped 1,400 households with cash to buy supplies in the last month and we are currently feeding 2,000 people with new stocks of flour and rice. Despite the restrictions on aid coming into Gaza, CAFOD's local partners are working tirelessly to help people. And with your ongoing support, they will do all in their power to keep doing so. You can find out more about how you can make a difference in Gaza at cafod.org.uk. Thank you for backing our work through holding collections for our Family Fast Day appeals and for continuing to pray for peace in the Middle East.

CAFOD Meeting: You are invited to a CAFOD meeting at St Bedes Church Hall Basingstoke on Saturday 20th September from 10:30am to 1:30pm. Come and hear about the difference your donations are making to communities around the world and CAFOD's work with partners in Southern Ethiopia. A simple lunch will be provided so please book your place by emailing Jo on jlewry@cafod.org.uk.

Recurring Events

Our Lady of the Assumption – Hedge End

- Tea, coffee, biscuits & friendly chat in the hall every Sunday after Holy Mass
- Children's liturgy during Mass every 3rd Sunday of the month (not during summer holidays)

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 during term time

St Brigid – West End

- Tea, coffee & cake every 2nd Sunday of the month after Mass

- 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
- Tea, coffee, biscuits & friendly chat in the hall after Holy Mass every 1st Sunday of the month
- Choir practice in hall - 7:30pm on 2nd & 4th Friday each month. All welcome.

Continuing to Support 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 mention which fund you are donating to as a reference.
Make out cheques for Fr Elijah to Rev Fru N Elijah
Thank you for your support