

1<sup>st</sup> December 2019

## FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR A

"But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father."  
(Matthew 24:36)

### Immaculate Conception Church

Within the Pastoral Area of Southampton East  
346 Portswood Road, Southampton, SO17 3SB

Tel: (023) 8055 5470

Website: [www.immaculateconception.church](http://www.immaculateconception.church)

Email: [portswood@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:portswood@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

Facebook: Immaculate Conception Church, Portswood

Twitter: @ic\_portswood

### Parish Priest: Fr Antony Gatt

Hospital Chaplaincy: (023 8120 8517)

University Chaplain: Sr Valentina Stilo (07983 883377)

Safeguarding Officer: Pat Saunders (023 80442189)

Parish Secretary: Rachel Brady (023 8055 5470)

**Confessions:** Saturdays, 5.15 pm before evening Mass

**Rosary:** Wednesdays, starting 25 mins before Mass

**Hall Bookings:** [portswood@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:portswood@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

**Sat 30 Nov**  
**Sun 01 Dec**

**Sunday Vigil Mass**  
**First Sunday of Advent**

Mon 02 Dec Of the 1<sup>st</sup> week of Advent  
Tue 03 Dec St Francis Xavier  
Wed 04 Dec Of the 1<sup>st</sup> week of Advent  
Thu 05 Dec Of the 1<sup>st</sup> week of Advent  
Fri 06 Dec Of the 1<sup>st</sup> week of Advent  
Sat 07 Dec Of the 1<sup>st</sup> week of Advent

**Sun 08 Dec** **Second Sunday of Advent & The  
Feast of the Immaculate Conception**

6 pm	†Ellen Gobbi
8.30am	†Audrey Campbell
10.30am	†Mavis Rosario
-----	No Service
10 am	-
10 am	-
10 am	Holy Souls
10 am	†Francesca Pereira
-----	NO SERVICE
8.30am	†James & Betty Oliver
10.30am	†Des Ryalls



#### Today's readings

1<sup>st</sup> Reading – Isaiah 2:1-5

Psalms – 122:1-9

2<sup>nd</sup> Reading – Romans 13:11-14

Gospel – Matthew 24:36-44

My dear Friends:

Advent, 2019 is here!! I was reading a very interesting reflection on Advent by Fr Dennis Hamm S.J., in which he mused that if we were still using the dating system popularised by Hippolytus of Rome, our year would be 7498 anno mundi!

The sixth century monk, Dionysius Exiguus contended that the great event of the incarnation in Christian Europe should be central to its history, "and to date events prior to Christ by counting backward, leaving the normal forward count for the events after that first Advent". One and a half centuries later, the Venerable Bede completed this dating system's popularisation with BC/AD (BCE/CE today!

The Incarnation was indeed perceived as a life and Time changing event – and Advent a time to prepare our hearts to experience that change in our own personal histories and the world in which we live! As sons and daughters of God, wrapped in his love, His Word burning within us, we would become children of the Light, transforming this world. In the words of today's first reading: They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; one nation shall not raise the sword against another, nor shall they train for war again. O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord!

That is our challenge! During this Advent (AD!), we shall try to address this personal and global challenge in our Tuesday evening sessions on the ways in which we can embody HOPE! The birth of Christ was a date changing event in Europe of Europe. Let us see how this Advent can become a date-changing, and life-changing event in our personal histories!

Love, Peace and Blessings, Fr. Antony

**WELCOME** to our Masses this weekend. Please join us in the hall after 8.30 and 10.30 Masses for tea, coffee, refreshments and the CAFOD Cake Sale.

#### BACK TO THE CHURCH!

From Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> December we will be back in the church for the usual 8.30 am and 10.30 am Masses, albeit there will still be scaffolding around the outside. However, some help will be needed on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> to set the church up again and move things back from the Hall and St Michael's room. Please have a read of the final roof newsletter this week to find out more about help needed. Please note there will be NO 10 am Mass on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December.

**ROOF TILES!** Thank you to all who bought a tile last week. Anastasia will be available after all masses to collect any outstanding pledges and there is still an opportunity for all those who did not manage to get a "Sponsor A Tile" form last weekend to get one this week. We are also very grateful for a couple of very generous donations received during the week. Next weekend we will publish the total amount either paid or pledged to date towards "Sponsor A Tile".

**GRAND RAFFLE TICKETS** If you have not yet got your raffle tickets there are some still available. Please ensure you return all tickets by next weekend. The raffle will be drawn at the Parish day celebration for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, on December 8<sup>th</sup> after the 10:30 Mass.

### **MONEY LAST WEEK:**

#### Main Collection:

Gift Aid Envelopes inc tax reclaim - £75.00

Loose plate collection – £91.23

Standing orders - £1080.27

#### Second Collection:

Roof - Inc tax reclaim: £456.22

#### **Second Collections:**

Today – Roof

Next week – Flowers for Christmas

**CHRISTMAS DRAW HAMPER DONATIONS** - Could all those groups that volunteered to donate a hamper as a raffle prize please try to get them to Sue, Steve, Anastasia, Olga, Moira or any member of the fundraising team before the next week's 10:30 Mass

**8TH DECEMBER PARISH DAY** - To celebrate our Parish day there will be mince pies and refreshments after the 8:30 mass in the hall and there will be a shared lunch after the 10:30 mass please bring food to share and/or let Sue, Anastasia, Georgiana, Olga or Moira know.

### **ADVENT PENITENTIAL SERVICE**

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December, 7.30 pm in the church.

### **ADVENT THEME/DISCUSSION SERIES**

Fr Antony will be running a series of 3 discussion groups around the theme of 'Hope' on Tuesday evenings during Advent starting this Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December at 7.40 pm in the hall (the next ones will be in the church).

**ADVENT & CHRISTMAS SERVICES** Please pick up a copy of the dates and times of Masses and services for Advent and the Christmas period this weekend.

**CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY** Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December 3-6pm in church hall. Afternoon tea, party games, visit from Santa. Tickets £3 available after Masses.

**CHRISTMAS CARDS** Recycled Christmas cards are now on sale after the Masses. Proceeds to the roof fund.

### **CHILDREN'S PAINTING/POSTER COMPETITION**

For all children up to the age of 16. Please pick up your leaflet and competition details after Mass this weekend. Entries should be handed in by 11 am on 21<sup>st</sup> December in time for judging and the announcement of winners after Masses on 22<sup>nd</sup> December.

**THE CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH** will take place again this year at Bassett Green Court. We are desperately in need of drivers to bring our guests to the venue after 11.00am and to pick them up again after 3.00pm. If you can help please contact Anne Dempsey on 80552064. There are also a few places left if you would like to come and spend Christmas with us. See poster on hall noticeboard for details.

**PARISH COUNCIL MEETING** Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> Dec, 7.30 pm, St Michael's room/Presbytery – key agenda items: Return to church plan & Strategy/action plan for new pillar structure.

### **FIRST HOLY COMMUNION SESSION REMINDER**

The session planned for 7<sup>th</sup> December has been postponed and will take place on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December at 9.15 am in the hall. Future planned sessions as previously advertised.

**FUNERAL OF DAPHNE MCGILL**, (sister of Dennis Wilson) 2 pm, Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> Dec at St Edmunds Church.

### **ADVENT DAY OF REFLECTION**

Sat 7<sup>th</sup> December, St Josephs Centre, Ashurst 10 am – 4 pm. The theme of the day will be the Immaculate Conception of Mary, the Mother of the Lord. Mass will be offered and there will be time for personal reflection and input from Father Des. Please bring some lunch. A suggested donation of £25.00 would be very helpful please.

### **YEAR OF THE WORD 2020 - Readers' Workshops**

The First of the Readers Workshops takes place on 11<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> January 2020, 10 am – 1 pm at St Peter and the Winchester Martyrs church, Jewry Street, Winchester, SO23 8RY. Please consider signing up if you are a reader in the parish. For further details and to register please visit [www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/readers](http://www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/readers)

### **PORTSMOUTH DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES**

15-19 July 2020, led by Bishop Philip Egan, Fr PJ Smith & Youth Pilgrims aged 14-35 from throughout this Diocese. Direct flight from Bournemouth, accommodation at Hotel La Solitude, very close to the Shrine. Cost £695pp or £545 for youth volunteers. For further details or to enquire about volunteering as a youth pilgrim e mail [lourdes@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:lourdes@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk) or tel 07780221686. Video clip to give you a taster, from last year's pilgrimage at <https://vimeo.com/367708674>. Poster on noticeboard and application forms on the table at the back of the hall.

### **ARE YOU INTERESTED IN TRAINING TO BE A TEACHER?**

Visit the teacher training open day at Springhill Catholic Primary School on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2020, 9.30 – 11.30am. There is no need to book, just turn up on the day, and you will get the opportunity to:

- Hear from Program Directors
- Hear from Tutors
- Find out about the different routes into teaching we support
- Speak with past trainees about their experience training with us
- Speak with current trainees about their experience
- Ask all those questions you have been wondering about.

If you would like more information prior to the open day please email [recruitment@springhillcatholic.net](mailto:recruitment@springhillcatholic.net)

### **PARISH OFFICE HOURS:**

Tues, Wed, & Thurs 9.30 am – 3.00 pm