

6th December 2020

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR B

'Be on your guard, stay awake, because you never know when the time will come'
(Mark 13:33)

Immaculate Conception Church

Within the Pastoral Area of Southampton East
346 Portswood Road, Southampton, SO17 3SB
Tel: (023) 8055 5470
Website: www.immaculateconception.church
Email: 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 (08044 2189)
Parish Secretary: Rachel Brady (023 8055 5470)


Enquiries re the Sacraments:

please make an appointment by email.
Hall Bookings are not being taken at present .

BOOKING TO ATTEND Mass

PLEASE NOTE due to current government guidelines, available capacity in the church is limited to 40 persons / 14 households except Saturday when it is 24.

Therefore, it is advisable to book to attend – details at end of this newsletter and on our website

Date	Solemnities & Feast days	Mass Times	Mass details & intentions	
Sat 05 Dec	of the 1 st Week of Advent	10.00 am (Recorded)	†Arthur Maxfield RIP	 <p>SUNDAY'S READINGS 1st Reading: Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11 Psalm: 85:9-14 2nd Reading: 2 Peter 3:8-14 Gospel: Mark 1:1-8</p> <hr/>  <p>https://www.dropbox.com/s/mtr29l9uefra0xt/Children%27s%20Liturgy%20Video%2006.12.20.mp4?dl=0</p>
Sun 06 Dec	SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT Sunday Mass available from 10 am on: Youtube, Face-book & the Parish Website *Saturday Mass is recorded for Sunday	10.00 am 5.30 pm	†Francesca Pereira RIP †Mavis Rosario RIP	
Mon 07 Dec	of the 2 nd Week of Advent	-	No Mass	
Tues 08 Dec	THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY	10.00 am	†Andrew Cole RIP	
Wed 09 Dec	of the 2 nd Week of Advent	-	No Mass	
Thurs 10 Dec	of the 2 nd Week of Advent	10.00 am	Advent <u>Service</u> of reflection & absolution	
Fri 11 Dec	of the 2 nd Week of Advent	-	No Mass	
*Sat 12 Dec	of the 2 nd Week of Advent	10.00 am	†James & Betty Oliver RIP	
Sun 13 Dec	THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT	10.00 am	†Bill Chandler RIP	
		5.30 pm	†Francis Mulenga RIP	

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in this Holy Sacrament of the altar. I love You above all things and I passionately desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come spiritually into my soul so that I may unite myself wholly to You now and forever. Amen

The Parish Bank Account details are:

Name: PRCDTR Immaculate Conception Church
Sort Code: 30-93-04 Account No: 00887995
For donations please give a reference e.g:
ERF = Emergency Relief Fund,
GEN = General Fund (offertory collection), followed by your gift aid number if you donate in this way.

Contacting the parish

The Parish Office is closed during lockdown until 2nd December. The parish secretary will still be working between home and the parish, so e mails will continue to be responded to. Please use e mail where possible to contact the parish unless you have an urgent matter and need to speak to Fr Antony. Many thanks.

My dear Friends

I hope you have had a wonderful first week of Advent!

As we are about to light the *second* Advent candle, may I give you a quick recap on the first? Last week, I spoke about the meaning of Advent. Do you remember... 'Adventus/Arrival...Ad-venire...motion toward Jesus birth, and our preparation *Day by Day*, by *seeing him more clearly, loving him more dearly, following him more nearly*. It finished with that beautiful reflection from Teilhard de Chardin.

During this week, I received a text message from my sister Ann. It contained a little Advent video in which the four Advent Candles were engaged in dialogue with each other. However, pervading negativity eventually extinguished and silenced the candles' lights and messages. At this point, Hope stepped in and resolutely restored both the message and the light.

Did you know that each Advent Candle has a name and special symbolism? The first Advent candle we lit last week is often referred to as the *Prophet's Candle (Isaiah waiting in HOPE for our Saviour)*. Today, the Second Sunday of Advent we light the second candle, which is the symbol of *FAITH*. The candle's name has its origins in the prophet Micah who prophesied Jesus would be born in *Bethlehem*. It is referred to as the *Bethlehem Candle*. I shall explain the other three, *Shepherd's Candle (Joy)*, *Angel (Peace)*, and *Christ's (Light) candles* as we come to them!

For *me*, the source of the *HOPE, FAITH, JOY, PEACE and LIGHT*, symbolised in these candles, is in the wreath! There is a word in Hebrew which encompasses a love, a faithfulness, a loyalty, a compassion, a tender mercy, a forgiveness, a healing which is so wide, so deep, and so eternal, that it virtually defies description! It is used to express God's love for us, and our loving response to Him. The Hebrew word is *hesed* (חֶסֶד) ! For *me*, *hesed IS* the wreath for Advent! A circle of God's endless love, and loving, which can flow into us, and through us, so that we can become that *hope, faith, joy, peace and light* to him, and to others in our world!

Each one of us is like a candle on that Advent wreath, *Hesed*! We are grounded in, rooted in, connected with, an unfathomable source of endless love, gentle mercy, boundless compassion, healing, forgiveness, inspiring hope, granite faith, joy, peace and light. *Hesed* connects us to those four Advent candles in dialogue with each other! As feelings and actions are fused together in *hesed*, our faith and action can light the flame of Hope in the hearts of others as we all struggle with the challenges of Covid19. *Hesed* is the self-sacrifice, gentle mercy and compassion, of faithfully responding to the often, unspoken needs of others. It is the unsung heroes and heroines who quietly attend to the needs of parents, children, and neighbours. *Hesed* is the word of gentle mercy, forgiveness and compassion in the reconciling phone call. God's *hesed* is mirrored in our lives and hearts when *our* embracing words and loving, mercy-filled actions fuse into one.

And so, my dear friends, as we light the second Advent *candle*, remember, it is not just a 'nice festive, season's ritual'! It is a symbolic reconnecting to the *hesed*, the never-ending circle/wreath of God's gentle mercy, faithfulness, and love for each one of us.

Remember me as loving you.
Fr. Antony



SECOND COLLECTIONS

THIS SUNDAY, 6th December – **Flowers for Christmas**

This collection goes directly towards flower arranging expenses for decorating our church to look beautiful for Christmas

NEXT SUNDAY, 16th December – Life Group



CHURCH NOW OPEN AGAIN for Mass on Tuesdays and at the weekend. The usual booking system will need to remain in place and an updated letter with information on booking is included with the newsletter circulation this week.

CHRISTMAS MASS BOOKING

Please note that we will be taking bookings for Christmas separately to the regular Masses. Circulated with the newsletter is our Advent Services leaflet. On the back you will find information about booking to come to Mass over Christmas.

PREPARING FOR CHRISTMAS AND ADVENT

- From the Parish Council and Liturgy Group

CALLING OUR MUSICIANS, SINGERS, FAMILY CHOIRS AND ORCHESTRAS.....

There is still an opportunity to help us put together a Christmas Carol Service to make available on our Youtube channel this Christmas.

Are you are a musician, singer or can get together as a family choir/orchestra to record some music, or if you are an expert in editing, scripting etc please contact the office before 22nd November? Are any of our musical or broadcasting university students coming home for Christmas and could help us? This is an opportunity for anyone in our community, not just our usual choir members.

Also any families who can help us produce a scene from the nativity which we can 'knit together'. If the post lock down restrictions enable us to record in the church we can try that the week of December 5th-13th

You must be happy that your offering will be broadcast and we shall do our best to avoiding breaching broadcasting laws.

Please contact the parish if you would be willing to help - Thank you!



QUIZ CORNER (Answers at bottom of p 4)

1. Where am I? I am the place where Elizabeth and Zachariah lived when Mary came to visit them.
2. Who am I? I am the first indigenous Saint in the Americas born in 1474. I received several apparitions of Our Lady, including one in Mexico, at the hill of Tepeyac.
3. What am I? I am the tallest Roman Catholic church in the world.
4. Who said? When in Rome, live as the Romans do; when elsewhere, live as they live elsewhere.

ADVENT REFLECTIONS WITH FR ANTONY

Wednesday 9th December, 7.30 pm

Join Fr Antony this evening to reflect on Advent as
'A time for Healing'

You can come to the church (*no need to book, just turn up*), or if you prefer you can join on Zoom – at the following link:

<https://zoom.us/j/94089600202?pwd=bHk0N1RYb3o3MjN5T3JrNjcyXgzQT09>

Meeting ID: 940 8960 0202

Passcode: 621452

ADVENT SERVICE OF REFLECTION & INDIVIDUAL ABSOLUTION

Thursday 10th December, 10.00 am

(*no need to book, just turn up*)

This is an alternative to our usual Advent Reconciliation Service which under current COVID circumstances is not possible to run in the usual way. This service can

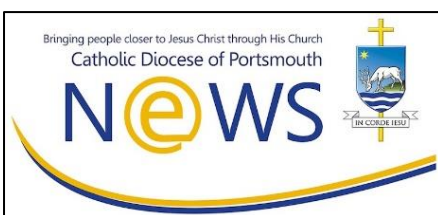
also be joined via Zoom using the following link

<https://zoom.us/j/94760565435?pwd=VHhzK3Z2Si9venQweDVGRFN2ZjBOUT09>

Meeting ID: 947 6056 5435

Passcode: 856662

NEWS FROM THE DIOCESE



Bishops Weekly Newsletter – E NEWS

Latest round up of news from the Bishop and around the Diocese. Lots of interesting notices, articles, reflections, online events, and videos and other opportunities both locally and further afar. Click on the logo for access.



The Advent Project

<https://www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/advent-project>

Bishop Philip has presented a suggested Advent Project for everyone around the diocese to join in with which is outlined in this booklet (click to view). The booklet includes his Advent message to the diocese, a weekly prayer guide, some history of the advent wreath and full instructions on how to make your own. You can even view a full explanation and demonstration from the Bishop at the following link!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4y6SGvSD3jg&feature=emb_logo



Vocations Prayer Newsletter

Here is December's Vocations Prayer Newsletter with some interesting reflections relating to this time of Advent (click the picture to view)

FRATELLI TUTTI - Summary of the Pope's new encyclical, Fratelli Tutti and some reflections on it.

Dr Anna Rowlands, St Hilda Associate Professor of Catholic Social Thought & Practice at Durham University, pre-recorded the reflection on Fratelli Tutti that was featured in last week's webinar on Fratelli Tutti and the work of CSAN and CAFOD. Dr Rowlands was a member of the panel that presented Pope Francis' third Encyclical in the Vatican on 4 October. Her reflection is available here: <https://vimeo.com/481709422> if you would like to watch it again or share with friends in online parish meetings.

QUIZ ANSWERS: (1) "Hebron, in the hill country of Juda (2) Saint Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzli. (3) and the tallest domed church, is the Basilica of Our Lady of Peace in Yamoussoukro. (4) St Ambrose

Government Consultation on Faith Engagement

Colin Bloom has been appointed as the Faith Engagement Adviser at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to lead a review into how best the government should engage with faith groups in England. The last few months have been very challenging for places of worship and people of faith. The significant restrictions that have been put in place to control the spread of the virus have limited people's ability to worship, practice and celebrate their faith as they normally would.

This review began before the COVID-19 pandemic, but it is timely as the recommendations may well come to strengthen how government engages with faith groups during the COVID-19 recovery phase and beyond. The Bishops' Conference encourages us to take part in this review by completing the questionnaire at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/independent-faith-engagement-review-call-for-evidence>

The review will run until 11:45pm on 11 December 2020.



ART FOR ADVENT

A Talk given by Dr Antonia Whitley

As we enter into Advent and seek to prepare our hearts for the coming of Jesus at Christmas, Antonia an experienced art historian, lecturer and parishioner, has given a talk on religious art focusing on paintings of the Annunciation and the Nativity. If you would like to join us on Zoom in listening to a recording of this presentation on Tuesday 22nd December at 7.45 pm, please register your interest by emailing:

formation@stpeterswinchester.org.uk

HISTORY OF THE 40 MARYTRS CONTINUED



Saints Edmund Campion, Ralph Sherwin & Alexander Briant (joint feast-day, 1st December)

Edmund took the Oath of Supremacy and was ordained deacon in the Church of England at Oxford. Influenced by Gregory Martin and other Catholics at the University he became a Catholic and went first to Douai for training as a priest, then on to Rome and Prague to become a Jesuit. Returning to England in 1570, Edmund worked hard in daily ministry, but at the same time made a name for himself by surreptitiously publishing the famous *Brag* and the *Ten Reasons* which explained and defended the cause of Catholicism with enormous public exposure and success. Eventually captured, Edmund was offered ecclesiastical advancement if he conformed, but he refused and was tried and convicted of treason. He was tortured for information but revealed nothing of significance and was executed by being hanged, drawn and quartered on 1 December 1581, together with Ralph Sherwin and Alexander Bryant condemned as priests. In the spirit in which he had lived his faith, Edmund declared at the conclusion of their trial, 'In condemning us you condemn all your own ancestors, all the ancient Bishops and Kings: all that was once the glory of England, the Island of Saints, and the most devoted child of the See of Peter. For what have we taught... that they did not uniformly teach?'

St Edmund, pray for us.

St Ralph, pray for us.

St Alexander, pray for us.

Dudley Plunkett

CATHOLIC BISHOPS' NEWS can be found at: <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/home/news-and-media/>

CATHOLIC NEWSPAPERS FROM AROUND THE UK free online: <http://www.churchpaper.co.uk>

SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL HELP AND SUPPORT

<https://www.southampton.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid19/i-need-help.aspx>

and **CITY CORONAVIRUS UPDATE FOR THIS WEEK**

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKSOUTHAMPTON/bulletins/2ae4c46>

PARISH WEBSITE: Don't forget you can access many resources on the parish website by going to this link.

<https://www.immaculateconception.church/downloads> Go to documents/resources.

CHRISTMAS GIFTS SUPPORTING CHARITIES:

If you are starting to think about Christmas cards and gifts you may be interested in some of the following:

AID TO THE CHURCH IN NEED (ACN)

www.acnuk.org/giftsoffait Select gifts for your family & friends to change lives this Christmas, from hot meals to trauma counselling, support for widows and orphans to transport for a priest or sister.

CAFOD

https://worldgifts.cafod.org.uk/?utm_source=staffemailfooter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=World-Gifts-2020 World Gifts are a range of virtual charity gifts for friends and family, which help transform the lives of families living in poverty

PAX CHRISTI

<https://paxchristi.org.uk/shop/> Christmas cards and small gifts to support the work of Pax Christi

MORE CHRISTMAS SHOPPING

If you are looking for Catholic resources and literature as Christmas gifts the following link to CTS Christmas Gifts might be of interest:

<http://go.pardot.com/webmail/520051/526410361/7c7dcf1f1ddddf0a0b4c9a6162e2b324e7190d173ae3efaf0cc7f177746e10ee>

POETS CORNER

OFFBEAT

A car that I bought had been owned by the Police
Which, I thought, made it just a bit grander:
So I said to a friend whom I wished to impress,
"Did you know that my car's an ex-panda?
So he thought for a while, then in puzzlement said,
"I'm afraid I don't quite understand:
Are you talking of height, width or length, or all three;
And exactly how does it expand?"

Dennis B. Wilson



DO PLEASE SHARE A COPY OF THIS NEWSLETTER with other parishioners who may not have access to the internet. If anyone without internet access would like a copy sent to them each week while we do not have regular access to the church, please let the parish office know.

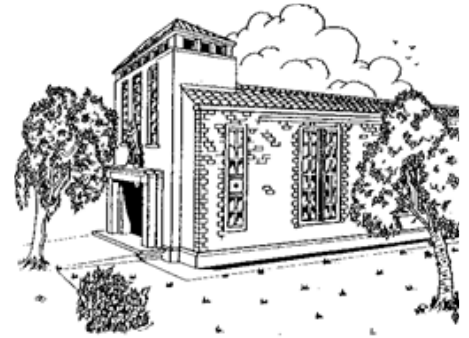
Immaculate Conception Catholic Church

346 Portswood Road, Southampton, SO17 3SB

Telephone: 023 8055 5470

Email: portswood@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Web site: www.immaculateconception.church



27th November 2020

Please see Advent & Christmas services leaflet for booking the Christmas Services.

My dear Friends

These are indeed challenging and trying times! In consultation with the relevant authorities on Covid-19 I should appreciate it if you would give the following guidance your attention. Because of current restrictions permitting only a limited number of parishioners in the church building at any one time, your cooperation for a guaranteed seat is essential to ensure safety, and avoid disappointment. It is important that you book in advance. Therefore:

- Email and phone bookings for Tuesday and Sunday Masses, should be made before 1200 (noon) on the previous Friday.
- **However**, with the exception of Saturday Mass you can turn up on a 'first come, first served basis' **but you will need to arrive at least 10 minutes before mass starts**, and speak to the church stewards in the porch. Please be prepared to wait for vacancies /cancellations. [Please wait by the Kent road /lawn side of the church and maintain 2 metres social distance].
- If the church is full, it is likely you would not be able to attend that service.
- If you are booked to attend mass in the Church Hall, please go straight there and wait outside the entrance by the noticeboard.

From Saturday 5th December, **with the exception of the Advent/ Christmas Services and Boxing Day.**

the Church will be open for Mass only as follows:

Sunday: 1000 and 1730 (5.30pm)

Tuesday: 1000

Saturday: 1000 Bookable only (for those with special circumstances-recorded Sunday Mass)

Email booking preferred at

icmassbookings@gmail.com

Tel (for those without internet):

080024613720

Sundays at 1000: We now have capacity in the hall for a maximum of **40 people** to attend either a recorded, or live streamed service. At the end of this service, I will then distribute communion.

To Make a Booking:

Please:

1. Send an email request to this email icmassbookings@gmail.com and state:
 - Your name and address.
 - The total number in your household /bubble coming to Mass (let us know if there are under 10s).
 - The preference for the day of the week, and mass time you wish to attend. (If you can give a second choice that will help if there are too many requests for one Mass time).
 - Whether there is a special circumstance (e.g. wheelchair access, working hours)
2. **Or** telephone **0800 2461372** and leave a message. We provide this option for those who have no access to the internet. If you have internet access, please email us.

For the time being, *you cannot book more than one Mass a week*. This is to allow as many people as possible to attend Mass once each week. When your booking is confirmed, you will receive details of your seat and row number in the Church/Hall. Numbers 1-10 are on the Sacristy side and 11-20 on the Lady Chapel side. Rows K-P are in the hall.

Please try to arrive at the recommended time so we can prevent a queue.

Please do let us know if you need to cancel, or make a change, so that we can free seats for other people. Just let us know if you have a query and we will try to help. Please try and be punctual when you can.

Access for those with disabilities/ children's buggies- So that we can plan your seating and comfort, kindly advise us if you require any of the following:

- ramp access for those who cannot manage steps
- wheelchair or extra leg room space –
- children's buggies

NHS Track and Trace.

As you know, we are currently required to take a record of everyone who attends to support the NHS track and trace system. The Government has requested that details are kept of those who have attended the church, for three weeks in case it is needed for track and trace purposes. It also allows us to pre plan the seating in the church which, as with all public buildings, currently has very limited capacity. To save time when you arrive, if you have not already given permission for NHS Test and Trace, please complete the form overleaf and return it to the porch/office. This is also available on the web. We now have the NHS Track and Trace QR code scanner.

We still need some **volunteer stewards, readers** and those who can manage the **slides** for some masses. So do let us know if you are not in a vulnerable category and can help. This involves for stewards:

- Welcoming people into the church/hall and helping people with their hand sanitizing
- Assisting with the communion line and preparing the altar
- Helping people to leave the church/hall
- Cleaning the church/hall after the mass (PPE is provided).

Some guidance notes from the Diocese/Government

Arriving:

- The Church will normally be open 30 minutes before the service commences. If possible, please try to stagger your arrival to avoid queuing outside the church /hall (particularly in wet weather!)
- Please do not congregate outside the church /hall before the service begins and maintain your 2 metres between household 'bubbles'. Rule of 6 applies.
- There is a one-way system operating in the church and hall with the entrance through the main porch and exit through side fire exits
- The porch is very small, so we can only accommodate 2 people at a time in the porch areas of both the Church and Hall.
- A steward will then show you straight to your seat – do not sit on seats marked with yellow hazard tape as they are marking out the social distance

During the Service:

- Please keep conversations to a minimum within the church/hall to reduce droplets.
- Throughout the service we will remain seated as this helps to maintain social distance.

Holy Communion:

- We will be receiving Holy Communion on the way out. The stewards will guide you. When it is time for Holy Communion the Presiding Priest will say 'Body of Christ' to us all and we respond together by saying 'Amen'. If you are receiving Holy Communion, please then wait for the stewards to guide you. Any face coverings must be removed to receive Holy Communion. Communion is normally given in the hand. Place the palm of your hand out flat -one hand supported by the other towards the Priest.
- Everyone must leave in line, so if you do not wish to take Holy Communion, please come forward and just nod to the Priest and depart through the exits. Alternatively, if you would like a blessing, just cross your hands in front of your chest.

Leaving the church/hall:

- Please leave the church/hall via the fire exit with the shortest queue
- Collection boxes are available for offerings on the way out. Where possible, please bring gift aid envelopes or an ordinary envelope with your gift aid number on it. Unless otherwise specified, donations are for the general running of the church. Please mark clearly 'second collections'.
- The Government has asked that worshippers 'leave promptly' after the service and maintain social distance of course!

Additional Information:

- Toilets are available if necessary, please draw the attention of the steward and they will guide you.
- Emergency personal water, medicinal and baby feeding is permitted, otherwise there is no eating or drinking in the church/hall.

Guidance on how to wear face-coverings/masks

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own>

A video from the World Health Organisation

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/when-and-how-to-use-masks>
<https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/posters/COVID19-PPE-Safe-Mask-Wear-Poster.pdf>

Guidance on how to sanitise your hands <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZnSjFr6J9HI>

This is also found on the noticeboard as you enter church or on this website *The Portsmouth Roman Catholic Diocesan Trust* A registered charity number 246871

Yours sincerely

The Parish Covid-19 Team & the Parish Priest