

26th July 2020

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR A

'The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field which someone has found; he hides it again, goes off happy, sells everything he owns and buys the field.' (Matt 13:44)

Immaculate Conception Church

Within the Pastoral Area of Southampton East
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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, attendance at mass is through the BOOKABLE SYSTEM ONLY

Details of how to book a place for Holy Mass are on the last page of this newsletter and on the parish website.

Sun 26 July	10 am	17th Sunday Ordinary Time Sunday Mass available from 10 am on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youtube • Facebook • Parish Website *Saturday Mass is recorded for Sunday	Arthur Maxfield RIP	 <p>SUNDAY'S READINGS 1st Reading: 1 Kings 3:5,7-12 Psalm: 118(119): 57, 72, 76-77, 127-130 2nd Reading: Romans 8:28-30 Gospel: Matt 13: 44-52</p>  <p>https://www.dropbox.com/s/iwnrd830jaogneb/Children%27s%20Liturgy%20Video%2026.07.20.mp4?dl=0</p>
	5.30 pm		Grandmother (RIP) of Aloma Francke	
Mon 27 July	—	Feria	No Service	
Tues 28 July	10 am	Feria	Margaret Daly RIP	
Wed 29 July	7.30 pm	St Martha	-	
Thurs 30 July	12 noon	St Peter Chrysologus	K.T. John RIP	
Fri 31 July	—	St Ignatius of Loyola	No Service	
Sat 01 Aug	10 am	St Alphonsus Liguori	Dr Kenneth Webb RIP	
Sun 02 Aug	10 am	18th Sunday Ordinary Time	Ted Andrews RIP	
	5.30 pm		Diamond Jubilees of Srs Maureen, Marie Bernadette, Catherine Carey of the Daughters of Wisdom	

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.

Thank you for your support and patience at this time

Contacting the parish

While the Parish Office is often physically closed, the Parish email is still checked.
For non-urgent matters please send an email to portswood@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk
Unless it is an emergency, please keep calls/emails to a minimum on Mondays as this is Fr Antony's day off.

My dear Friends

Many years ago, I was awakened by the sounds of doors shaking and things around me rattling. It took me a few moments to realise that I was experiencing my first mini earth/seaquake! We all abandoned the buildings and headed towards the sea. I noticed that many hundreds of people had grabbed what was most precious to them as they had exited their properties. Many people were in their bathrobes, clutching wooden boxes which contained their prized possessions. Recently, I saw in the papers, the tragic images of homes teetering on the edge of wave-battered cliffs before collapsing on to the beaches below. The thought did run through my mind, were I in that situation, what would I consider precious enough to grab before I raced from the house?

Today's readings ask us what we perceive 'most precious' in our lives? *The Pearl of Great Price*, in this Sunday's readings, place before us a number of images/analogies/metaphors in which we are invited to discern the preciousness of our relationship with Christ, and the *kingdom of heaven*. One of the great mystics tells us that it is very unlikely we shall find a *pearl of great price* sitting on the beach or on the rocks! If we want to find that precious pearl we shall have to learn how to dive for it.

I guess that challenge here is to ask ourselves three questions:

- How precious to **me** is my relationship with Christ?
- How precious to **me** is *the Kingdom of heaven*?
- For **me** what in life has the *ultimate* value?

To a large extent, my responses to these questions will unfold the commentary of my life! My words and my actions will bespeak what is most precious to me. What I perceive as the most precious, having the ultimate value to me, will be what I clutch to my heart, and cling to, when the world around me seems to be imploding, or falling apart.

The gospel today unfolds for us how precious and life-giving that relationship with Christ is for each one of us. We are not going to *find* that precious relationship as casually as picking a precious pearl off the beach. Like any relationship, relationships do not just *happen*...relationships have to be 'worked at'...if we deem them precious to us!

We all know that the pearl is created by an irritant within the oyster. The oyster's response to irritation and pain is to create a thing of beauty. Our human condition being what it is, as I reflect on my life's experiences, I think I know why some of the pearls in the oyster can be a little distorted and twisted! It is often by allowing the reflective love of God to flow through us, and in us, that his healing and restorative love can make the slightly twisted and distorted pearl into a thing of unique beauty. In the ever-hopeful words of the mystic: *what strikes the oyster shell does not damage the pearl!!*

And so, my dear friends, we can ask ourselves, *is my relationship with the God who loves me truly precious to me? Is it my pearl of great price?* As we hear in other parts of the sacred scriptures: *where your treasure is, there your heart will be also*. All too often, we put off 'diving' for that pearl, putting it on the 'back-burner' of our busy lives until 'we have more time' – and then life is over before we know it!

This is the 'now' when we are both invited and challenged to *discern* and *respond*!

Remember me as loving you,

Fr. Antony

QUIZ CORNER (Answers on p4)

1. Where am I? I am mentioned in Genesis (21:22-34). My name means well of seven or well of oaths. Why am I named so?
2. Who am I? I was married in the 14th Century at the age of 13 and subsequently had 8 children. My husband Ulf and I went on pilgrimage to Santiago del Compostela where Ulf became very ill. St Denis appeared to me in a vision and my husband recovered. Widowed aged 41, God called me to create a new religious order which I did- the only woman to do so.
3. What am I? My name is both an item of Greek clothing or a form of mollusc. Women often wore me to ankle length whereas the male style was usually to the knee. It is the clothing typical of Jesus' time.
4. Who said? "Safeguard the warmth of the family, because all the warmth of the world will not make up for it".

CATHOLIC BISHOPS' NEWS

can be found at

<https://mailchi.mp/cbcew/230320-1183514?e=d8f421adff>

This week includes items on:

- A series of talks for those involved in youth ministry

CATHOLIC NEWSPAPERS FROM AROUND THE UK

free online: <http://www.churchpaper.co.uk>

SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL HELP AND SUPPORT and CITY UPDATE FOR THIS WEEK

<https://www.southampton.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid19/i-need-help.aspx>
<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKSO/UTHAMPTON/bulletins/294ca17>

- Southampton Virtual Jobs Fair, Wednesday 29th July
- Free creativity packs over the summer for children

SAINT OF THE WEEK: St John Boste (feast-day 24 July)



John came from Westmorland and studied at the Queen's College, Oxford University, before becoming a Fellow of the College and being ordained in the Anglican Church. At some stage he converted to the Catholic faith and was admitted to the English

College at Rheims, where he was ordained in 1581. He returned to England soon afterwards and worked very effectively for 12 years in the North, where he had a price on his head. Relentlessly pursued by the authorities, he was eventually arrested after celebrating mass at a Catholic house near Durham in 1593. St John boldly confessed to his priesthood and ministry. He was imprisoned and later transferred to the Tower of London where he was tortured on the rack and in other ways, but he disclosed nothing. It seems that the more the martyrs were tortured the more they found strength to persevere in their faith. When returned to Durham for trial, St John denied all involvement in political affairs, saying that 'Our function is to invade souls and not to meddle with these temporal invasions.' He was nonetheless found guilty of treason and condemned to be hanged, drawn and quartered. He was executed on 24 July 1594, after being forbidden to speak. He managed just to say, 'I hope in God that if you will not suffer me to speak unto you in this world this, my death, will speak in your hearts that which I would have spoken.'

St John, pray for us

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.



UK DISASTERS EMERGENCY COMMITTEE APPEAL

CAFOD has joined with the UK Disasters Emergency Committee to help millions of people whose lives are at risk, as Coronavirus spreads across refugee camps and countries suffering conflict. Your generous support can help CAFOD to scale up its Coronavirus response throughout our global Church family. Donations can be made at www.cafod.org.uk/coronavirus, or you can support the 60 volunteers from around the diocese who have taken part in the 10,000 steps challenge in aid of this appeal by donating to their just giving page at <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Cportsmouth-Aldershot>.

Alternatively, for just one week starting Saturday 25th July, you can donate via the collection at all Masses via the collection boxes at the exit doors. These donations should be put in an envelope clearly marked 'CAFOD Emergency'. Envelopes will be available in the church porch. Thank you for your support.

BEREAVEMENT GROUP

The Pastoral Team is looking for volunteers to join our parish St Luke's Bereavement Group which is really short of help. No previous experience required as Fr Antony will be providing training, but an interest in providing some practical and emotional support to those who are grieving the loss of a loved one. Please have a chat with Fr Antony or contact the parish office if you would be interested in finding out more

THE MERTON PRAYER

My Lord God,
I have no idea where I am going.
I do not see the road ahead of me.
I cannot know for certain where it will end.
nor do I really know myself,
and the fact that I think I am following your will
does not mean that I am actually doing so.
But I believe that the desire to please you
does in fact please you.
And I hope I have that desire in all that I am
doing.
I hope that I will never do anything apart
from that desire.
And I know that if I do this you will lead me
by the right road,
though I may know nothing about it.
Therefore will I trust you always though
I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of
death.
I will not fear, for you are ever with me,
and you will never leave me to face my
perils alone.

Thomas Merton

(A prayer found by Fiona)

(1) Beersheba in Southern Israel- Negev. The place where Abraham and Isaac dug seven wells and made an oath (covenant) with Philistine King Abimelech. (2) St Brigid of Sweden https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=264 (3) chiton- a form of tunic that fastens at the shoulder, worn by men and women of Ancient Greece and Rome- iike (4) Saint Charbel Makhoulouf or Sharbel Maklou-

Arrangements for attending Mass

The Church will be open for 'bookable' Mass only as follows:

Sundays: 1000 and 1730 (5.30pm)

Tuesdays 1000

Wednesdays 1930-7.30pm

Thursdays 1200 (noon)

Fridays 1930 (7.30pm)

Saturday 1000 – for those with special circumstances- recorded Sunday mass

Email booking : icmassbookings@gmail.com (preferred)

080024613720 for those with no internet.

If you have not already booked your normal 'weekly mass time' then:

- i) Send an email request to this email address: icmassbookings@gmail.com and state
 - a. Your name and address.
 - b. The total number in your household coming to Mass (let us know if there are under 10s).
 - c. 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).
 - d. Whether there is a special circumstance (e.g. wheelchair access, working hours)
- ii) Call this number **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.

You must specify the day of week and time you would like to attend Mass. This will be your usual Mass time each week. For the time being, *you cannot book more than one Mass a week* to allow as many people as possible to attend Mass. We are asking those who are retired, and those who can attend a Mass during the week, to sign up for a weekday Mass. Please do not 'swop' mass bookings, rather cancel them through the booking system, so we can release seats for those on shift work etc. Those who work unpredictable shifts should email us on a Wednesday for the following week. When your booking is confirmed, you will receive details of your seat and row number in Church. Numbers 1-10 are on the Sacristy side and 11-20 on the Lady Chapel side. Please try to arrive at the recommended time so we can prevent a queue.

There will be no toilet facilities available.

Each mass must have 3 stewards, so please volunteer if you can by emailing the office.

Attending mass: There is a one-way system operating in the church, with the entrance through the main porch and exit through the side fire exits. Please see the details on the website and the noticeboard as you enter church. Please feel free to wear a face covering /gloves in church except to receive Holy Communion. 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. Diocesan / Government guidance states that:

- You will need to sanitize your hands on the way in and out of church.
- The congregation should not stand or kneel during mass as this reduces social distance.

Capacity for Mass: Sunday- Friday included – 40 people or 14 households

Capacity for Saturday mass (recorded) excluding households- 27